Reflections on Starting an Urban Farm
Start With Your ‘Why’
Step 1: Business Plan

The Most Important Step!

Take your time.
Step 1: Business Plan

What are you growing? What services are you providing?
Step 1: Business Plan

What are you growing?  What services are you providing?

Who are your customers?
Step 1: Business Plan

What are you growing?  What services are you providing?

Who are your customers?

Dig Into the Numbers
Step 1: Business Plan

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Who are your customers?

Dig Into the Numbers

Production per $ft^2$
Step 1: Business Plan

What are you growing? What services are you providing?

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Dig Into the Numbers

Production per ft$^2$

Cost of goods sold
Step 1: Business Plan

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Dig Into the Numbers

Production per ft²

Cost of goods sold

Reoccurring Costs - Insurance, Accounting, Taxes, Digital Costs, Rent)
Step 1: Business Plan

What are you growing?  What services are you providing?

Who are your customers?

Dig Into the Numbers

Production per ft$^2$

Cost of goods sold

Reoccurring Costs - (Insurance, Accounting, Taxes, Digital Costs, Rent)

One Time Costs - (Biz License, Tax Registration, Health Certification)
Step 1: Business Plan

Resources:

DC Small Business Development Center: https://www.dcsbdc.org/

DC BAR: https://www.dcbar.org/

Farm Business Plan Writing (Cornell): http://smallfarms.cornell.edu/plan-your-farm/planning-funding-your-farm
Step 2: Find Land

*Your business plan should guide your search for land*
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Identify viable ‘land’
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Contact property owner
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Negotiate terms
Step 3: First Growing Season

Make sure all legal and regulatory stuff is taken care of
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Line up as much ‘friendly’ distribution as possible

ie. Individuals and businesses that understand there will be gaps in supply
Step 4: Learn & Grow

Keep an open mind and don’t be afraid to abandon an idea if it doesn’t work.
Step 5: Push for Support from Local Institutions

- DC Council & Mayors Office
- DC Food Policy Council
- Local Business Advocacy Groups