

HOME (/)  
ABOUT  
JOURNAL (/ABOUT)  
MASTHEAD (/NEW-PAGE)  
PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS (/PROSPECTIVE-MEMBERS)  
SUBSCRIBE (/SUBSCRIBE)  
STAFF RESOURCES (/STAFF-RESOURCES)  
PUBLICATIONS  
PUBLICATION ARCHIVE (/PUBLICATION-ARCHIVE)  
VOLUME 1 (2009) (/VOLUME-1-2008-2009)  
VOLUME 2 (2010) (/VOLUME-2-2009-2010)  
VOLUME 3 (2011) (/VOLUME-3-2010-2011)  
VOLUME 4 (2012) (/VOLUME-4-2011-2012)  
VOLUME 5 (2013) (/VOLUME-5-2012-2013)  
VOLUME 6 (2014) (/VOLUME-6-2013-2014)  
VOLUME 7 (2015) (/VOLUME-7-2014-2015)  
VOLUME 8 (2016) (/VOLUME-8-2015-2016)  
VOLUME 9 (2017) (/VOLUME-9-2016-2017)  
VOLUME 10 (2018) (/VOLUME-10-2018)  
SYMPOSIUM  
INFORMATION (/SYMPOSIUM)  
BLOG  
FULL BLOG (/FULL-BLOG)  
BLOG ARCHIVE (/BLOG-ARCHIVE-1)  
  
SUBMISSIONS (/SUBMISSIONS)

November 10, 2014 (/full-blog/2014/11/7/putting-more-green-in-your-pocket-and-in-the-ground)

## Putting More Green in Your Pocket and in the Ground (/full-blog/2014/11/7/putting-more-green-in-your-pocket-and-in-the-ground)

Agriculture (/full-blog?category=Agriculture)

By: Alissa Bocook, Staff Member

San Francisco, California recently became the first city in California to implement a new state law offering a tax break to urban individuals who use their property to grow food.<sup>[i]</sup>

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_edn1) This new state law allows residents to use their urban property to produce food and, in return, the assessed value of their property is lowered, thereby lowering their property tax.<sup>[ii]</sup>

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_edn2) In order for an individual's urban property to qualify for this tax break the property must, among other things, be larger than one tenth of an acre, but no larger than three acres, the property owner must sign a contract with the city assuring that the space will be used for urban farming for at least five years, and there can be no permanent structures (aside from those used for the furtherance of the agriculture, like sheds) on the property.<sup>[iii]</sup>

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post



(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/piush/4619314533/sizes/o/>)

%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_edn3) The law also outlaws the use of pesticides or fertilizers on properties used for urban farming.[iv]  
(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_edn4)

The California legislature enacted this bill in order to help deal with the growing problem of urban blight and also allow residents the chance to grow their own food.[v]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_edn5) There are waiting lists as long as two years in the city to be able to use community gardens.[vi]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_edn6) Not only are many other California cities, including Sacramento and Fresno, enacting the same law soon, but also other cities in across the United States are moving toward enacting similar laws.

[vii]  
(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_edn7)

Washington D.C. residents are trying to enact a similar law, which would allow for low tax rates on properties that are used for urban farming.

[viii]  
(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_edn8) Current D.C. law rewards development, and therefore taxes vacant lots at a much higher tax rate, causing problems for urban farmers.[ix]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_edn9)

With the passing of California's Urban Farming Tax Break law many states could be moving toward tax incentives for urban farming. This could lead to a reduction in blight, a more sustainable city, and produce food that can be used for purposes like feeding the city's homeless, helping not just property owners, but the community as a whole.

[i]  
(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_ednref1) Associated

*Tax Break Law For Property Owners*, CBS San Francisco (Sept. 2, 2014), <http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2014/09/02/san-francisco-first-california-city-to-test-urban-farming-tax-break-law-gardening-garden-agriculture-bligh-empty-plots-property>.

[ii]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_ednref2) *Id.*

[iii]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_ednref3) 2013 Bill Text CA A.B. 551

[iv]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_ednref4) *Id.*

[v]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_ednref5) *Id.*

[vi]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_ednref6) Associated Press, *supra* note 1.

[vii]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_ednref7) *Id.*

[viii]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_ednref8) Karen Chen, *DC Considers Bill to Encourage Urban Farming on Vacant Lots*, Washington Post (Sept. 14, 2014), [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-considers-bill-to-encourage-urban-farming-on-vacant-lots/2014/09/19/1a51ad0c-3de9-11e4-9587-5daf96295f0\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-considers-bill-to-encourage-urban-farming-on-vacant-lots/2014/09/19/1a51ad0c-3de9-11e4-9587-5daf96295f0_story.html)

[ix]

(file:///C:/Users/Laken/Dropbox/KJEANRL%20Blog/Fall%202014/Bocook%20Blog%20Post%20Edits%20(LG).docx#\_ednref9) *Id.*

Photo:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/piush/4619314533/sizes/o/>

Tagged: Agriculture (/full-blog?tag=Agriculture)

♥ 9 Likes    ↩ Share

COMMENTS (0)

Newest First [Subscribe via e-mail](#)

[Preview](#) [POST COMMENT...](#)

Newer Post

[A Nuclear Power Plant May be Coming Near You Soon: Governor Beshear Attempts to Lift Thirty Year Ban in Kentucky \(/full-blog/stearns\)](#)

Older Post

[A Different Kind of Green: Economics in the Environmental Debate Over Oregon's Coal Export Terminal \(/full-blog/2014/10/29/beer\)](#)

[SEARCHABLE ARCHIVE \(/PUBLICATION-ARCHIVE-1\)](#)

631 SOUTH LIMESTONE, LEXINGTON, KY

40508 (859) 257-4747 [BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:blog.kjeanrl@gmail.com) ([MAILTO:BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:blog.kjeanrl@gmail.com))