# SEEDS OF SOLIDARITY EDUCATION CENTER

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Dear Friends,

This letter is our annual ritual of gratitude to reflect on a fruitful year and share it with those who help make so much possible. Seeds of Solidarity remains an ever-creative force for positive change. You energize our efforts to teach thousands locally and globally to Grow Food Everywhere, promote wellness where there is despair, and educate for climate justice. It is more vital than ever to believe in the power of the people to cultivate vibrant communities and a peaceful world in which all can thrive.

**Several themes resonate throughout our programs that are essential for these times. We persevere to:**

*Support the rising generation*
*Teach and share meaningful skills*
*Cultivate hope and sense of belonging*
*Provide spaces for healing and rejuvenation*
*Raise local power through partnerships*



For three decades, we have carried forward with hard work and resilience to make barren land deeply fertile, raise energy efficient structures, and bring people across age and culture to our site through multiple programs and events. A joy of this year has been to make a portion of land available for a new project, guided by several native plant enthusiasts who are rising professionals with creative, informed vision. Ripple Hill Ecology Center is housed at Seeds of Solidarity, and is becoming an exciting growing and teaching space where regionally adapted native plants for food, medicine and pollinators can thrive and multiply outwards through seed collection and sharing. Another space on our farm is evolving to host art and land-based retreats that we call Metta Sequoia. These new endeavors ignite exciting possibilities for learning and gathering for many years to come.



Spring, summer, and fall events at Seeds of Solidarity offer an abundance of DIY skills. Equally important, participants carry forward new connections and a sense of hope. Our experiential farming and gardening workshops feature methods that cultivate healthy soil, abundant food, and climate resilience. Our annual building workshop empowers people across age and gender with economical, energy efficient building basics to promote self-sufficiency. The Waking up With the Land spring ceremony, Solstice Garden Altar workshop, and Soothe the Soul retreats provide space to re-center, unite and rejuvenate.

Our Women Healing Women Healing Earth program thrives. Amazing workshop leaders offer art, nature, cooking, and healing workshops through the seasons. Be it designing hats, collectively creating cross-cultural dishes and herbal preparations, hands in clay, or quiet footsteps in nature, these sessions counter isolation and stress with open hearts and a sense of accomplishment. Donations enable this program free of charge to over 100 participants.





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For over a decade now, we've taught organic gardening courses to those incarcerated at our county jail, who receive college credit for participation. In addition to gaining growing skills, our outdoor classes offer needed fresh air, exercise, and critical conversations about reclaiming personal power, food and health. Side benefits include the correctional officers who become increasingly excited to garden as well! We also teach at Mt. Wachusett Community College and enjoy the opportunity to cultivate food and learning in a 'free college for all' multi-aged setting, plus serve as a field trip site for their regenerative agriculture program through the seasons.





We go deep locally with programs and partnerships, then extend our reach from local to global with our 'Grow Food Everywhere' educational videos, recipes for wellness, and curricula for schools and youth via our website and available to thousands each year, free of charge.




*Quabbin Food Connector Photo*

Food justice and nutrition education are core to our Stocking Up Farmshare program in collaboration with Quabbin Harvest coop. A monthly bag of nourishing food with economical recipes are provided to residents struggling to make ends meet, increasingly vital due to federal cuts that target the poor and working class. We also partner with and serve on the board of Quabbin Food Connector, an organization that bridges the gaps for fair food in our low-income region while uniting families, farms, and fostering local food system leadership.

Ever in the spirit of cooperation, the North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival remains a collective endeavor among friends and neighbors.
Hope Grows Here was the festival theme for the year and celebrates the impact of this long-standing event. Over 28 festival years, millions of dollars have circulated on the festival fields to support local artists, farmers, food producers, and performers, and over 4,000 bags of compostables kept from landfills and transformed into rich garden soil. Hope grows as children raised attending this event now bring their own families to enjoy the festivities and spirit of community that fill the air.



Thank you for believing in Seeds of Solidarity. We are a small and mighty, deeply experienced organization that makes a lot happen on a modest budget. We prioritize care of each other and land, and creative vision forward. Every contribution has meaning and impact.

We await your reply with gratitude,

*P.S. Enjoy the enclosed quotes with tea blending ideas on the back, balm for these times. Keep, or cut and share as you wish.*

Ricky Baruch and Deb Habib, Co-Founders

Seeds of Solidarity Education Center Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.
Visit seedsofsolidarity.org for more: programs, events, resources, or to make a donation.