Urban Farming in Vancouver

What is Urban Farming?
Urban farming is a type of urban agriculture. Other types of urban agriculture include community gardens, backyard gardens and edible landscaping. Urban farming differs from other types of urban agriculture in that food is primarily grown for sale, rather than for personal consumption or for hobby. Urban farms may be operated on a for-profit, non-profit, and/or a social enterprise model.

Why Urban Farming?
The Greenest City Action Plan and the Vancouver Food Strategy identify urban farms as key food assets that contribute to sustainable food systems in Vancouver.

- Greenest City 2020 Action Plan: Tracks urban farms as a key metric to achieving the City's local food goal of increasing local food assets by 50% by the year 2020
- Vancouver Food Strategy: Sets out five goals, including the identification of urban farming as a priority action area that can enhance Vancouver’s green economy
- Healthy City Strategy: Identifies a healthy, just and sustainable food system as one of the 20 building blocks of a healthy city for all

Urban farming provides many benefits, such as greening the city, improving biodiversity, making use of under-utilized spaces and producing food closer to home. Since food is grown primarily for sale, urban farming also enhances the local food economy by creating green jobs (including food retail, distribution and processing), building skills and shortening food supply chains.
In March 2016, City Council passed policy to enable two types of urban farms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Urban Farm Class A</th>
<th>Urban Farm Class B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>These are smaller scale, integrated into the neighbourhood, likely located in front or backyards, and growing in soil.</td>
<td>These can be small or large and include a building or greenhouse. They can sell produce from the site, and can be soil or soilless growing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zoning District</strong></td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Industrial, Commercial and Historical area zones (Chinatown, Gastown, and Yaletown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size Limit - Per parcel</strong></td>
<td>Maximum planting area 325 m²</td>
<td>Maximum planting area 7000 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size Limit - Combined area across all parcels in one business or organization</strong></td>
<td>Maximum planting area 7000 m²</td>
<td>Maximum planting area 7000 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farm Sales Limits - If leasing land</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farm Sales Limits - If owning land</strong></td>
<td>$9,999 per organization or business</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business license</strong></td>
<td>$10/year</td>
<td>$136/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development Permit</strong></td>
<td>not required ***</td>
<td>required ($279)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building Permit</strong></td>
<td>Can have accessory building up to 10 m² without requiring a building permit</td>
<td>If in part or in a whole within a building, a building permit is required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farm gate sales</strong></td>
<td>Only allowed if on Institutional land</td>
<td>Allowed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Hens & Bees**

Urban farming is defined as the cultivation of fruits and vegetables for sale, and precludes honey and eggs at this time.

The City of Vancouver continues to encourage the keeping of backyard chickens and bees for hobby. If you would like to keep hens or bees please follow the Bylaw and guidelines found at vancouver.ca/foodpolicy.

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**How do I apply for permit and business license?**

The City of Vancouver now has guidelines for urban farming. If you want to grow and sell food, follow our Urban Farm Guidelines at vancouver.ca/foodpolicy.