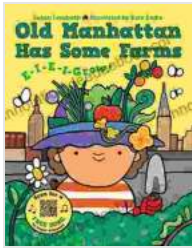


# Old Manhattan Had Some Farms: A Hidden History of Agriculture in New York City



**Old Manhattan Has Some Farms** by Susan Lendroth

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

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Print length : 32 pages



Beneath the skyscrapers and bustling streets of modern Manhattan lies a forgotten history of agriculture. From its earliest days as a Native American settlement to the Dutch colonial era and beyond, the island was home to a variety of farms and gardens that provided food for its inhabitants.

## Native American Roots

The first farmers in Manhattan were the Lenape Native Americans, who inhabited the island for thousands of years before European colonization. They practiced a form of agriculture known as swidden farming, which involved clearing small areas of land and planting crops such as corn, beans, and squash. These crops were essential to the Lenape diet and were often supplemented with wild plants and animals.

One of the most visible remnants of Lenape agriculture in Manhattan is the "Indian Rock," located in Inwood Hill Park. This large boulder is believed to have been used as a grinding stone for processing cornmeal.

## **Dutch Colonial Era**

When the Dutch arrived in Manhattan in the 17th century, they established a colony called New Amsterdam. The Dutch settlers continued to farm the land, but they also introduced new crops and agricultural techniques. They built windmills to pump water for irrigation and established large farms outside the city walls.

One of the most important Dutch farms in Manhattan was the Stuyvesant Farm, owned by the colony's governor, Peter Stuyvesant. The farm was located on the East Side of the island and produced a wide variety of crops, including wheat, barley, and vegetables.

## **British Colonial Era**

After the British took control of New Amsterdam in 1664, they renamed the city New York. The British continued to farm the land, but they also began to develop the island for other purposes, such as commerce and housing.

As the city grew, the number of farms in Manhattan declined. However, some farms remained in operation until the 19th century. One of the last working farms in Manhattan was the Rhineland Farm, which was located on the Upper West Side.

## **Hidden Farms of Manhattan**

Even today, there are a few hidden farms tucked away in the corners of Manhattan. These farms are a reminder of the city's agricultural past and provide a glimpse into a different side of New York.

One of the most popular hidden farms in Manhattan is the Greenacre Park Farm, located in the heart of Midtown. This small farm grows a variety of

fruits, vegetables, and herbs that are used in the park's restaurant.

Another hidden farm is the Randall's Island Farm, located on Randall's Island in the East River. This farm is larger than the Greenacre Park Farm and grows a wider variety of crops. The Randall's Island Farm also has a farmer's market where visitors can buy fresh produce.

The history of agriculture in Manhattan is a reminder that even the most urban of environments can have deep roots in the land. The hidden farms of Manhattan are a testament to the resilience of agriculture and the importance of preserving our city's green spaces.

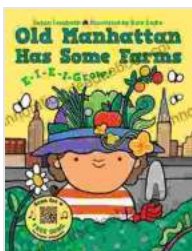
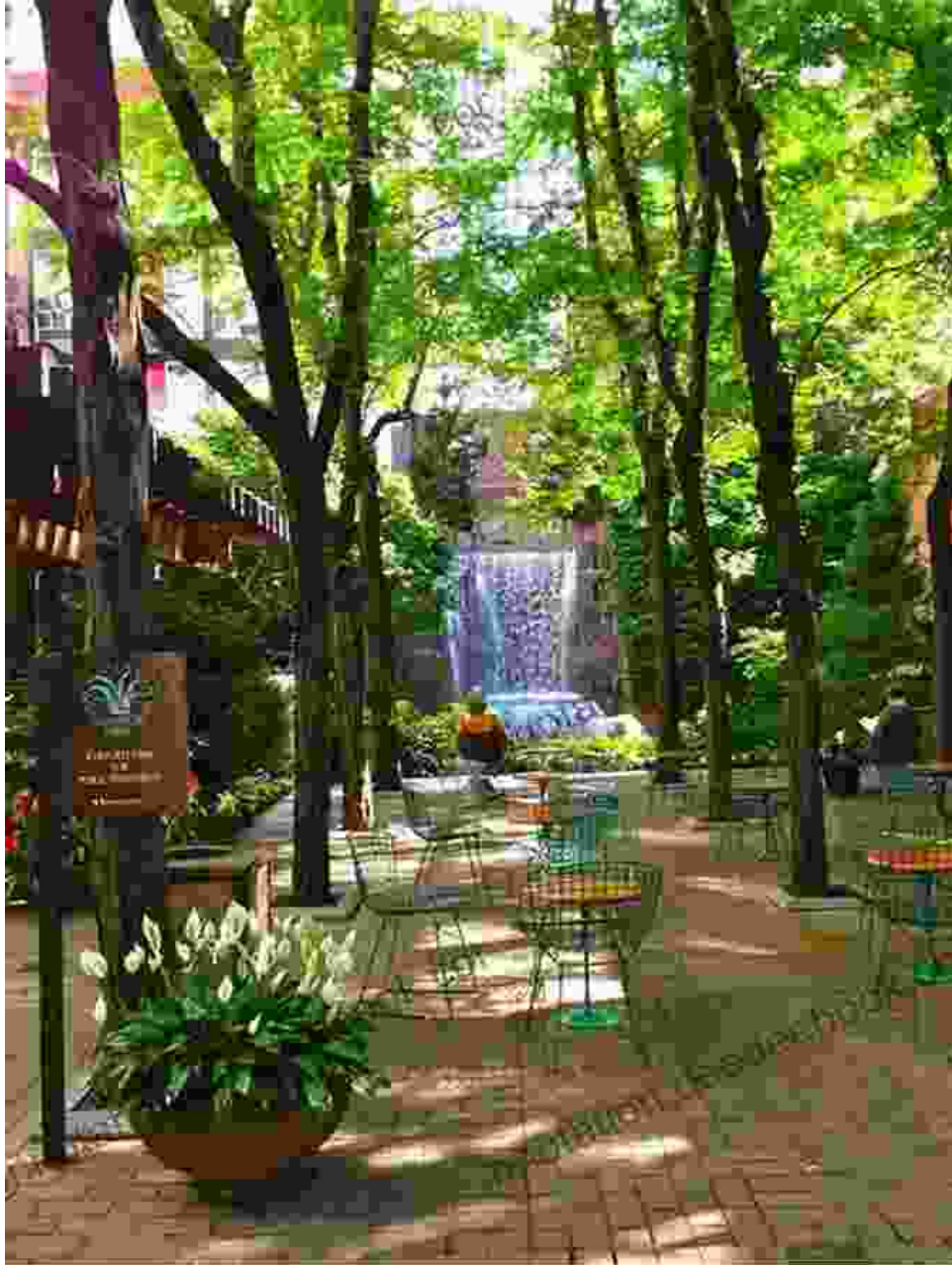
As New York City continues to grow, it is important to remember its agricultural past and to support the preservation of the city's remaining farms. These farms not only provide fresh food but also offer a valuable connection to the city's history and heritage.



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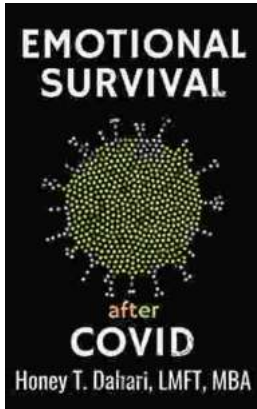
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