



MEDIA ALERT

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Fresh Future Farm in 2015 Class of SBA Accelerator Cash Award Recipients

Small Business Administration awards \$50,000 to North Charleston urban farm for certified kitchen

OVERVIEW: Fresh Future Farm Inc. (FFF) is a nonprofit urban farm and community food operation dedicated to providing affordable and convenient access to fresh and healthy organic foods, conventional foods, and grocery products. FFF is also committed to creating essential jobs and micro-entrepreneurial opportunities within our community. Additionally, we intend to develop our farm into a unique urban agriculture education resource and training center that will serve both youth and adults in meaningful ways.

In May 2014, a group of judges selected the nonprofit startup as winner of South Carolina's Community Loan Fund's first *Feeding Innovation: Healthy Retail Business Plan* competition which earned them \$25,000. Today the farm doubled last year's contribution as **one of 80 national winners of the SBA Accelerator competition**. Fresh Future Farm plans to develop their urban farm and market concept in the Chicora-Cherokee community, which is a food desert challenged with high rates of poverty and unemployment. SBA Accelerator funds will allow FFF to build a certified kitchen to process fresh produce on-site and rent the space to trained local food entrepreneurs for a nominal fee.



REACHING AN UNDER-SERVED ECONOMIC HUB: The purpose of the SBA Accelerator competition was to draw attention and funding to parts of the country where there are gaps in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. While there are entrepreneurial activities occurring nationwide, some are better supported by private sector ecosystems than others. SBA has created connective tissue amongst the nearly 130 winning entrepreneurial ecosystems now part of the Growth Accelerator Fund. The SBA will continue to explore ways to creatively harness this powerful network and connect startups to each

other and Federal government resources. Class of 2015 SBA Accelerator entrepreneurs cover a broad set of industries and sectors – from manufacturing and tech start-ups, to farming and biotech – with many focused on creating a diverse and inclusive small business community. **Each organization will receive a cash prize of \$50,000 from the SBA.** In accepting these funds, the accelerators will also be committing to quarterly reporting for one year. They will be required to report metrics such as jobs created, funds raised, startups launched and corporate sponsors obtained. FFF plans to partner with strategic partners including local food entrepreneur, Trident Technical College culinary graduate, and local [Geechee Chef Benjamin 'BJ' Dennis](#), and others to create an incubator commercial kitchen and training center in the Chicora-Cherokee community of North Charleston, SC.

ABOUT FRESH FUTURE FARM: Fresh Future Farm is a non-profit social venture Mrs. Germaine Jenkins, [a recent Center for Women "Be Brave Award" recipient](#), developed her project with [Growing Power Inc.](#), the national nonprofit and land trust created by Will Allen, as its model. The timing is right to launch this new venture. SC commissioned a report ([Making Small Farms into Big Business](#)) that quantifies the need and economic potential that small farms have on building the state's economy.

Thanks to support from the South Carolina Association of Community Development Corporations, Metanoia CDC and other local businesses, Germaine completed Growing Power's Commercial Urban Agriculture training in May 2014. She has also invested in Online Permaculture Design training and is expected to earn certification from Geoff Lawton in August 2014.

Fresh Future Farm plans to diversify its agricultural revenue streams and become a grassroots nonprofit that is self-sustaining, which will allow staff members to focus their time and energy on achieving their mission.

Fresh Future Farm will grow food and the economy in the Charleston Heights area of North Charleston through the following products and services

- Farm Store and Farm Tours
- Educational farm tours and activities for school youth, families and out-of-town visitors
- Workshops on innovative/urban farming techniques
- Collaborative community development projects with strategic partners

Fresh Future Farm's fields are already producing loads of fruit, which is currently being donated to local organizations. The farm store itself has not yet opened due to contractor delays and final permitting, but a Fresh Future Farm stand that will accept SNAP payments is expected to open by mid-September.

Fresh Future Farm Mission:

To leverage healthy food and grocery products to create socially just economic development.

For more information about Fresh Future Farm, please visit www.freshfuturefarm.org.

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