



## [The Bright Side Episode 1: Michigan Fresh](#)

Produced by  
CEDAM

**Kate Nault** Welcome to today's episode of The Bright Side, the show where we shed light on the real Michigan. I'm today's host Kate Nault. We're coming to you today from the Lansing City Market. The original market was established in 1909. After a recent reconstruction, the market is now situated along the Grand River. For more than 100 years area farmers and local artisans have been bringing their goods to sell to the public in a warm and family-friendly environment.

Today's episode features stories about a movement in Michigan to create a more locally integrated and community based food system. A food system is more than just the steps food takes from farm to your fork. A food system is about diverse places and people. It's about the food landscape, jobs and economic development. And most importantly, a food system is about healthy people and resilient communities.

We've been hearing a lot lately about inner city farms sprouting up across the U.S., but few people know that in Michigan cities, urban agriculture has been around for over a century. Our first segment introduces you to some volunteers from Earthworks Urban Farm in Detroit who, relying on their roots, have learned to grow much more than food.

---Earthworks Urban Farm & Capuchin Soup Kitchen---

**Willie Spivey** My own experience showed me that if you hold up your own and do your part, there's so much possibility and potential in Detroit that no outsider or no insider can do anything to dampen that possibility.

**Stevie Washington** One of the things that the soup kitchen provides is healthy meals for our clients that come in, and how that is done is through Earthworks. That grows an abundance of great food here.

**Willie** We have two acres here at Meldrum and St. Paul and we develop produce.

**Dinah Brundidge** So we cultivate, we do everything that farmers do. We just... in the city.

**Willie** We have beehives and we do compost and we develop markets and we build businesses.

**Shane Bernardo** So we're also increasing access to healthy, affordable and safe food in the community.

**Onakapoma Moore** So most of the foods go from our church to go to the soup kitchen.

**Shane** I'd say about 90% of our produce goes here to the soup kitchen.

**Steve LaFraniere** We use their mixed greens in our salad. We serve a salad every day with lunch.

**Stevie Washington** We serve anywhere from 600 to 700 meals a day.

**Steve LaFraniere** What we do with Earthworks is try to give them numbers of how much produce we're going to use. We pick certain items that we would like them to grow for us, like tomatoes and lettuce and cucumbers and peppers.

**Jahleel Muhammad** We're harvesting lettuce, spinach.

**Shane Bernardo** Some small bulb onions. We've got some mixed salad.

**Onakapoma Moore** Potatoes, spinach, we got cabbage. We have greens. We have choate.

**Shane** Peaches, cherries, apple, and pear trees.

**Onakapoma** Everything is done by natural organic processes.

**Ila Dutta** And it's tasty! [laughs]

**Onakapoma** The best part of this is that you get lead-free food. We do lead testing when we do this.

**Stevie Washington** I mean, they even have programs here where they teach some classes as well as how to eat, what the kids in the neighborhood...

**Steve LaFraniere** What the children learn, vegetables come from the ground and not from a can.

**Shane Bernardo** And so we're more than just an urban farm. We also provide education in the form of nutrition education, youth development. We have an entrepreneurship program for youth. We also have an adult internship program.

**Onakapoma** The Earthworks Agriculture Training Program, which gets you ready to do your own farm work.

**Jahleel Muhammad** What we do here is we learn everything from seed to harvest.

**Willie Spivey** And so we bring balance and we bring identification to what a food system really is. What it has shown me and even 1,200 and something organized gardeners is that we can take it from seed to plate, you know, our actual self, with just a little bit of effort.

**Shane Bernardo** There is a lot of opportunity to provide for our own basic needs. And I'm not just talking about food.

**Stevie Washington** And what their thing is, is to try and show love and concern for those people that are maybe broken hearted. That may be broken down and what we try to do is open up our arms and show love and compassion.

**Onakapoma** Helping people to eat, it warms my heart to be able to do something like that.

**Stevie Washington** For a lot of people have written Detroit off, but they have a lot of people that come that want to give their time, finances and their resources.

**Willie Spivey** You know, it's almost like when I come to the farm I know there's so much going on in politics and business, but it's like you come here and it's like a serenity. You come here and you still a part of the world, but you get a chance to regroup and rejuvenate yourself.

**Onakapoma** Here you get a sense of being a part of something.

**Shane Bernardo** Buying our food from the local store and having others prepare and source it for us: we've gotten away from some of those critical life connections that we have with our food and the earth and with nature.

**Jahleel Muhammad** And now it's more of an appreciation for nature and when you start learning the different things you're like, "Oh, okay, that's what that is."

**Willie Spivey** It's reconnecting us with this great soil and earth that we've been blessed with.

**Onakapoma** So everything that you see that's going on in Detroit with all the different organizations, with the companies and Earthworks. We're hoping to do more job services. So we're hoping that later on to create more jobs doing this.

**Willie** It's just great for the state of Michigan. It's sustainability at its best.

**Onakapoma** It's so important to be able to grow your food because you have accessibility.

**Willie** I can have food 15 feet away from me as opposed to 1,500 miles away.

**Jahleel** It's such fulfilling work because the work that you put in, you get to see the finished product.

**Willie** Somebody could have told me something over and over again, but until I came in and put myself in it hands on, watched a seed germinate and watched the transplant go to ground and the vegetable wind up on my plate. Those collard greens I'm talking about. You won't know until you experience it.

**Onakapoma** And we'd be very grateful to have you. So bon appetite!

---

**Kate Nault** We now take you to Ann Arbor, where we'll visit with Selma Café and CEDAM member Avalon Housing to find out more about their exciting summer project.

---20 Hoops in 20 Days---

**Jude Walton** Hoop houses basically are, they're big hoops. I mean I know that sounds silly, but they're structures that have large kind of curved structures that come over that are very simple. They're almost more like tents than greenhouses. And greenhouses as well are a lot more expensive to build just by the nature of the structure and with the glass and everything. They're a lot, lot more expensive. Hoop houses are kind of a bit of down and dirty way of doing it on a much bigger scale.

In Michigan, if you're just growing outside you've really got a five or six month growing season. Half the year you can't be growing. Hoop houses are great because they give that extra bit of protection so they really extend the growing season for

gardeners and for farmers. There are certain crops – spinach is a good example – which you can grow much later in the year just in a simple hoop house. And as simple structures they're not mechanical, they don't require additional equipment. Once they're up they're there and working, so maintenance on them is pretty low, which is why they're such a great support for farmers in more northern climates like Michigan.

**Lisa Gottlieb** We're really invested in building hoop houses, but we didn't want to spend every weekend over the summer doing hoop builds. So far we've built... before the 20 in 20 we built about a dozen hoop houses all over our community including a couple in Detroit. We thought if we could do 20 hoop houses in 20 days, we'd do it for a chunk of early summer and then after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July we'd be done hoop building for the summer. So that was the impetus for doing 20 in 20.

---Avalon Housing's Edible Avalon program is partnering with Selma Café to build 1 of the 20 hoop houses.---

**Carole McCabe** Avalon Housing has been around almost 20 years and we grew out of an emergency shelter in an effort to develop a more permanent, long-term solution to homelessness. So we provide affordable housing and support services for people who are, who have very low incomes and who are homeless and who have a physical or mental disability. So we own and manage at most 300 units that are scattered at 4 different sites throughout Ann Arbor.

We started Edible Avalon with Kris' help and other volunteers as a way to make fresh organic produce more readily available to our tenants, as well as to help people build community, come together, connect with the larger community and learn more about food and health and nutrition. And so it's been a terrific blend. We have Edible Avalon sites at... I think a dozen Avalon properties. We're very scattered. Our units are scattered and integrated into neighborhoods all around town and so we have multiple gardens and tenants at each site work with the volunteers to develop, plant, grow and maintain the gardens.

**Kimberly Wilcox** Edible Avalon is really just a project that stemmed from being able to see this opportunity as well as a need for our tenants to have healthy grown food that they can do in their yard. So that's really how that got started.

**Kris Kaul** It's a community garden and education program for tenants of Avalon Housing and also their immediate neighbors. So we go in and build raised bed gardens. They're organic. And we provide tools and transplants and seeds and then volunteers adopt the gardens and visit them once a week. They share gardening expertise, learn gardening from many of the tenants, share recipes with what's currently harvestable in the garden.

---Selma Café---

**Michelle Fortin** This was something that started, let's see, two years ago. We use a lot of eggs, bacon, bread, and whatever vegetables are in season. Lisa always has a bread pudding with local fruit. In the winter she's frozen things. So there's always... the fruit is available but it's local. And we have homemade waffles and often it's a bread-based thing with a vegetable and a sauce. Depending on who has which produce, it'll come from the farmer's market. It'll come from the people's food co-op. Which are all local stores.

**Kris Kaul** I know I've been there when they've had over 190 people through between 6 am and 10 am. It's just really successful.

**Michelle** Just a few weeks ago we busted 200, which was really amazing. In two and half hours in an actual just home space to serve that many people is really fun.

So come on out and eat with us. It's great food. You'll meet great people and the money goes to such a great place.

---

**Kate Nault** Next we take you to Lansing, where CEDAM member Allen Neighborhood Center is taking a comprehensive and grassroots approach to food access issues.

---Allen Neighborhood Center---

**Farmers Market Live Music** Quiet nights and quiet stars. Quiet chords from his guitar. Floating on the silence that surrounds us. Quiet thoughts and quiet dreams.

**Joan Nelson** You know, people have asked me about goals around all of our food stuff. And when they ask that I... the person that asked that to me most recently was talking about, "Do you have a goal like, we will increase the consumption of produce by ½ serving a day." And our goal, *our goal*, is to change the food culture of the Eastside.

So the food programs, much like the housing programs, the health programs, any of the programs that we do can be arrayed on a continuum. Right. And at one end of the continuum are those programs that are really about providing immediate services to people in need. And on the other end is... the programs have more of an emphasis on self-reliance and empowerment. So if we array our food related programs on this continuum, over on this end we have Bread Basket.

**Francine Watts** You're at the Allen Neighborhood Center and we're getting prepared for our bread basket day. Which means we serve the community with free bread that's donated to us from different providers. Especially with the economy and the price of things, bread day is very important.

**Joan Nelson** Bread Basket is often the initial point of entry into a whole lot of our other food programs because we can tell folks who come to Bread Basket about the farmers market: Allen Street Farmers Market.

We began this in 2004 with four farmers. We now have sixteen farmers in 2010. We were the first nonprofit in Michigan to be approved to accept food stamps for our farmers. We're really proud of that.

So the market was very successful, but we didn't want to stop there because we knew that real self-reliance would have to involve producing food in the neighborhood.

**Allison Burkholder** So welcome to the Hunter Park Community GardenHouse. This is where neighbors meet to grow food, flowers, and community for those on Lansing's Eastside.

You come in and you tend to your plot. You offer up 8 hours per month of volunteer work, which helps us keep our actual greenhouse open. And then there are no chemicals to be used unless it's organically accepted and you are also privy to a lot of the resources that we have in the greenhouse.

**Steve Couch** The real value of our center is that when we say we do something, when we say we're doing a program, the program's not just shim-sham thrown together. And I think the real value is that when we do things, we want to do things with excellence. We want to do things well. We don't want to just say, "Oh, well, these are just some kids in the park." These are kids in the park that deserve just as much as kids wherever.

**Allison** We've got a worm bin that we just started.

**Neighborhood Kid** Oh, like at my school. Coffee grounds.

**Neighborhood Kid** I got to plant tomatoes over there and we got to water them and put them in the soil.

**Neighborhood Kid** I like to plant and I met my friend that's a grown-up and I ate a bagel.

**Allison Burkholder** What does vitamin K do?

**Neighborhood Kid** Uh, heal cuts?

**Allison** It does heal cuts.

**Joan Nelson** And that is so much more exciting than half a serving a day. I mean, it's culture change. It really is. But isn't that what we're all doing, everywhere? Isn't that

what REO Town is about, what Old Town is about, is really... It's all about building sustainable communities.

Good health is contagious. Catch some on the Eastside.

---

**Kate Nault** In our next segment, we'll catch up with MSU Professor Kirk Goldsberry to find out how to use maps to better understand the retail food environment.

---The 411---

**Tiffany Lemieux-McKissic** Hi, welcome to What's The 411. I'm Tiffany Lemieux-McKissic and I'm here with Kirk Goldsberry, who is a professor at Michigan State University, and he's here today to talk to us about his interesting research on food environments and mapping.

So welcome Kirk, how are you?

**Kirk Goldsberry** I'm good, how are you?

**Tiffany** Good. So can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

**Kirk Goldsberry** Well, I'm a professor at Michigan State and I study geography and I'm sort of the cartographer on campus. I'm the mapping expert on campus, so I teach courses in what's called GIS or Geographic Information Systems. And my research usually involves mapping things in urban environments.

**Tiffany** Awesome, so what are you guys doing around food systems? What does that mean?

**Kirk** Well there are these things called food deserts, which are areas within cities that don't have ready access to healthy foods, and a lot of people have been talking about this issue in the last decade or so but nobody's really been able to put their finger on where these places are within cities. So one of the things mapping enabled us to do is go in and actually visualize food access in a way that shows people that access within an urban area varies from very good to very bad within one city.

**Tiffany** So are you particularly concentrated in Lansing or different - across the state, or where are you looking at this?

**Kirk** We're looking at this right now in Lansing, East Lansing, the whole metropolitan area here. So there's about 300,000 people who live in Lansing and East Lansing and what we've tried to do is create a high resolution image of the food environment here in Lansing with special focus on retail availability of fresh produce in different parts of the city.

**Tiffany** And so how does Lansing rate? How's it going here in Lansing?

**Kirk** Lansing is pretty typical. There are places within Lansing that are really good. We have a lot of good grocery stores, a lot of good organic markets, a lot of good farmers markets. However, just like any other city in the country, there are places where it's really inconvenient and really hard to attain fresh, healthy food, particularly in areas around East Lansing by the University surprisingly. There are no grocery stores over there.

**Tiffany** Really? That is surprising.

**Kirk** And a couple areas here in Lansing that we're kind of concerned about too, where it's not to say it's a food desert. There is food there. It's just unhealthy food. There's a lot of liquor stores, there's a lot of restaurants, there's a lot of convenience stores, but there's not a really good produce section for some of the neighborhoods in this area.

**Tiffany** So what do you feel like are the implications of this for the community? What does this mean to us?

**Kirk** Well, the first step is it should mean that we're aware of this issue. And that's really the first goal of the project, like I said, is to visualize this. To put a picture of the food environment in front of people's faces and say look, it depends on where you live and some people in this area and some neighborhoods in this area are at risk for obesity or diabetes because of environmental factors such as access to fresh produce. Just raising the awareness was the first goal.

After that, good maps enable decision makers to sort of mitigate the problem in different ways. For instance, with new farmers markets or there are certain programs looking at getting fresh produce into Quality Dairies or some of the smaller markets in town that are really helping.

But first we wanted to identify which areas needed that so that people in positions of power could actually make good decisions about improving the food environment.

**Tiffany** So what's the solution?

**Kirk** Oh, that's a big question. So what's the solution? I think the solution involves a lot of things: better markets. Working with market owners to say, "Please stock fresh produce. You're a really big resource in this community and your community is consuming food based on what certain retailers stock in their stores." So convincing them to stock healthier food is one big solution that we're working on.

Another one again is to raise awareness not only that people who live in a quote-unquote food desert live in a food desert, but where can they go to get healthy food?

And the biggest thing I think is to teach people who have grown up in disadvantaged nutritional areas is how to cook. Because I think you might live right next to a supermarket with a giant produce section, but you might not know how to deal with a piece of broccoli or a potato even. So getting people in organizations in the community to teach kids how to cook again and the value of fresh produce and how affordable and nutritious this can be for them, I think that's a big step as well.

**Tiffany** So if someone wants to find out more about this or they want to see these maps, where can they go?

**Kirk** They can look at my website ([geo.msu.edu/food](http://geo.msu.edu/food)). Go to the geography website of Michigan State University and find my website, and there's all sorts of maps. There's the local area and different ways of looking at accessibility to fresh produce and other things in the food environment. And I'd encourage people interested in this to do just that. Go to the website and look.

**Tiffany** Well thanks so much. I have one last question for you. What is your vision of Michigan? If there were no constraints and it could be any way. How would you picture it?

**Kirk** Well, in terms of food systems I think that Michigan should be more proud of the agricultural stuff that's going on here. It's second to California. You have so much diversity in agriculture. You have fruits and vegetables and the envy of almost every other state. And you don't really see that shown in the markets or shown in the food environment.

I feel especially in the summer time we could eat almost entirely Michigan products and I'd like to be able to do that with supermarkets supporting those kinds of initiatives and restaurants opening up that supported all local food because Michigan needs to be more proud of its agriculture and its food system.

**Tiffany** Well thanks so much for joining us on The Bright Side and good luck.

**Kirk** Thanks for having me.

---

**Kate Nault** We've sampled some great stories about community food systems in Michigan and now it's time to find out how you can make something fresh at home with some local ingredients from your farmers market.

---Fun in 5---

**Olivia Courant** I'm Olivia Courant and this is Fun in 5. Today we're here at the Allen Street Farmers Market and I'm here with my friend Katie Fritz and she's going to talk to you a little bit about what we're going to do here today.

**Katie Fritz** When I come to the market, I like to look around and see what they have in season that day. So we're going to go look at all the different vendors and I'm going to pick out a few things that look good and then we'll take them back home and cook them.

I was looking for asparagus today but we just missed it. It's sold out. But we found some kale instead and something I just learned how to make is kale chips, so we're going to make those today.

**Olivia Courant** So what is kale?

**Katie** Kale is a dark green and it's really good for you. It has a lot of antioxidants and vitamins and minerals. It's a little bit tough. It's not usually – and a little bit bitter if you eat it raw. So it's usually eaten either cooked or if you... it's called massaging it. [laughs] And it can make some of the bitterness come out. So it's sometimes used in salads raw.

And to make kale chips we're just going to need some olive oil and some salt and pepper. That's it.

So I preheat the oven to 350 or 375. It doesn't really matter when you're roasting vegetables. Once you get your oven preheated you want to wash the kale. So you can do that by putting it in a bowl of salt water is a good way to wash vegetables. But I'm a little bit lazy so I'm just going to rinse it in the sink. Just making sure we get any dirt or bugs off of it.

So I'm going to shake that off. Put it on some towels. Just trying to dry it off a little bit. It doesn't have to be perfectly dry. If you have a salad spinner you can use that.

The next thing, you want to tear the kale after it's rinsed into bite sized pieces or a little bit bigger. They don't have to be teeny tiny. Manageable pieces. And you want to take the stems off because the stems are really tough and hard to eat. Like that much stem is okay.

So now we've got a bowl of manageably-sized kale and I'm going to take some olive oil and drizzle some in there. You want to be pretty generous with the olive oil so that the kale doesn't burn and it also gives it good flavor.

So I'm just mixing it all up. I'm trying to coat as much of the surface of the leaves as I can. And it feels like I've got a good amount of oil in there. If it didn't then I'd add more.

So now I have a bunch of oily kale leaves. I've lined a tray with parchment paper. It's really helpful to line a tray with foil or parchment paper when you're roasting vegetables because otherwise your tray... you can never get it clean again. This makes it much easier to clean up.

I'm going to spread it out as close to single layer as I can. Okay. That's probably good. I don't want to do it much thicker than that.

Now the next step is to put salt on them. This is what makes them extra delicious. You could probably add pepper as well, but I'm going to go minimal this time and just do salt. Alright. So I was pretty liberal with the salt. When you eat chips you want them to be salty. And I'm going to put it in the oven.

Those need to stay in there for about 10 minutes until they get crispy. We'll check them in a little bit. Some of the edges might start turning brown and that's okay.

I think the kale chips are done. I don't want to burn them. See how they look pretty dry and crispy in most places. I'll prod them with a spatula and see. Yeah. That feels right and they're making the right kind of sound.

So we'll let those cool and then we can eat them. Alright. there we go.

**Olivia Courant** I'm Olivia.

**Katie Fritz** And I'm Katie.

**Both** And this has been Fun in 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

---

**Kate Nault** By paying attention to our resources, the opportunities and the challenges around food systems, we only begin to get a glimpse of the amazing possibilities. To quote the Michigan Good Food Charter, we envision a thriving economy, equity and sustainability for all of Michigan and its people through a food system rooted in local communities and centered around food that is good, healthy, fair and affordable.

Thanks for joining me, Kate Nault, on today's episode of The Bright Side. If you have a story to share with us, visit [brightsidetv.com](http://brightsidetv.com).

---Outtakes---

**Tiffany Lemieux-McKissic** Hi, welcome to... No. No no.

**Kate Nault** If you have a story to share with us, visit [ww.brightsidetv](http://ww.brightsidetv)

**Allie Hock** Two w's!

**Tiffany Lemieux-McKissic** Hi, welcome to What's the 411, and I am your... no. Should I turn?

**Katie Fritz** How does this open?... [can't open container] Woo-hoo!

**Tiffany Lemieux-McKissic** Are you going to do a jig?

**Kate Nault** [does a jig]

---Credits---

**Host**

Kate Nault

**Directors**

Tiffany Lemieux-McKissic, CEDAM  
Olivia Courant  
Allie Hock  
Ashiy Pierson  
Paris Wilson

**Featuring**

Lansing City Market  
Earthworks Urban Farm  
Capuchin Soup Kitchen  
Avalon Housing  
Selma Café  
Allen Neighborhood Center  
Kirk Goldsberry  
Katie Fritz

**Music**

Tyler Vander Maas – The Bright Side Theme  
Kevin MacLeod – “Porch Blues,” “Quasi Motion” (incompetech.com)  
Dominic Tremblay – “Arabic Umbrella”  
hjcrbass – “Bossa Nova Loop”

**This show made possible by an equipment grant from the Lansing Public Media Center.**