



# The jane b semel HCI Community Garden

Promoting Healthy Communities through Urban Gardening

By Mark Biedlingmaier - "Garden Coordinator and Global Food Initiative Fellow"

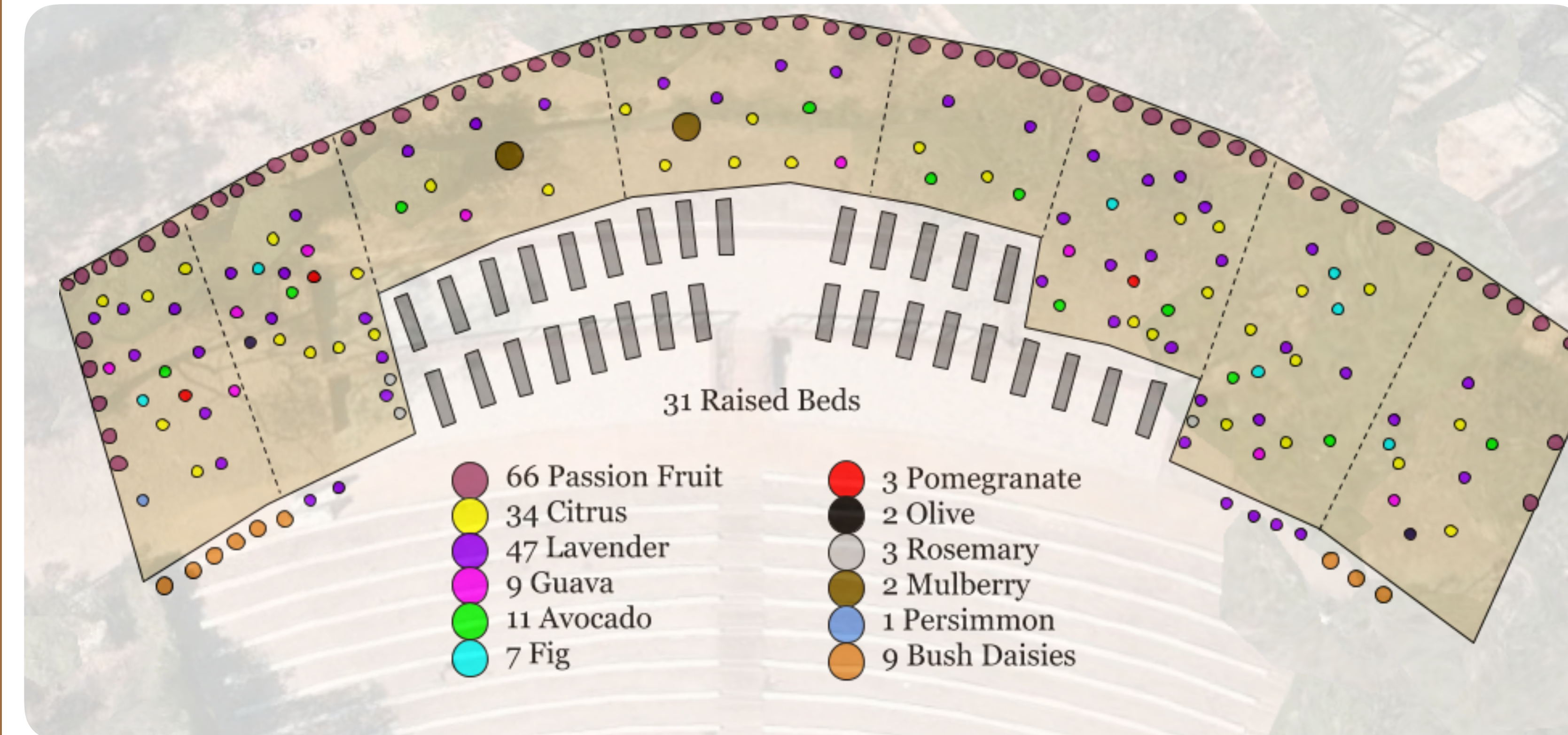


## Mission

The Jane B Semel HCI Community Garden provides an on-campus space for the UCLA community to grow healthy food and foster education of urban gardening practices. In partnership with the Healthy Campus Initiative, envisioned and supported by Jane and Terry Semel, the initiation of this garden is intended to promote community building and address food insecurity on campus.

## Fellowship Objectives

- **Garden Oversight Committee:** An initial task of Mark's fellowship was to develop a governing structure for the garden. By establishing a joint committee of Dig leaders, HCI representatives, and Recreation staff, the GOC will ensure the success of the garden to serve as a hub for experiential learning and dialogue about our food systems. Managing over \$9,000 in funds, the GOC has acquired the tools, materials, and infrastructure needed to conduct their educational programming.
- **Educational Programming:** Due to the transient nature of student leadership, building an archive of lesson plans has been a major goal of this fellowship. By creating educational material that is detailed and organized, future GOC leadership will be able to pull from a library of topics capable of engaging a wide range of student organizations, classes, staff, and faculty.
- **UC-Wide Collaboration:** Over the course of his fellowship, Mark has successfully built relationships across the UC system by networking with other students, staff, and faculty involved with farm and garden projects. These collaborations were made possible due to campus tours that were conducted at a majority of the UC campuses throughout seasonal breaks. These connections allowed a group of fellows and advisors to create an online listerv which they use to host monthly conference calls to share campus updates, webinars, and best practices.



## Inaugural Garden Groups

Sustainable Living LLC  
Ecology, Economy, Equity  
Food Cluster  
UCLA Sustainability  
Community Health  
Sciences  
Cosecha Colectiva 2.0  
Run for the Hillz  
YOKSOBYCBSUMTO  
Flowerpuff Girls

Environmental Health Sciences  
Mendel's Peace  
Rec Yo Garden  
Carrot Apple Theta  
Earth, Planetary, and Space Sciences  
Green Thumbs of 507  
Grow & Thrive  
UCLA Extension  
Beet Dip  
Geffen Academy

UCLA Pediatrics  
Public Health Nutrition Club  
El Jardin  
Eco Fresh Bruins  
Engage Well Pod and  
Friends  
CPO Food Closet  
Saxon Suites  
Herb Alpert School of Music  
E.A.R.T.H.

## Programming

Throughout the year, the Garden Oversight Committee has organized a number of workshops and speakers in order to encourage hands-on experiential learning and community development for our over 200 member community. Such activities include...



- Communal Work Days
- Biodynamic Agriculture
- Square-Foot Gardening
- Seed Sovereignty
- Integrated Pest Management
- Compost-Tea Brewing
- DIY Food and Beverage Fermentation
- Potlucks
- Growing Rare Fruit Trees
- Soil Structure
- Vermi-Culture
- Plant Botany
- Orchard-Culture
- Container Gardening
- Flowers, Herbs, Natives
- Backyard Composting
- Garden Practices and Designs
- Etc.

## Food Security

In 2016, The UC Food Security and Access Study spotlighted the unfortunate reality that approximately 42% of students across the UC system experience some degree of food insecurity, defined as "experiencing a reduced quality of diet or reduced food intake".<sup>1</sup>

As part of the solution to increasing student access to fresh fruits and vegetables, the Jane B Semel HCI Community Garden has reserved space in the garden solely for growing produce for the CPO Food Closet as well as established a "donate when possible" rule of thumb for participating garden groups.

With these combined efforts, the garden has donated approximately 300 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to the CPO food closet for students in need of healthy and reliable food options.



## Goals Achieved

- Reserved growing space for CPO Food Closet
- Established "donate what you can" rule
- Approximately 250 pounds of donated produce

## Goals in Progress

- Improve donation signage in CPO Food Closet
- Increase the weight and number of produce donations
- Develop food literacy programming between the garden, Teaching Kitchen Collaborative, and CPO

## References

1. Martinez SM, Maynard K, Ritchie LD. *Student Food Access and Security Study*. 2016. UC Nutrition Policy Institute.

## Acknowledgements

Shen and Mark Biedlingmaier and our inheriting leadership of Pamela Lim, Madison Feldman, and Elaine Zhang. This garden would not have been possible without the student leaders who first envisioned the on-campus community garden atop the amphitheater and worked tirelessly to make it real. These students include Ian Davies, Steven Eggert and Cloudy Xu. Also a big thank you to the garden's early supporters including Jane and Terry Semel for their vision, support and leadership of the Healthy Campus Initiative, and for the HCI campus leadership, including Chancellor Gene Block, Executive Vice Chancellor Scott Waugh, Associate Vice Provost Wendelin Slusser, Alice Bamford and Shelby Thibodeaux from One Gun Ranch, Dana Dickerson, and Mick DeLuca, and the Global Food Initiative Fellowship. Special thanks also to The Green Initiative Fund for getting us our initial funding for the project, our construction team, and in memory of former campus architect Jeff Averill for his advocacy and design expertise. Added to the list are the inaugural members of the GOC, including Katie Zeller, Jacob Garson, Daniel Shen and Mark Biedlingmaier and our inheriting leadership of Pamela Lim, Madison Feldman, and Elaine Zhang.