

## Oral Question

### Envirothon 2014: Sustainable Local Agriculture/Locally Grown

The issue of “food deserts” in the Houston Metropolitan area has gained significant attention in the last several years. The Mayor’s office has decided to partner with local nonprofits and funding agencies to establish a network of community food gardens that can help address the lack of fresh food availability in certain parts of the city. The attached map shows the “food deserts” in the City of Houston as defined by the USDA (areas where low-income populations live a mile or more from a food store that carries fresh food).

You work for the City of Houston’s Sustainability Director. You have been assigned to put together a model proposal to build a community sustainable food garden in a food desert area. You will present the model proposal to potential partners and funding sources. Your proposal should include the following elements:

- Acreage needed
- Growing methods to be used
- Crop selection criteria
- Construction and Maintenance considerations
- Resource Management
- Business Model
- Amenities and aesthetics
- Water and energy conservation measures
- Community enrichment
- Project long-term sustainability

Your model proposal should incorporate flexibility in order to adapt to local cultural values as well as the constraints of an urban landscape. You may consider using new methods of locating your gardens, or parts of them. Although a cost estimate is not required, you should assume that the lowest cost options will be most attractive to potential funding sources. A discussion of additional values provided by the gardens will certainly enhance your chances of getting the proposal funded!

