

Moore Heritage Farms Origin Story

1. THE FOUNDATION: TENNESSEE ROOTS (1910–1934)

The agricultural legacy of Moore Heritage Farms is not merely a modern venture; it is a century-long yield rooted in the soil of post-Emancipation Tennessee. History does not just repeat; it yields, and the first seeds were sown by William Johnson Moore. According to the 1910 U.S. Census, William—a man who had survived the first 12 years of his life in enslavement—was identified as a 57-year-old farmer. Working alongside him was his son, Albert Allen (A.A.) Moore, who began his apprenticeship with the land at the age of 12. A.A. Moore transformed this lived experience into professional expertise, graduating in 1934 from Tennessee Agricultural & Industrial College with a degree in Agriculture. However, the American landscape of the 1930s offered little available farmland to Black graduates. Consequently, A.A. Moore channeled his expertise into education, serving as a high school teacher and principal in Lebanon, Tennessee, while maintaining the vision of a larger agricultural harvest.

In 1934 A.A. Moore graduated from Tennessee Agricultural & Industrial College in Agriculture.





2. THE GREAT MIGRATION AND URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE (1934–1948)

The Moore family's transition from rural Tennessee to urban Indianapolis was a pivotal chapter in the "Great Migration." Historical records present a scholarly tension regarding the family's arrival: while ledger entries suggest a 1934 foundation, supplemental documents place the arrival in 1947 or 1948. Despite these conflicting dates, A.A. Moore's appointment as the Agricultural Director for Flanner House marked a radical shift in urban community development. Moore did not see city lots as vacant spaces, but as a massive urban infrastructure designed for self-help. Under his direction, he established:

- **100 Acres of Conversion:** Repurposing the near north side's urban land into productive agricultural zones.
- **600 Individual Plots:** Managed directly by residents to foster food sovereignty.
- **200+ Sustained Families:** Households provided for through shared farming and a communal cannery, proving that urban agriculture was a vital mechanism for survival.
- In 1948 as part of the "Great Migration", he moved his family to Indianapolis to become the Agricultural Director for Fanner House.
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Co-Op Groceru to Move Store, New Site 1006 N. West

The Peoples Cooperative grocery store located 812 N. West street will be open for business at its new location at 1006 N. West st on Monday, Feb. 9 according to members of the board of directors it was announced this week.

The store will become completely self service and will offer a fine line of meats, fresh vegetables and other staples. The staff or management will be continued in the former location. Jay Smith manager; Herbert Hines, assistant manager and Henry Pierson will be on hand to meet friends and patrons.

A. A. Moore, president of the board announces that at a recent meeting it was decided to expand the service of the Co-Op by selling additional stock. The stock will be offered to present shareholders and if the issue is not sold it will be offered to the public.

3. THE COOPERATIVE ERA: THE PEOPLES COOPERATIVE GROCERY (1940s)

In the late 1940s, the "Self-Help" philosophy evolved into a cooperative economic model. A.A. Moore served as Board President of the Peoples Cooperative Grocery, an institution that utilized community stock options to fund fresh, local food access. In this era, the farm was the engine for the neighborhood's economy.

The Fruits of Labor: 1940s Historical Proof

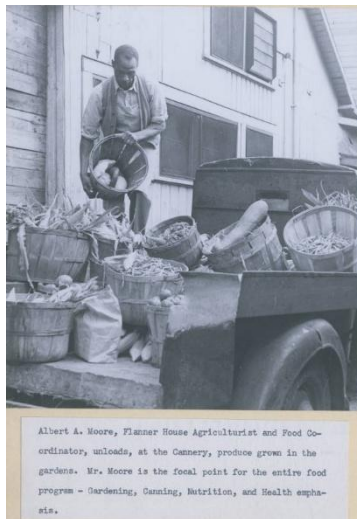
The Citizen, The Agricultural Action, The Urban Outcome

"Mrs. Eliza F. Waits (74 years old, of 937 Sheffield)", Maintained vigorous employment in her prize garden., Health & Sustenance: Personal vitality through nurturing fruits, vegetables, and spirit."

Zemer Green (One of 12 children in a family working 6 gardens), Harvested okra plots to feed the family., Economy & Hope: Generated \$25.00 in cash profit and seed money; secured food security.

Ed Morris (Employed at Stewart-Warner), Maintained a well-kept example garden while serving as Treasurer of the People's Co-op. Housing & Leadership: Directed energy to become President of a Veterans group planning self-help homes.

In 1948, amidst this cooperative flourishing, John G. Moore, Sr., was born. He would eventually emerge as the bridge to the modern era, serving as the Chairman of the Moore Heritage Projects Corporation (MHPC).



4. THE REVIVAL: MODERN TRANSITION AND USDA ALIGNMENT (2022–2023)

The modern revival of this legacy represents what we term the "88-Year Harvest." In 2022, the Moore Heritage Projects Corporation was formalized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit under the leadership of John G. Moore, Sr. A hallmark of this era was the acquisition of USDA Farm

Number in Marion County, re-establishing the family's formal link to federal support. The symmetry of this revival is profound for the agricultural historian. In 1935, the federal government created the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to protect American soil during the Great Depression. Exactly 88 years later, in 2023, A.A. Moore's descendants secured federal Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) grants from that very same agency. In November 2023, "Moore Heritage Farms" was established as a DBA to manage this modern operational ecosystem.

5. THE URBAN FARM BLUEPRINT: CURRENT OPERATIONS

The current operations at 2526 Indianapolis Ave are situated within a "Geography of Endurance." The Fall Creek Watershed has persisted for over 70 years as a focal point for Black history and urban evolution. The site operates as a permaculture demonstration space through a bifurcated strategy:

- **West Side Lots (The Rotational Engine):** Dedicated to high-yield rotational crops within raised boxes and specific growing locations.
- **East Side Lot (The Perennial Investment):** Reserved for long-term investments, including an established herb garden and perennial root systems. This "Interconnected View" transforms vacant lots into performing ecological infrastructure. Key placemaking initiatives include:
- **The Indy Redbud Project:** Restoring the urban tree canopy to unify Mapleton Fall Creek.
- **The Sunflower Mural:** An "Agriculture" installation enlivening spaces of community awareness.
- **The Delaware Project:** The preservation and restoration of a long-vacant Fannie Mae foreclosure in the Historic Meridian Park neighborhood.
- **Indy Rain Gardens:** On-site stormwater management at 30th & Park Ave (a 20/21 LEED ND Community) designed to mitigate watershed runoff.

6. THE MULTI-GENERATIONAL YIELD: COMMUNITY PILLARS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Moore Heritage Farms cultivates self-sufficiency through three community pillars:

- **The Leslie Allen Urban Apiary:** Producing honey, beeswax, and lavender to provide pollinator habitats.
- **The Stone Soup Kitchen:** A hub for hands-on workshops in home economics and nutrition.
- **The OASIS Initiative:** Direct fresh food access with the mantra: "Eat Healthy, Eat Affordably & Live Well for Less!"
- "The "Value-Added Engine" of the farm is **Johnny and Yanni's Teas**. In a profound generational transfer of skill, youth process Lemon and Spearmint harvested from the Indianapolis Ave mint patch into premium packaged goods under Grandma's guidance. This initiative transforms raw agricultural yield into higher-margin products, teaching the next generation the economics of agriculture.

7. THE 2026 HARVEST: DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER STRATEGY

As we approach 2026, the mission of community-sustained local food access remains identical to the 1948 era, though the medium has evolved. We have transitioned from the 1948 model of physical community stock to a modern model of digital commerce and philanthropic anchoring. Our distribution now flows through a three-pronged strategy: Digital Commerce (an online hub), Local Distribution (participation in 50+ Farmers Markets and Cleo's Bodega synergies), and Family Hubs.

2026 Harvest Schedule

- **Mid-June 2026:** Zucchini & Romaine Lettuce
- **Early July 2026:** Sweet Peppers & Plums
- **Mid-August 2026:** Indiana Peaches & Sweet Corn

8. CONCLUSION: THE SELF-HELP FLYWHEEL

The continuity of the Moore family legacy is encapsulated in the "Self-Help Flywheel." This model, fueled by a modest working capital fund, follows a rigorous cycle:

1. **Fund & Procure:** Providing the revolving fund for land and equipment.
2. **Plan:** Preparing detailed site plans for lasting homes and farms.
3. **Employ & Train:** Providing on-the-job training in construction and agriculture.
4. **Construct:** Utilizing the community's leisure time for physical building.
5. **Finance:** Assisting owners in arranging long-term mortgages.
6. **Replenish:** Returning capital to the fund to restart the cycle. This flywheel proves the mantra: "Education for Home Ownership: Labor in the garden built the discipline and capital required to build the neighborhood." We don't just build gardens, rehab houses, or paint murals. We build the interconnected ecosystem required for human flourishing. **Eat your vegetables—and build your city.**