

**GROWING ROOTS:
INVOLVING SENIOR IMMIGRANTS IN URBAN AGRICULTURE**

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In Canada, an increasing proportion of immigrants are seniors. Adaptation and integration into Canadian society can be extremely challenging for these seniors due to social isolation, lack of economic security, and poor health. As many come from rural and farming backgrounds, it was speculated that involvement of these senior immigrants in urban agriculture (UA) could help address these social and economic issues. UA is increasingly recognized for its contributions to health and well-being, income generation, and overall development of more sustainable communities. In February 2007, a pilot project was launched in Edmonton to train senior immigrants in a new creative and organic approach to commercial UA, known as Small Plot Intensive (SPIN) farming, developed by two Saskatoon urban farmers. Despite some initial challenges, numerous and wide ranging benefits were identified for individuals taking part. This research suggests that UA can play an important role in improving the quality of life of senior immigrants, whilst also contributing to the evolution of local food systems and more sustainable communities.