

# State Of Maryland

## 2024 Bond Initiative Fact Sheet

<b>1. Name Of Project</b>		
Mushroom Learning Center and Farm at Clinton		
<b>2. Senate Sponsor</b>	<b>3. House Sponsor</b>	
Muse	Valderrama	
<b>4. Jurisdiction</b> (County or Baltimore City)	<b>5. Requested Amount</b>	
Prince George's County	\$750,000	
<b>6. Purpose of Bond Initiative</b>		
the acquisition, planning, design, construction, repair, renovation, reconstruction, site improvement, and capital equipping of the Mushroom Learning Center and Farm at Clinton		
<b>7. Matching Fund</b>		
Requirements:	Type:	
Grant		
<b>8. Special Provisions</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Historical Easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Sectarian	
<b>9. Contact Name and Title</b>	<b>Contact Ph#</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Delegate Kriselda Valderrama		Kris.Valderrama@house.state.md.us
Therese Hessler		3015032576
<b>10. Description and Purpose of Organization</b> (Limit length to visible area)		
<p>The Garden International exists to build a more sustainable food system by creating restorative and innovative farms that grow high nutrition foods in urban and suburban areas so that people and the Earth can be fed, inspired, and cared for in harmony with nature. The current food system is broken filled with waste, inefficiencies, and gaps in access and in need of transformation. Our vision is to establish a global network of cooperative franchise farms under The Garden International brand, dedicated to cultivating high-nutrition, sustainable foods and producing value-added products. This vision reflects a commitment to fostering environmental sustainability, community engagement, and providing consumers with direct access to fresh, quality produce and value-added products and experiences.</p>		

**11. Description and Purpose of Project** (Limit length to visible area)

The Mushroom Learning Center & Farm in Prince Georges County, where 20 food deserts and 14% food insecurity persist, will expand production from 10k to over 300k lbs yearly. Collaborating with local growers, it aims to provide fresh produce and protein to consumers, institutions, and food banks, bridging an 8-year life expectancy gap with neighboring counties. The center will feature a processing kitchen, cold storage, and a market, fostering economic growth for small, BIPOC, and women-led enterprises. Aligning with Maryland's Senate Bill 985/ House Bill 1488, it will enable farmers to satisfy institutional needs, enhancing food resilience amidst climate concerns. Initiatives for waste reduction, composting, and sustainability are key. Moreover, Maryland's inaugural on-site mycology lab will support local mushroom cultivation, decrease import dependence, and integrate STEAM with agriculture and nutrition education for youth, teachers, and future farmers.

*Round all amounts to the nearest \$1,000. The totals in Items 12 (Estimated Capital Costs) and 13 (Proposed Funding Sources) must match. The proposed funding sources must not include the value of real property unless an equivalent value is shown under Estimated Capital Costs.*

**12. Estimated Capital Costs**

<b>Acquisition</b>	\$0
<b>Design</b>	\$10,000
<b>Construction</b>	\$860,000
<b>Equipment</b>	\$351,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,221,000</b>

**13. Proposed Funding Sources - (List all funding sources and amounts.)**

The Garden International Company Investment from cash	\$100,000
Grant Funding	\$100,000
Loans	\$271,000
2024 MDGA Legislative Bond Initiative	\$750,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,221,000</b>

<b>14. Project Schedule (Enter a date or one of the following in each box. N/A, TBD or Complete)</b>			
<b>Begin Design</b>	<b>Complete Design</b>	<b>Begin Construction</b>	<b>Complete Construction</b>
September 2023	February 2024	April 2024	December 2024
<b>15. Total Private Funds and Pledges Raised</b>	<b>16. Current Number of People Served Annually at Project Site</b>	<b>17. Number of People to be Served Annually After the Project is Complete</b>	
461000.00	10,500	217,890	
<b>18. Other State Capital Grants to Recipients in the Past 15 Years</b>			
<b>Legislative Session</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	
N/A			
<b>19. Legal Name and Address of Grantee</b>		<b>Project Address (If Different)</b>	
The Garden International LLC 11890 Old Baltimore Pike, Ste. G Beltsville, MD 20705		11801 Piscataway Road Clinton, MD 20735	
<b>20. Legislative District in Which Project is Located</b>	26 - Prince George's County		
<b>21. Legal Status of Grantee (Please Check One)</b>			
<b>Local Govt.</b>	<b>For Profit</b>	<b>Non Profit</b>	<b>Federal</b>
[ ]	[ ]	[ X ]	[ ]
<b>22. Grantee Legal Representative</b>		<b>23. If Match Includes Real Property:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Elizabeth Robinson	<b>Has An Appraisal Been Done?</b>	Yes/No
<b>Phone:</b>	301-957-4258		
<b>Address:</b>		<b>If Yes, List Appraisal Dates and Value</b>	
11890 Old Baltimore Pike, Ste. G Beltsville, MD 20705			

<b>24. Impact of Project on Staffing and Operating Cost at Project Site</b>			
<b>Current # of Employees</b>	<b>Projected # of Employees</b>	<b>Current Operating Budget</b>	<b>Projected Operating Budget</b>
2	51	110000.00	2000000.00
<b>25. Ownership of Property</b> (Info Requested by Treasurer's Office for bond purposes)			
<b>A. Will the grantee own or lease (pick one) the property to be improved?</b>			Lease
<b>B. If owned, does the grantee plan to sell within 15 years?</b>			No
<b>C. Does the grantee intend to lease any portion of the property to others?</b>			No
<b>D. If property is owned by grantee any space is to be leased, provide the following:</b>			
<b>Lessee</b>	<b>Terms of Lease</b>	<b>Cost Covered by Lease</b>	<b>Square Footage Leased</b>
<b>E. If property is leased by grantee - Provide the following:</b>			
<b>Name of Leaser</b>	<b>Length of Lease</b>	<b>Options to Renew</b>	
Kathy Mason	30 years	Yes	
<b>26. Building Square Footage:</b>			
<b>Current Space GSF</b>	0		
<b>Space to be Renovated GSF</b>	0		
<b>New GSF</b>	10,910		

**27. Year of Construction of Any Structures Proposed for Renovation, Restoration or Conversion**

N/A

**28. Comments**

Construction of The Mushroom Learning Center and Farm will increase our capacity to cultivate fresh local produce and plant-based protein from 10k lbs to over 300k lbs annually. We will be able to work with dozens of local farmers and producers to aggregate healthy foods for distribution to consumers, restaurants, institutions, and foodbanks. This is particularly important in Prince Georges County where we have over 20 food deserts, approximately 14% of the population is considered food insecure, 12.5% have diabetes, and 71.2% are obese or overweight all leading to an 8-year life expectancy deficit compared to Montgomery County. The processing kitchen, cold storage, and farm market will create new pathways for economic growth by allowing small, BIPOC, woman-owned businesses to craft value-added agricultural products which increase the sustainability and viability of those businesses.

This project creates the infrastructure needed for farmers in Prince Georges and the surrounding counties to aggregate products for Marylands institutional buyers such as schools and hospitals to meet their 20% procurement goal for Maryland State agencies and institutions to purchase locally grown food from certified local farm enterprises, as required by Senate Bill 985/ House Bill 1488.

Our innovation space will allow us to test new methods of controlled environmental agriculture which will lead to a more resilient food system which can withstand increasing demands for food production despite the challenges of climate change. We will work together as a community of farmers and food service providers to reduce food waste, increase composting, and support on-farm environmental sustainability projects that increase soil health while capturing carbon and increasing biodiversity.

We will launch Marylands first on-farm mycology lab where we will support mushroom producers in Maryland and reduce the need to import agricultural products from other regions of the country. Here we will also host STEAM educational programs with organization such as the William S. Schmidt Outdoor Education Center blending Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math with agriculture, nature, and nutrition for kids, educators, and anyone who wants to learn in harmony with nature. We will also help beginning farmers to learn about growing mushrooms, vegetables, and herbs, and increasing production while reducing their footprint through innovative practices.