



Feeding Neighbors, Making Connections



Jason and Oakland Food Connection products

Jason Harvey has a vision for a just food system that stems from his childhood roots in East Oakland, California, where he learned from neighborhood elders how to grow pesticide-free produce. “I remember growing 10-15 pound cabbage heads with Mr. Howard Sneed over on 92nd and C Street, and how we would share this food and recipes with friends and neighbors. Those experiences let me know that we can feed our neighbors with food right from our own yards.”

Jason served our country in Kuwait. After his discharge from the Air Force, Jason returned to his roots. He noticed many of Oakland’s neighborhoods had an abundance of fast food restaurants and liquor stores but a scarcity of fresh produce and healthy foods. So he decided to help change that.

In 2005, Jason Harvey founded Oakland Food Connection (OFC). As the founder and director of OFC, Jason’s focus is to make sure residents learn about how to grow healthy food and how to maintain healthy lifestyles and strong community ties through food.

OFC’s methods for achieving these goals are thorough: expanding access to nutrition education for Oakland’s residents and establishing urban gardening programs. The Oakland Food Connection’s programs teach people to prepare healthy food, plan menus, and grow gardens. OFC garden programs assist in everything from planning to planting. These gardens are planted in schoolyards, empty lots, back yards and on rooftops. The garden work force consists of youth, ages 12-18, who hunger to “green” Oakland.

Jason’s ambitions for the programs are big; within 5 years he wants OFC to be feeding 1 to 4 percent of Oakland’s residents. His program has already grown by leaps and bounds and had a positive impact on the community.

Military Service

United States Air Force: 1999 to 2001

Served in Kuwait

Senior Airman/E- 4

Current Operation

Oakland Food Connection (OFC)

Oakland, CA

<http://www.foodcommunityculture.org/>