

# NYBG

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## **NYBG's State-of-the-art Edible Academy Set to Open, Marking a Major Expansion of Its Garden-based Education Program for Children, Teachers, and the General Public**

### **Dedication and Ribbon-cutting Ceremony on June 14, 2018; Edible Academy Opening Weekend Celebration with Hands-on Family Activities on June 16 & 17, 2018**

Addressing the National Concern about Childhood Obesity, the Three-Acre Campus Doubles NYBG's Capacity to Teach People How to Grow, Harvest, and Prepare Healthful Produce



Rendering of the new three-acre Edible Academy campus at The New York Botanical Garden (Cooper Robertson)

**Bronx, NY**—Marking a major expansion of its acclaimed garden-based education program, The New York Botanical Garden will dedicate its new \$28 million Edible Academy with a festive ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, June 14, 2018, followed by a public opening on Saturday and Sunday, June 16 & 17, 2018. The indoor-outdoor campus, designed by the distinguished architecture firm Cooper Robertson at the cutting edge of sustainable technology, will allow the Botanical Garden's edible gardening program for children, families, teachers, and the general public to double its capacity and operate year-round.

The Edible Academy, with the existing Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden as its centerpiece, features a 5,300-square-foot classroom building with a demonstration kitchen and a high-tech classroom; a teaching greenhouse; two outdoor pavilions for programs, including one at treetop level offering a vista of the Garden's old-growth forest and the Bronx River; a tiered lawn amphitheater designed to seat 350; and spacious gardens where children, educators, and other visitors will learn about plants and grow and harvest their own produce.

A bigger and broader range of educational programs and activities will double the number of people who can be served from 50,000 to 100,000 annually. In addition to existing programs for school groups and families, Edible Academy programming will include new distance learning offerings, expanded teacher training, cooking demonstrations, and special events.



Sustainable components of the Edible Academy's campus include a green roof for the classroom building, geothermal wells for heating and cooling, a freestanding solar pavilion to help power the facility, and composting toilets, all designed to minimize the environmental impact of the facility and support one of the largest educational gardening programs in the United States.

The opening of the Edible Academy comes at a time of heightened national concern about childhood obesity and related diseases such as diabetes. The area around NYBG has one of the highest rates of food insecurity in the nation, with lack of access to fresh, affordable fruit and vegetables and high rates of obesity-related ailments. Extensive research has shown, however, that children who plant and harvest their own produce develop important life skills and are more likely to eat fresh fruit and vegetables.

At the ribbon-cutting on June 14, NYBG Chairman Maureen K. Chilton and Chief Executive Officer and The William C. Steere Sr. President Gregory Long will be joined by 100 students from three Bronx elementary schools who will present a ceremonial "first harvest" of plants from the gardens of the Edible Academy. In addition to NYBG leadership, several city, state, and Bronx public officials have been invited to speak, including New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, New York State Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie, New York State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, New York City Council Member Ritchie Torres, and Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.

Following the ceremony, guests will be invited to tour the buildings and gardens and enjoy activities such as potting a herb plant, making their own salad dressing, and observing cooking demonstrations.

### **Tours and Activities Planned for the Edible Academy Opening Weekend Celebration**

Edible Academy Opening Weekend Celebration activities on June 16 and 17 include tours of the Edible Academy, hands-on craft-making and planting activities for children, a Makers Station where children can decorate a harvest bag with botanical stamps, a chance to meet

the Global Gardeners and learn what they are growing in their beds in the Edible Academy, and more. Ongoing culinary workshops with local chefs will feature ingredients fresh from the garden that will inspire participants of all ages, with samples shared following each workshop.

Adding to the opening celebration will be curator-led tours highlighting the Edible Academy's sustainable building practices and the innovations they will bring to the Garden's programming, booksignings with local authors, and live music with family-friendly songs and dancing.

This major addition to the Garden's built environment is opening as Gregory Long prepares to step down as the Garden's CEO and President at the end of June. During his transformational 29-year tenure, the institution has completed capital projects totaling \$350 million, including new buildings and gardens, renovated historic structures, and restored landscapes and gardens. Carrie Rebora Barratt, Ph.D., currently Deputy Director for Collections and Administration at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, will succeed him, beginning July 1.

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour. For ticket pricing, please check our Web site. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit [nybg.org](http://nybg.org)

The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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