We’re thrilled to release a new series of virtual workshops. Connect with our experts for fun, informative, and interactive classes offered remotely—perfect for the current times. Details below!

MODELING AN URBAN AGRICULTURE BUSINESS
A 3 PART, INTERACTIVE VIRTUAL SERIES
WITH BROOKLYN GRANGE CO-FOUNDER ANASTASIA COLE PLAKIAS

PART ONE: WHY FARM IN CITIES? (90 min)
Anastasia Cole Plakias, a Co-founder of Brooklyn Grange, will contextualize contemporary urban agriculture in past and present-day. We’ll examine the motives and methods driving various models of farming in cities, from the Victory Gardens born of wartime supply chain gaps, to community gardens built by activists converting vacant lots into vectors for social and food justice, to indoor aeroponic operations launched by entrepreneurs identifying market opportunities. By asking why we farm in cities, we’ll present a framework for thinking creatively about opportunities to do so.

PART TWO: BUSINESS MODELS (90 min)
In part two of our course, we’ll explore different business models leveraged by urban farmers across the globe, and ask why a budding urban farmer might consider each. After taking a broad view of the history and modalities of urban agriculture in our first session, we’ll begin to look at the various parallel enterprises that can diversify a farming business, examine the relationship between growing methods and organizational structures, and zoom in on a couple of contemporary case studies, each of which practice commercial urban agriculture in a particular and unique way.

PART THREE: SEEDING SUCCESS (2 HRS)
After identifying the most critical steps to the launch of an urban agriculture endeavor, such as building a business plan, assembling a team, and raising funds, we’ll break into groups and model out some urban agriculture start-ups as teams of entrepreneurs. Bound by the parameters of lease opportunities grounded in real-life examples, and with an emphasis on designing not only financial stability, but ecological sustainability, and social value into our business plans, we’ll learn that often, when it comes to farming in cities, a big idea has to play second fiddle to pragmatic considerations. But that won’t stop us from dreaming big! For the culmination of this three-part course, participants will share their group’s work with their classmates in the style of a fun, interactive mock-investor pitch.

ABOUT ANASTASIA COLE PLAKIAS
A passionate and outspoken crusader for urban agriculture, Anastasia spent several years working in corporate hospitality before her desire to make a more meaningful contribution to the food system led her to co-found Brooklyn Grange Rooftop Farm. As COO, her focus is on operating the business with a deep commitment to its triple bottom line mission, and creating strong and meaningful connections between the farm and the communities it serves. In 2011, Anastasia co-founded the farm’s non-profit sister organization, City Growers. She is the author of the award-winning book, The Farm on the Roof: What Brooklyn Grange Taught us About Entrepreneurship, Community, and Growing a Sustainable Business. A native New Yorker, Anastasia is dedicated to making the city that raised her a greener and more sustainable place to live.
NOT-SO-BASIC INDOOR PLANT 101

We believe that plants can help improve happiness and calm in your life, while brightening up your indoor spaces, which is especially important now that many of us are spending most of our time at home. So we’d like to help you grow your indoor plant knowledge!

There are endless possibilities with our indoor spaces. We’ve designed this workshop to walk you through the basics and not so basics to get you started on creating and maintaining your own thriving indoor plant paradise!

Will Axelrod, our Head Gardener and indoor horticultural specialist, will teach you everything you need to know about soil, light and watering needs for your indoor garden. We will examine what conditions are favorable for different types of plants, their care requirements, and steps for addressing common challenges. We’ll also discuss varied propagation techniques from stem and leaf cuttings to division.

Let’s keep greening the city one windowsill at a time!

ABOUT WILL AXELROD
A born and bred New Yorker, Will believes greenery is as important to NYC’s culture as bagels and corner delis. At Skidmore College, he majored in finance hoping to become a slick wall street executive, but as the strain on the environment weighed on him, he found a job with a local landscaper and was immediately hooked. Since then he has worked for New York Restoration Project maintaining 15 community gardens in underserved neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens, as well as several for-profit landscape companies, versing him in many styles of urban gardening.

At Brooklyn Grange, Will is able to combine his passion for sustainability and ecologically minded landscaping while building a system that help his team feel fulfilled and grow. When he’s not gardening, you can find Will biking the loop in prospect park, sneaking food into Film Forum, or swimming on Rockaway Beach.

INTRO TO BEEKEEPING

Did you know that all of the worker bees are female? How can you tell a queen bee apart from the others? Have you ever wondered what honey bees do during the colder months? Get your answers to these questions and much more at the winter introduction to beekeeping with our Head Beekeeper Geraldine Simonis. It’ll leave you buzzing with excitement! Inside the warmth of our indoor loft classroom, Geraldine will provide you with a crash course in apiculture, walking participants through a brief history of beekeeping, the beekeeper’s calendar, and the special challenges of keeping bees in an urban setting. This workshop is perfect for those of you who are considering beekeeping for the first time and want to learn more before bee season is in full swing!

ABOUT GERALDINE SIMONIS
2019 will be Geraldine’s fourth season in the hives. In addition to her work with Brooklyn Grange, Geraldine has been assisting her friend and mentor Tom Wilk of Wilk Apiaries, maintaining hives throughout Queens. Geraldine is an active member of the NYC beekeeping community, dedicated to furthering research and awareness of urban bees.

She is a voracious reader and committed learner, which is critical in the urban beekeeping environment, where new challenges, developments and findings are revealed each year. When she doesn’t have her hands in a hive, she can be found exploring the city’s parks and waterways or at a local brewery, connecting with her Belgian roots.
VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS
CONTINUED

A CONSCIOUS KITCHEN

Green your kitchen, learn how to reduce waste and get greater bang for your buck from your purchases with Brooklyn Grange co-founder, Anastasia Cole Plakias.

Reducing the carbon footprint of your home begins in the kitchen! In this workshop, we'll walk through how to assess your home kitchen for opportunities to minimize waste, saving you money and opening up a world of delicious possibilities. We'll go beyond the usual carrot top pesto, so you come away with concrete ideas for how you can realistically make practical changes to your day-to-day habits that will have a meaningful impact on the amount of waste you generate, and change the way you think about what’s in your fridge.

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PLANNING AN URBAN VEGETABLE GARDEN

Director of our Design/Build Department, Cecelia de Corral teaches you how to grow the most veggies from your small city plots! It’s Spring, and that means it’s time to get your plans together for that garden you’ve been dreaming of! Ben will take you through the early decisions to make, so you’ll have all of your ducks in a row as the days start getting longer and warmer. Will you need to do some construction? The class will start with discussing different types of planting boxes, and ways to work around different opportunities, sun exposures, etc. Then we’ll briefly discuss soil, potting mix, and fertility, seeds to start stocking up on, and the best places to purchase what you need.

Next we'll discuss planting schedules, timing for different crops and crop varieties. Each attendee will make a diagram of their own plots, and share with like-minded urban gardeners. We’ll discuss different layout strategies, best ways to plan for the cycles of the season, how to succession plant, and get the most flavor, quality, and fun from your garden this summer!

ABOUT CECELIA DE CORRAL
Following the receipt of her BFA at Parsons New School for Design, Cecilia "Ceci" de Corral worked for several non-profit organizations, and, fueled by a passion for arts and education, co-founded Arts in Parts, an education hub geared towards reinvigorating community youth post-Hurricane Sandy. Her search for ways to incorporate food independence in the community led her to Brooklyn Grange in 2014 and she has since grown to become the Director of our Design/Build department. By partnering with local growers, her designs aim to include as many native plants as possible, creating beautiful and healthy landscapes. The work plays an active role in educating the community on not only the benefits of green roofs, but also the importance of activating spaces with non-invasive plant species that may serve wildlife for years to come. Ceci oversees the amazing team that manages all off-site, client-based projects, from green roof construction, to indoor plant installations, to the maintenance of various sites across our city and the BG OSHA certification. She has co-taught Green Roof Ecology at The New School annually since 2016, facilitating conversations around local plant and wildlife communities. When she’s not onsite she can be found baking bread or quilting.
VIRTUAL FOUNDER’S PRESENTATION

A Founder’s Presentation is the best introduction to our vibrant rooftop farming business. Get the real dirt on urban farming, a burgeoning industry taking root in NYC. Using our decade old business as a case study, we will describe the infrastructure and installation process of our farms, examine what it takes to operate a healthy commercial urban agricultural business; and explore the social, environmental, and economic benefits of rooftop farming.

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