

alchemist




Urban Farm Stand



Bringing Fresh Produce to the Neighborhood

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Who We Are

- Alchemist is a non-profit organization promoting smart growth and social justice in Sacramento's central city areas through neighborhood-based community development.
- Our work has been focused on the Alkali Flat neighborhood in downtown Sacramento.

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Alkali & Mansion Flats Demographics – Census 2000

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1,500 households 2,850 individuals | The Flats | Sacramento |
| Race & Ethnicity | | |
| White Alone | 45% | 40% |
| African American | 8% | 15% |
| Asian | 7% | 16% |
| % Latino | 37% | 21% |
| Some Other race/Two or more races | 5% | 8% |
| % Owner-Occupied Housing | 9% | 50% |

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Income & Poverty Status in 1999 Alkali & Mansion Flats

| Indicators from 2000 Census, SF 3 | The Flats | Sacramento |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Median Household Income (in 1999) | \$20,858 | \$37,049 |
| % of Households Earning Under \$25,000 (in 1999) | 56% | 33% |
| % of Households with Income Below Poverty Level (in 1999) | 28% | 20% |

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Food for the neighborhood – the idea takes shape

The Farm Stand project grew out of neighborhood visioning and community organizing in the Alkali & Mansion Flats Neighborhood in Downtown Sacramento.

Alchemist with support from the Neighborhood Association, Redevelopment Advisory Committee and City Council offices, hosted a comprehensive visioning session to help residents identify priorities and implement change.

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Origins of the Urban Farm Stand:

2006 Community Design Workshop - Residents prioritize access to fresh, healthy foods as one of the top four neighborhood issues.





 **alchemist****The neighborhood wants produce – why not a traditional farmer’s market?**

- Farmer’s markets require high attendance to succeed; many Sacramento farmer’s markets were struggling
- Most farmer’s markets are held during the day, but Alchemist wanted to provide a source of produce for residents returning home from work
- In general, farmer’s markets are an expensive and time consuming marketing activity for local farmers

 **alchemist****What is an Urban Farm Stand?**

- Brings fresh produce directly to neighborhoods through a non-profit sponsor
- The non-profit purchases produce in advance from various local sources and acquires permitting as a “temporary food facility” to re-sell the produce

 **alchemist****The Alkali Flat Farm Stand**

- Opened on July 10, 2007
- Held once per week from 4pm-7pm in a City park
- Operated until the last week in September
- Plans to re-open in May of 2008!

 **alchemist****Why an Urban Farm Stand?**

- Fresh produce for neighborhoods that lack access to a grocery store
- Builds community by providing a safe and welcome social gathering space
- Engine for economic development by providing a venue for start-up businesses
- Builds job skills for youth volunteers

 **alchemist****Challenges**

- Permitting – health department, park permits
- Purchasing and delivery schedules
- Small scale makes volume discounts more difficult
- Setting prices to keep produce affordable but make the farm stand sustainable
- Insurance requirements
- Start-up capital and operating funds required; a minimum of \$10,000 for the opening season

 **alchemist****The Future of the Urban Farm Stand**

Partnership with Sacramento Mutual Housing Association will allow us to bring the Farm Stand model to new communities



Sacramento Mutual Housing Association

- SMHA is a non-profit affordable housing developer, providing housing to over 600 families in 11 mutual housing communities.
- Working with Alchemist, SMHA will open four new farm stands at SMHA properties over the next 2 years



The Future of Farm Stands in Sacramento

- Support from the California Wellness Foundation will allow Alchemist and SMHA to engage youth in the development and operation of farm stands, including working with local officials to obtain support and local agencies to obtain necessary permits.
- SMHA's Urban Farm Stand program will combine the Alchemist model with nutrition education for young families, funded by the First 5 Commission of Sacramento



The Future of Farm Stands

Want advice on starting a Farm Stand in your community?

Contact Us!

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