

History



Expanding the farm at CUH in 2011

In 2006, a group of students, faculty, and staff came together to start a small urban farm on campus. They carefully double dug three beds at the Botany Greenhouse, and began to grow food in them.

As the community around these garden beds grew, the farm grew to surround the entire outdoor space at the Botany Greenhouse. There was so much energy and excitement around the UW Farm, and so much potential for growth and expansion, that in 2011, students approached the folks at the Center for Urban Horticulture about growing into one of its vacant fields.

Finally, with the addition of the Mercer Court Apartments site in August 2013, the UW Farm now occupies three unique different spaces, illustrating the various styles and possibilities for urban sustainable agriculture.

1949 – The University’s Botany Greenhouse is built.

1983 – The Center for Urban Horticulture is founded on the shores of Union Bay, the former site of the Montlake Dump.

1998 – The Program on the Environment accepts its first students.

2002 – SEED is formed, pushing to have recycling bins on every floor of the residence halls.

This goal is accomplished in 2006.

2005 – The UW Botanical Garden is founded uniting the Center for Urban Horticulture and the Washington Park Arboretum.

2005 – The UW Farm breaks ground on 1/3 acre site near the Botany Greenhouse.

2006 – The UW Farm becomes a registered student organization.

2009 – The College of the Environment unites many environmentally and food related departments.

2010 – Seattle Tilth Partners with the UW and UW Farm.



Breaking ground at Mercer

2011 – The UW Farm expands to a site near Union Bay. The farm now cultivates an additional acre of land.

2012 – Chef Amy Belknap opens Cultivate restaurant as a part of the West Campus construction by HFS.

2013 – The School of Public Health, The College of the Environment, Housing and Food Services, and The UW Botanic Gardens come together to support the UW Farm program and hire

farm manager Sarah Geurkink. We also break ground at our Mercer Court growing space this year.

2014 – The UW Farm secures a \$22,310 grant from CSF to build a greenhouse and hire an intern to help manage our planting schedule throughout the season. An irrigation system is installed at Mercer Court, and we kick off our inaugural CSA program in the summer of 2014.



Our very first CSA pick-up

2015 – In February we launch a successful crowdfunding campaign, and with the help of 135 supporters, we raise over \$10,000 to build a shelter and two earthen ovens at the Center for Urban Horticulture—a space that will serve as a wash-pack station and community gathering venue for years to come. We also kick-start several other projects, like our vermicomposting system, and are able to extend our growing season into earlier spring and later fall with our new hoophouse.