Morris Heights Farmers Market Adds to Growing List
By CHLOE RICKERT

The BronxWorks-sponsored Heights Community Farmers Market at University Avenue and 181st Street is the newest addition to an increasing number of local farmers’ markets. Open every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. until Nov. 15, the market not only offers fresh produce for purchase with cash, credit, or benefit payment systems, but thanks to BronxWorks, customers can also get help applying for food stamps.

The idea for the market came from a small local farm stand run out of a BronxWorks office in the fall. “We wanted to expand to a farmers market because the farm stand was doing well,” said market manager Robert Moore. Moore connected with GrowNYC to recruit farmers who wanted the business structure of a market to sell their produce. The market’s stands are filled with food from Gudelio Garcia of El Poblano Farm in Staten Island, Feliciano Gonzalez of Fresh Radish Farm in Goshen, and one urban grower in the community.

Garcia said he was interested in the market because he was looking for Spanish customers. He cheerfully pointed out each of his crops including four different kinds of lettuce, three types of onions, tomatoes, peppers, carrots, and more. Besides the produce stands and BronxWorks’ food stamps table, the market also provides cooking demonstrations provided by the non-profit organization Just Food.

Here’s a list of other local farmers markets, all open until Nov. 15:

- **Bissel Gardens Farmers Market** (Bayside Avenue and East 241st Street)
  - Details: Open Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

- **Crotona Park Greenmarket** (Crotona Park South and Clifton Avenue)
  - Details: Open Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- **Harvest Home Echo Park Market** (Ryer and Burnside avenues)
  - Details: Open Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- **Harvest Home Mt. Eden Farmers Market** (Mt. Eden and Morris avenues)
  - Details: Open Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- **Harvest Home North Central Bronx Farmers Market** (Moshola Parkway and Jerome Avenue)
  - Details: Open Wednesdays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

- **Inwood Go Green Market** (242nd Street and Broadway)
  - Details: Open Tuesdays from 3 to 7 p.m.

- **Kingsbridge Heights Youthmarket** (West Kingsbridge Road between Aqueduct and Reservoir avenues)
  - Details: Open Fridays from noon to 6 p.m.

- **La Familia Verde Farmers Market** (East Tremont and LaFontaine avenues)
  - Details: Open Tuesdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

- **Marble Hill Youthmarket** (225th Street and Broadway)
  - Details: Open Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

- **New York Botanical Gardens Greenmarket** (Southern Boulevard between Bedford Park and Moshulu Parkway inside gate)
  - Details: Open Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- **Poe Park Greenmarket** (129th Street between Grand Concourse and Valentine Avenue)
  - Details: Open Tuesdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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“Year: No Longer Empty has done a lot to bring this art and people together into this huge show, and I think that’s a big, big step,” said Hatuey Ramos-Fermin, who participated in the show.

“Organizations in the Bronx are coming together, weaving this cultural landscape,” Herson-Ringskog said.

“The No Longer Empty project generated energy and interest in the arts that has now affected all of the arts institutions,” Cunningham said.

One recent offshoot of these collaborations is the formation of the Bronx Arts Alliance (BAA), a collective of 20 Bronx anchor art organizations, including the Bronx Council on the Arts, BronxArtsSpace, The Point, the Bronx River Art Center and the Bronx Museum of the Arts.

The BAA aims to support a cohesive and vibrant arts presence in the Bronx, using its collective resources to bring more group exhibitions and events to the borough, as well as advocate for art and cultural policies.

This coordinated effort is a far cry from how the art scene in the Bronx was even a decade ago.

“When I moved here in 2000, if there was an art scene, it was nothing I knew about or participated in,” Cunningham said. “By 2001, artists like Wanda Ortiz and artists organizer Mitsu Hadeishi had begun putting on periodic events, video showings, performance and art exhibitions, and soon coordinated with the Bronx Council on the Arts.”

The growth in the art scene reflects the progress throughout the borough over the last 20 or so years.

“I started working in the Bronx in 1989, 1990 because I got a grant to do murals from the MTA from the early arts project Creative Station,” said Carey Clark, now the visual arts director at The Point and its representative to the BAA.

“It was a very tough neighborhood when I started going there, and I’ve seen nothing but improvement since then.”

Clark, who resides in Mott Haven, said that even today’s economic roadblocks “won’t ever stop what’s going on in terms of this being an incredibly artful, soulful place.”

“I think everyone is doing the best they can with the circumstances, and there’s not a lot of economic support for the arts in the Bronx,” said Ramos-Fermin. “The [Bronx Museum of the Arts] is really trying to change the perception that art is only for certain people, that it’s only for the elite or something like that. They’re really trying to be more inclusive of people of different backgrounds.”

Just as before, an evolving art scene is changing some perceptions of the Bronx outside the borough.

“The Bronx has an amazing, rich history that people are not as well aware of as they should be and the more organizations and artists and even residents talk about it, and its beauty and dynamic quality, more people will come and more people here will be bolstering that borough pride,” said Herson-Ringskog.

Many involved in the arts see even more potential for the Bronx.

“The most important thing is to work collaboratively, to create sort of festival days and you sort of have to keep pushing for those sorts of things and more and more,” Clark said. “It’s coming up with sort of promotional strategies [for the Bronx] to become more of a cultural destination.”

‘Paradise’ Boosts Bronx Arts Scene

FOR THIS INSTALLATION, artist Linda Cunningham collaged drywall from the Home with window frames, historic photos of the Bronx, and more.

(Photos by Sarah Ramirez)

(Photos by Chloe Rickert)