

NYBG

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***African American Garden: Remembrance & Resilience*, Part of NYBG's Exhibition *Around the Table: Stories of the Foods We Love*, Explores African American Food and Gardening Histories and Essential Contributions to American Foodways**

Multi-faceted, Garden-wide Presentation Celebrating Plants as Foundational to All Culinary Customs Runs June 4 through September 11, 2022



African American Garden: Remembrance & Resilience is a sequence of eight garden beds at NYBG's Edible Academy.
(Photo by Ben Hider/The New York Botanical Garden)



Jessica B. Harris, Ph.D., America's leading scholar of the foods of the African Diaspora

Bronx, NY—Curated by Jessica B. Harris, Ph.D., America's leading scholar of the foods of the African Diaspora, *African American Garden: Remembrance & Resilience* is a sequence of plantings at The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) that explores African American food and gardening histories and essential contributions to American foodways. The *African American Garden* is a major component of *Around the Table: Stories of the Foods We Love*, NYBG's institution-wide, multi-faceted exhibition that celebrates the cultural, horticultural, environmental, and historical significance of what we eat and examines the art and science of foodways and food traditions, many dating back thousands of years. *Around the Table* is on view from June 4 through September 11, 2022.

At the entrance to NYBG's Edible Academy sit the Barnsley Beds, a stunning collection of eight vegetable garden beds arranged in a semi-circle. To create the *African American Garden*, Dr. Harris has worked with historians, heritage seed collectors, and NYBG's Edible Academy staff to replant and reinterpret the beds, turning them into a living archive of more than 80 plant varieties that document African American food and farming histories.

“In the eight beds of the *African American Garden*, visitors will find stories of resilience and resistance, remembrance and rebirth told through the plants of our world,” said Dr. Harris, who has written 12 books on the foods and foodways of the African Diaspora, including *High on the Hog: How African American Cuisine Transformed America*. “As they explore, they will enter our plant world past and present and learn our history. I hope visitors will leave informed and amazed.”

From rice, okra, and other grains and greens to cotton and indigo, watercress, and licorice root, each bed features groups of essential plants grown and foraged for food, dyeing and cloth making, healing, and more. Evoking the kinds of plants free and enslaved Blacks would have kept, the *African American Garden* pays homage to the ancestral knowledge passed down through generations of families and communities.

Interpretive signage provides historical context, tracing the roots of plants brought to America via the transatlantic slave trade, how they were cultivated and prepared primarily in the American South, and how they found their way onto tables everywhere.

The experience also includes an orientation center, shaded seating areas, a Hibiscus Drink Station, and interpretive signs designed by Lawrence E. Moten III, whose credits include Broadway’s *Chicken & Biscuits*. A Poetry Walk with six poems by African American poets has been curated by Cave Canem Foundation, the premier home for Black poetry, committed to cultivating the artistic and professional growth of African American poets.

After *Around the Table* ends, the *African American Garden* will evolve over time to tell food stories from across the African Diaspora. It will serve as a diverse and inclusive learning environment for scholars, schoolchildren, and families.

In addition to the *African American Garden*, *Around the Table* offers expansive installations of living edible plants; the work of contemporary artist Lina Puerta; displays highlighting the art and science of edible plants and plant-based cookbooks; and 30 tables designed by Bronx-based artists. Programming for all ages includes “Around the Kids’ Table” in the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden, Wellness Wednesdays with the NYBG Farmers Market, weekend celebrations, and more. The exhibition provides opportunities to discover the diversity and beauty of plants that are grown for cuisine around the world, to uncover the botanical origins of the foods people think they know, and to cultivate deeper understanding of the environmental and social impacts of food choices.

For more information about *Around the Table: Stories of the Foods We Love* or to purchase tickets, please visit <https://www.nybg.org/event/around-the-table-stories-of-the-foods-we-love/>.

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African American Garden: Remembrance & Resilience Plant List

Bed 1: In the Beginning

- Cotton (*Gossypium barbadense* 'Long Staple')
- Cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* 'Nankeen Natural Brown')
- Cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* 'Sea Island Brown')
- Cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* 'Mississippi Brown')
- Indigo (*Indigofera suffruticosa* 'Ossabaw Island')
- Rice (*Oryza sativa* 'Carolina Gold')
- Sesame (*Sesamum indicum* 'Sea Island Benne')
- Sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum* 'Purple Ribbon')
- Tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum* 'Broad Leaf Orinoco')
- Tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum* 'Virginia Bright Leaf')

Bed 2: Greens

- Collards (*Brassica oleracea* 'Green Glaze')
- Collards (*Brassica oleracea* 'Alabama Blue')
- Collards (*Brassica oleracea* 'Nancy Malone Wheat Purple')
- Variegated Collards (*Brassica oleracea*)
- Kale (*Brassica oleracea* 'Premier')
- Kale (*Brassica oleracea* 'Lacinato Rainbow Mix')
- Mustard Greens (*Brassica juncea* 'Carolina Broadleaf')
- Mustard Greens (*Brassica juncea* 'Southern Giant Curled')
- Turnip (*Brassica rapa* 'Seven Top')

Bed 3: Grains

- Rice (*Oryza sativa* 'Carolina Gold')
- Corn (*Zea mays* 'Sea Island White Flint')
- Field pea (*Vigna unguiculata* 'Whippoorwill')
- Field pea (*Vigna unguiculata* 'Fish Eye')
- Pearl Millet (*Cenchrus americanus*)
- Millet (*Eleusine coracana* 'Dragon's Claw')
- Coral Sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor*)

Bed 4: Cookpot

- Eggplant (*Solanum melongena* 'White Garden Egg')
- Garlic, music (*Allium sativum* var. *ophioscorodon* 'Music')
- Okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus* 'Alabama Red')
- Okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus* 'Sea Island Red')
- Onion (*Allium cepa* 'Red Wethersfield')
- Onion (*Allium cepa* 'New York Early')
- Fish Pepper (*Capsicum annuum*)
- Pepper (*Capsicum annuum* 'Buena mulata')
- Yam (*Solanum tuberosum*)

- Shallot (*Allium cepa* var. *aggregatum* 'Figaro')
- Tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum* 'Moyamensing')
- Tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum* 'Plate de Haiti')

Bed 5: Making & Mending

- Cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* 'Sea Island Brown')
- Cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* 'Arkansas Green Lint')
- Cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* 'Erlene's Green')
- Cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* 'Mississippi Brown')
- True Indigo (*Indigofera tinctoria*)
- Indigo (*Indigofera suffruticosa* 'Ossabaw Island')
- Kenaf (*Hibiscus cannabinus*)
- Flax (*Linum usitatissimum*)
- Saw Palmetto (*Serenoa repens*)
- Sweetgrass (*Anthoxanthum nitens*)

Bed 6: Out in the Wild

- Black raspberry (*Rubus occidentalis*)
- Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum* 'Northland')
- Butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
- Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*)
- Cress, Creasy Greens (*Barbarea verna*)
- Dandelion (*Cichorium intybus* 'Catalogna')
- Dwarf Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea* 'Kelsey')
- Mint, Peppermint (*Mentha* sp.)
- Elderberry (*Mentha* × *piperita*)
- Plantain (*Plantago major*)
- Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*)
- Rabbits tobacco, Sweet Everlasting (*Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium*)
- Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*)
- Sunchoke (*Helianthus tuberosus*)
- Sweet flag root (*Acor* *Acorus calamus* var. *americanus*)

Bed 7: Curing & Conjuring

- Aloe (*Aloe vera*)
- Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*)
- Collards, Green Glaze (*Brassica oleracea*)
- Okra, Sea Island red (*Abelmoschus esculentus*)
- Ginger, Peruvian yellow (*Zingiber officinale*)
- Gourd, Birdhouse, Bradshaw's (*Lagenaria siceraria*)
- Roselle (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*)
- Licorice root (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*)
- Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)
- Watermelon (*Citrullus lanatus* 'Georgia Rattlesnake')

Bed 8: Remembrance & Resilience

- Collards (*Brassica oleracea* 'Green Glaze')
- Bambara Groundnut (*Vigna subterranea*)
- Efo shoko, Lagos spinach (*Celosia argentea*)
- Efo Gboma, Eggplant leaf (*Solanum macrocarpon*)
- Efo Gbure, Waterleaf (*Talinum fruticosum*)
- Field Pea (*Vigna unguiculata* 'Sea Island Red')
- Field Pea (*Vigna unguiculata* 'Whippoorwill')
- Field Pea (*Vigna unguiculata* 'Fast Lady Northern')
- Field Pea (*Vigna unguiculata* 'Iron and Clay')
- Peanut (*Arachis hypogaea* 'Carolina Runner')
- Sweet Potato (*Ipomoea batatas* 'Beauregard')
- Yam (*Dioscorea rotundata* 'African white')

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The New York Botanical Garden is located at 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458. For more information, visit nybg.org

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