

## OFFICE OF URBAN AGRICULTURE URBAN FARMING TAX ABATEMENT PROGRAM AND APPLICATION

This application is for the District of Columbia's Office of Urban Agriculture (OUA) Urban Farming Tax Abatement (UFTA) Program pursuant to D.C. Official Code §47-868 "Reduced tax liability for certain urban farms," under the District of Columbia's Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE).

The UFTA Program offers property owners an **up to 90 percent tax abatement** of real property taxes for portions of real property used continuously as an urban farm.

**"Urban farm"** means any property in the District of Columbia that is used for the growing, cultivating, processing, and distributing of crops for profit, not for profit, or for educational purposes. (D.C. Official Code §48-401(4)).

The urban farm must grow produce and promote the District's Sustainable DC 2.0 goals. See the section "CALCULATING YOUR TAX ABATEMENT" below for additional information on how the abatement is determined.

### PLEASE READ AND FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

- Do not delete or alter any part of the application.
- Complete all sections.
- If a question is not applicable, mark "n/a."
- Fill out the form accurately and double check all answers.
- Provide all the square footage measurements requested for DOEE to verify your calculations. Be sure to also accurately calculate the percentage of property used as a farm. This, in addition to the annual beginning and end dates of farm utilization, will be used to determine your tax abatement amount.

### UFTA APPLICATION REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- A completed UFTA Program application form (below).
- A simple site map of the property that indicates the dimensions of the urban farm and any structures.
- Three to four (3-4) color photographs of the portion of property used continuously as an urban farm site. Ensure that the photographs are adequate to show the existing site conditions and the context of the urban farm site in relation to any other portions of the property.
- A narrative statement (500 word maximum) demonstrating how the urban farm will promote and foster a **sustainable and equitable** food system.
- A one (1) year planting plan for the crops grown on the urban farm during the abatement fiscal year that includes the total anticipated crop yield for each crop grown.

Submit your application via email or mail, providing all the requested information and documents, to:

Kate Lee  
Kate.lee@dc.gov  
Office of Urban Agriculture DC Department of Energy & Environment  
1200 First Street NE, 5th Floor  
Washington, DC 20002  
202-924-8932

### **UFTA APPLICATION REVIEW**

Once your UFTA Program application is received, OUA will review and evaluate it for eligibility. If OUA deems your property is ineligible, you will be notified within 30 days. If OUA deems your property may be eligible to participate, OUA will schedule a site visit to verify the information given on the UFTA application as well as verify the continual use of the urban farm during the dates proposed. If verified, OUA will approve your UFTA Program application, and it will be sent to the Office of Tax Revenue (OTR) for processing. When OTR confirms the amount of the abatement, OUA will provide the farmer with a letter certifying the dollar (\$) amount the farm site contributed to the tax abatement.

### **UFTA PROGRAM FUNDING OVERVIEW**

- The annual amount of tax abatement allowable for each site is set at a maximum of \$20,000 (\$10,000 per half year) or up to a 90 percent tax abatement of real property taxes for the portion of property used continuously as an urban farm, whichever is less.
- If the amount of tax to be abated for any half tax year for the properties available certified exceeds the total amount of fund available, available funds shall be allocated pro rata among all properties.

### **CALCULATING YOUR TAX ABATEMENT**

Under UFTA, property owners are able to receive up to 90 percent of their property taxes abated on the portions of their land that is used exclusively for urban farming during tax periods in which their farm is operating. If 100 percent of the land is used as an urban farm, then up to 90 percent of the property taxes will be abated. If 50 percent of the land is used as an urban farm, then 45 percent of the property taxes will be abated (as 45% is 90% of 50%). In other words, under this abatement, a property owner may pay as low as 10 percent of property tax on land that is used for urban farming. Applicants are required to certify the time in which the farm is continuously in use, which must include a minimum of three (3) months of the applicable Tax Period.

If urban farming occurs in a structure or on an otherwise improved portion of land on the property, the property taxes will be abated on the portion of land that is used exclusively for urban farming. If the building or improvement is not used exclusively for farming, the abatement will be applied to the percentage of the improvement used exclusively for farming. I.e. if the farming occurs on a rooftop garden of a multistory building, the abatement will be applied to the square footage of the rooftop garden farm divided by the total square footage of the building (including all floors).

Penalty for making false statements is a fine of not more than \$1,000, imprisonment for not more than 180 days, or both, as prescribed in the D.C. Official Code §22-2405. Penalty for false swearing is a fine of not more than \$2,500, imprisonment for not more than three (3) years, or both, as prescribed in the D.C. Official Code §22-2404.