

# DANIELS'

## urban agricultural commitment: Planting the seeds of sustainability one garden at a time

**W**e live in a changing world where the environment is at the forefront of everyone's minds. At the centre of it all is an urban food revolution. We know that food systems of the future must be natural and accessible. What this means is growing more of our food locally, which in turn means growing more of our food in and close to cities, where local gardens not only feed us but help us address issues of turning waste into resources.

Always thinking outside the box, The Daniels Corporation has been a trailblazer in the development industry, actively incorporating urban agriculture opportunities such as gardening plots, edible landscaping and greenhouses into their new home communities wherever possible. Gardening invites green-thumbs to come together, establish a deeper sense of community, and help residents feel connected to the earth in an interactive way.

In 2009, Daniels first introduced urban agriculture with their community gardening plots at OneCole Condominiums in Toronto's Regent Park. Proving to be a success, they have since taken this concept to NY Place Boutique Condominiums at Bayview and Sheppard with the incorporation of gardening plots and an edible landscape where residents can enjoy apple trees, echinacea plants and much more. Moving west to Mississauga, Daniels was the first to introduce community gardening into condominium landscaping by designing a unique interwoven labyrinth of gardening plots for residents to enjoy at Limelight Condominiums. Most recently, Daniels is excited to welcome community gardening and a greenhouse to FirstHome Hazelton Place in Erin Mills. Centrally located within the community, and incorporated into the landscaping, the gardening plots have proven to be a great success with new homeowners of this neighbourhood.



Where gardening plots aren't feasible for every community, Daniels is constantly coming up with innovative solutions to expand their urban agriculture initiatives. At OnePark West Boutique Condominiums and Townhomes,

Daniels collaborated with Dixon Hall Mill Centre ([dixonhall.org](http://dixonhall.org)), a non-profit agency that teaches at risk youth carpentry skills, to create the balcony planter boxes for the residents.

Providing not only unique gardening platforms in their communities, Daniels provides urban gardening workshops and seminars to ensure that residents maximize the opportunity to grow herbs, vegetables and flowers – and the response has been phenomenal. Daniels has partnered with FoodShare Toronto ([foodshare.net](http://foodshare.net)) and The Cutting Veg ([thecuttingveg.com](http://thecuttingveg.com)) to teach, develop and implement plans to assist homeowners in using their gardening plots efficiently. At the well-attended sessions, residents and purchasers receive the tools to start and maintain successful gardens that will thrive.

Now, Daniels and Toronto Community Housing, partners in the 69-acre revitalization underway at Regent Park in Toronto's Downtown East, have come together to take the first steps in creating a food partnership within the revitalization with community organizations and FoodShare Toronto. FoodShare is a non-profit community food organization. The Regent Park Food Partnership

will increase residents' access to local, fresh food in addition to hands-on educational programs through a greenhouse, community oven, community gardens and a farmer's market in the new six-acre community park.

This past month, The Daniels Corporation was an active participant in Ryerson University's 2012 Urban Agriculture Summit, which brought together people and organizations who are nurturing the practice of growing food in cities. The summit provided attendees with the tools to advance urban agriculture in their communities. Members of the Daniels team attended the Summit and participated in lectures and hands-on workshops to develop their urban agriculture knowledge to implement in upcoming communities. Daniels' Vice President Martin Blake was a keynote speaker on the Summit panel, and he addressed the topic of developers supporting this growing trend, with a focus on the company's gardening initiatives across the GTA.

"Food is a common interest that is shared regardless of economic or social background" Blake says. "Socially, neighbours, family and friends who garden together get to know each other and experience a strong sense of belonging. Daniels will continue to celebrate the growth and development of ideas for urban agriculture opportunities and green living as new possibilities bloom."

**The Daniels Corporation is one of Canada's preeminent builder/developers with a reputation for quality and integrity in all forms of residential construction. Named the Tarion Warranty Corporation's 2012 High Rise Builder of the Year and the recipient of the 2012 Toronto Arts and Business Award presented by the Toronto Arts Foundation, Daniels has built more than 23,000 homes throughout the GTA. Committed to community, Daniels champions neighbourhood initiatives that enhance residents' quality of life and supports numerous charities and non-profit organizations. Including urban agriculture in community designs is a natural offshoot of the Daniels motto "Love Where You Live." For more information on The Daniels Corporation and their communities that feature urban agriculture visit [danielshomes.ca](http://danielshomes.ca).**