



Fourth annual Urban Farm Tour registration open

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The 4th Annual Urban Farm and Backyard Garden Tour of the Riverbend will have expanded hours this year, due to farmers' requests. The Sierra Club gladly invites the public to meet and see the farmers, gardeners, and chicken coop owners that will display their edible yards and farms on Saturday, May 9th from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. An electronic map of all the participating farms, gardens, and coops is being issued to all "tourists" who would like to partake in the free tour. Tourists must register by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 8.

"We enjoy partnering with the many organizations that have small gardens as well as local growers - many who sell at Alton Farmers' & Artisans' Market", said Christine Favilla, Three Rivers Project Co-coordinator. "At least eight vendors and neighbors of the Godfrey/Alton area are welcoming the public to come and see where the farming magic happens."

Contained within this tour is a terrific opportunity for those interested in getting a firsthand look at neighbors' and community members' spaces. Educational tips will help those who want to transition from energy-intensive lawns to gardens and yards that are producing edible yields. From the first seeds sown, to the final harvest, the farmers and gardeners will relay all the experience they can and answer any question that comes to mind for "tourists" on this self-guided tour.

"It's a chance to show our appreciation of our local growers and get ideas for our own backyards," said Dana Winn, SIUE's intern for Sierra Club's Local Food project. "In the fall, we hope to feature the upcoming Lincoln Douglas Community Garden and Hellrung's raised beds after a successful summer."

After receiving the map, participants will plan out their route to see all the sites of their interest within the event's duration, based on the variety of hours the individual sites will be open. No matter which site one chooses to go to, shining demonstrations of

urban homesteading, organic gardening, and encouragement for you to start your own will be provided. The fall tour is planned for October 4th; a great opportunity to allow participants to see what can still be planted in the fall and proper harvesting techniques.

Some of the local farms that will be on this tour again are:

Alton Middle School

Clifford Clark's backyard garden

Community Cultivators' Jaime Hines Discovery Garden and Grassroots Grocery's Herb and Edible Boxes

Dry Street Gardens

La Vista Community Supported Agriculture Farm

North Elementary Community Gardens

Senior Services Plus, Inc.

To be a garden/farm on the tour, [register here](#) by Friday, May 8th, no later than 12pm.

To register to be a tourist, e-mail christine.favilla@sierraclub.org with the number in your party by Friday, May 8, at 5 p.m. and you will receive a map via e-mail.