

Agroecological Fellows Program at UC Gill Tract Community Farm

Project Lead: Katie McKnight, Vanessa Raditz & Jennifer Sowerwine

Sponsor: UC Gill Tract Community Farm

TGIF Grant: \$29,448.35

(additional funds request approved for \$913.00 in Fall 2016)

Project Theme: Agriculture & Food Justice

Project Location: UC Gill Tract Community Farm

2016 Application Submission

Status: In Progress

Project Description: The UC Gill Tract Community Farm will develop an Agroecological Fellows Program (AFP) for UC Berkeley students through creation of five paid, part-time positions throughout Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. The AFP will provide valuable experiential learning opportunities for the growing number of students interested in food systems, allowing them to become successful change-makers. Implementation of the AFP will significantly increase the Farm's capacity to expand its food justice goals and accomplish its mission.

The UC Gill Tract Community Farm ("the Farm"), currently a 1.1-acre operation, was established in September 2013 to address the lack of access to fresh and healthy food within East Bay communities. The mission of the Farm is to conduct collaborative community-driven research, education, and extension focused on urban agriculture and food justice; and to foster equitable economies, a healthy environment, and increased resilience in vulnerable communities, both urban and rural. As an innovative program through UC Cooperative Extension and the College of Natural Resources, the Farm serves as an active classroom and production space for both UC students and community members. Each month over 200 volunteers of students and community members visit the Farm to engage in a plethora of farm activities, include planting seedlings, harvesting and weighing food, applying organic pest management practices, and attending skill-share workshops and social justice forums. The students and volunteers produce and distribute over 15,000 lbs. annually of free organic produce throughout the community.

Goals:

- 1) Train students in the skills needed to be successful change-agents for food system transformation
- 2) Increase the number of students directly involved in experiential learning at the Farm
- 3) Improve access to healthy, sustainable food for students who are food insecure
- 4) Expand the capacity of the Farm to advance its mission on campus and in the community
- 5) Enhance the visibility of the Farm on campus as a valuable student resource