


[HOME](#) [EAT+DRINK](#) [CULTURE+SOCIETY](#) [STYLE+SHOPPING](#) [WELLNESS](#) [SOCIAL SEEN](#) [TOYS+TECH](#) [VIDEOS](#)
 [Go](#)

DYNAMIC SEATTLEITE: URBAN FARMER, COLIN MCCRATE

 Seattleites By [Lisa Remy](#) on August 10, 2012

[Tweet](#) 2

[g+](#) 0

[Like](#) 5

[SKOUT](#) 3

Trendsetting and trailblazing — this Seattleite sheds new light on food production and changes the landscape of sustainable agriculture in the Emerald City.

Colin McCrate is bringing farms to our city's rooftops with his business, [Seattle Urban Farm Company](#) — which builds, maintains and designs edible gardens in residential and urban areas.



Colin McCrate of Seattle Urban Farm Company. Photo by Cordell Hardy.

McCrates founded the company in 2007, and since then has created rooftop gardens for restaurants, backyard farms for homeowners, educational gardens for schools and even co-authored the book ["Food Grown Right, In Your Backyard: A Beginner's Guide to Growing Crops at Home."](#)

"It has been really cool to get feedback from people who have bought the book and actually used it when setting up and working in their garden," he said. "People other than my mom, who bought 20 copies and doesn't even have a garden."

The 34-year-old Seattleite said he never considered himself an entrepreneur.

"I figured I was about as likely to own a business as I was to be struck by lightning," he said.

The Dayton, Ohio native, who said he had no business experience before starting SUFCo, had been working in sustainable agriculture for about eight years before moving to Seattle.

the perfect pairing



simple & crisp

BE IN THE KNOW

get the most from where you live

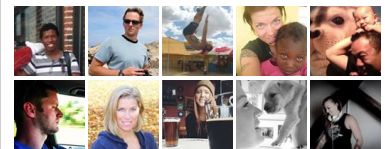
subscribe to SEATTLEITE's weekly newsletter

[Sign Up](#)

Find us on Facebook


[Like](#)

4,840 people like Seattleite.



Facebook social plugin

He said he spent these years exploring and learning about different farming systems, crops and farm management. After moving to Washington nine years ago, he taught environmental education and worked on small vegetable farms and maintained residential landscapes. He said these experiences sparked the idea for SUFCo.

“I wanted to grow food, I wanted to talk to people about why sustainable food production is important and I wanted to live in the city,” he said. “Right now is an amazing time to be a farmer because people are thinking about all sorts of food issues — the effects of food production on human health and the environment, food quality and access — all these things really need to be worked on.”

At any point in time SUFCo is usually constructing about two new gardens, consulting for at least one upcoming project and managing a couple dozen existing gardens, McCrate said. Some of his rooftop work includes gardens for [Bastille Cafe & Bar](#), [Kappo Tamura](#) and [Ravish](#).


“We find ways to make use of the difficult spaces we have available in the city,” he said. “Growing on rooftops, terracing slopes, planting in parking lots and anything you can think of.”

McCrates said starting the business has made him re-examine his role as a food producer, and that he has high hopes for what SUFCo can achieve.

“I hope our business can make farming issues more visible and that by creating economically viable farming jobs we will start to shift the perception of a farmer’s place in our society,” he said. “For the most part, farmers are marginalized and their work is undervalued and poorly understood.”

This entry was posted in [Seattleites](#) and tagged [Colin McCrate](#), [Dynamic Seattleite 2012](#), [Lisa Remy](#), [Seattle Urban Farm Company](#), [SUFCo](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

Leave a Comment



☒ Post to Facebook


Posting as Hilary Dahl ([Change](#))

Facebook social plugin

Click to get the best
deals & information

SKOUT 1

> LOOK NO FURTHER
<http://snapskout.com>

 SNAP SKOUT