

Will Allen ~ Keynote: (www.growingpower.org)

“If you remember one thing I say tonight

It’s about the soil. It’s about the community and the soil.”

“We cannot have healthy communities without a healthy food system.”

~ Will Allen

Growing Power Vision:

“Inspiring communities to build sustainable food systems that are equitable and ecological sound, creating a just work, one food-secure community at a time.”

Everyone has the basic right of access to good food.

We cannot live in sustainable communities or a sustainable country with inequities in our food system.

Growing Power produces food 365 days per year.

Goal is to grow food 365 days per year otherwise “we’re not in the game” and cannot compete with wholesalers.

Growing Power grows 6 million tons of compost and vermicompost per year.

They produce at or above organic standards using seeds from Johnny’s Seed and Seed Savers. Their sustainable system includes growing greens, vegetables, sprouts, aquaponics, beekeeping, composting, livestock, vermicomposting and energy initiatives.

Good Food Movement has morphed into Good Food Revolution that is multi-generational and multi-racial. We are in infancy stages of this revolution and we need 50,000,000 more people growing in their yard to facilitate this grassroots revolution. The goal is to show people how to grow food 365 days per year (as they are in the Netherlands).

Organize and engage the community so that the community views you as an asset to the community,

Grow Soil – It starts with healthy, nutrient soil.

Grow intensively by growing soil and getting wormcastings.

Recommends 4 x 4 starting space with 130 degree internal temperature.

It takes 40 wheelbarrow loads to fill a bin resulting in 1 yard of finished product. It takes 6 months to for the finished product.

Then you have material you can feed to worms (redworms) to give off wormcastings which is the best compost in the world.

Five pounds of worm castings yields 25 gallons of compost tea.

Create a large enough mass of compost to keep internal temperature 70 degrees so the worms live throughout the winter and recover your livestock via screening.

Goal to grow at \$5/square foot yielding \$200,000 revenue on one acre of production.

Turn a 3000 square foot growing space into a 5000 square foot space by growing vertically with up to five levels of growing.

Hoophouses have no heating systems except the compost piles in the four corners of the hoophouse which emit 150 degrees F. When it gets below 25 degrees F, Will covers the beds with plastic.

“The other thing we need for this revolution is ENERGY.” ~ Will Allen

We can create energy using solid food waste.

Many cities don't want to do open composting.

Will and his partner developed an Anerobic Digester.

Solid food waste can be turned into acetic acid.

Acetic acid can be turned into about seven different products, one of which is methane.

Acetic acid goes into a methane digester to produce methane and then it gets scrubbed to run a generator to generate electricity to offset Growing Powers electrical costs.

Acetic Acid can be stored for over a year and it can be turned into energy.

Growing Food on Asphalt

Program with Catholic Charities to create a garden for 100 immigrant seniors building a garden over asphalt by laying down 8 inches of woodchips and the 36 yards of compost.

Opening new store this fall on Cape Drive in Milwaukee (an African American Community in a food desert area) providing healthy, safe, affordable food.

Worked with the City of Chicago's Mayor's Office, Parks department Forestry Department to use the same money they pay landscapers to plant flowers to grow vegetables instead by making it aesthetically appealing using the French potager garden model.

Works with handicapped people. “Blind people can plant and harvest as well as sighted people. They seed trays of sprouts and harvest.” - Will Allen

Growing Power maintains livestock (goats, chickens, ducks, turkeys).

Has 16 beehives. Each hive produces 100 pounds of urban honey.

Teaches beekeeping.

All projects include involving youth. Youthcore work starts at age 8 and goes through college age.

2000 Volunteers/year with Nationwide and Worldwide outreach teaching programs.