

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Teens Thrive in Summer Environment at The Food Project

**Lincoln, MA--July 6, 2018--**Summer is an important time at The Food Project. On July 2, the organization welcomed 100 young people (most between the ages of 14 to 17) from diverse cultural, racial, economic, and geographic backgrounds to work on their urban and suburban farms in Boston, Beverly, Lincoln, Lynn, and Wenham. During the summer season, these youth work together to grow vegetables and to donate or distribute nearly 200,000 servings of produce to increase food access throughout eastern Massachusetts—all while developing important leadership, teamwork, and civic participation skills.

Young people thrive in the challenging atmosphere on the farm and experience remarkable growth by the end of the season. “Seed Crew is a great summer job for young people—and so much more,” said Cindy Davenport, director of learning and design for The Food Project. “Besides making lifelong friends, young people in Seed Crew learn to push through discomfort by spending hours with each other working on the farms, engaging in deep conversations about disparity in the food system and elsewhere, and learn to pull together in service to others.”

After working on the farm each morning, Seed Crew spends most afternoons in workshops learning about sustainable agriculture, food access issues, social justice, and more. They also spend one day each week at hunger relief organizations preparing and serving the produce they have grown.

Seed Crew is the entry point to participate in The Food Project’s more advanced youth crews. Following Seed Crew, young people may apply to continue working each academic season and summer throughout their high school careers. In Dirt Crew, The Food Project’s academic year opportunity, members work to build raised-bed gardens for families in low-income communities, lead volunteers on The Food Project’s farms, do research projects that benefit local communities, and much more—all while continuing to develop leadership and public speaking skills. Following Dirt Crew, young people can apply to Root Crew. Root Crew members have increased responsibilities on The Food Project’s farms, where they serve as crew leaders and peer leaders for summer’s Seed Crew, run farmers markets, manage CSA farm share distributions, and lead community workshops to discuss issues surrounding the food system.

Seed Crew is a transformational experience for the young people who spend their summer with The Food Project. In the 27 years since The Food Project was founded, over 1,800 young people have participated in these youth crews. Many of these young people have gone on to launch organizations based on The Food Project’s model in other parts of the country, started their own urban or suburban farms, or have founded businesses that are committed to social justice.



Please join The Food Project in welcoming these young food justice leaders as they begin their summer. There are many ways to get involved with the organization, including making a donation, joining them as a volunteer on the Lincoln farm, taking part in the Summer Institute from August 1 to 3 to learn more about food justice and youth development, and many more. To learn more about The Food Project, visit [thefoodproject.org](http://thefoodproject.org).

### **About The Food Project**

Since their founding in 1991, The Food Project has grown into a nationally-recognized non-profit organization that works at the intersection of youth, food, and community. For more than 27 years, The Food Project has brought youth and adults from diverse backgrounds together on their farms to grow healthy food for residents of the city and suburbs to build a local and sustainable food system. The organization believes that food is a unique vehicle for creating personal and social change. The Food Project aims to transform the local food system into an equitable and inclusive model that is community-controlled and supports food justice for all.

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