On January 1, 2020, New Haven Farms and New Haven Land Trust merged into a single organization after several years of close collaboration and partnership. We have worked over the last six months to integrate our programs and systems, recruit a new Executive Director, and develop a new name that reflects our history, mission, and direction.

We are excited to announce we are now **Gather New Haven**.

Our tagline conveys our commitment to connecting people to each other as well as to our shared natural resources, and the importance of doing so to grow a vibrant community: **Neighbors and Nature Thriving Together / Vecinos y Naturaleza Prosperando Juntos**.

Our mission reflects the shared histories and commitments of our two predecessor organizations while challenging us to grow deeper in our collective engagement with our community:

*Gather New Haven promotes health, equity, and justice for people and the environment by cultivating connections with each other and our local lands and waters, and by inspiring us to care for ourselves, our community, and the natural world.*

New Haven Land Trust, Connecticut’s first urban land trust, was founded in 1982 to preserve open land in New Haven and give city residents opportunities to access and learn about the environment. New Haven Farms was founded in 2012, growing out of Fair Haven Community Health Center Diabetes Prevention Program.

**Gather New Haven** emerges at a time of pervasive uncertainty when we cannot gather physically. We are acutely aware of how this crisis has highlighted the critical importance of safe ways to enjoy and steward our open spaces and natural resources. Even now, we are
engaging with our community to weather this crisis together and emerge connected, resilient and strong.

**Gather New Haven**’s innovative programs center on the intersection of urban agriculture, public health, community development, entrepreneurship, and environmental education, enjoyment, and stewardship. As we enter the 2020 growing and outdoor recreation season under the weight of a global pandemic, we are determined to:

- Support and guide the work of 800+ individuals and family members gardening in over 50 community gardens;
- Engage more community members at risk of diet-related diseases in our nationally-recognized Farm-Based Wellness Program;
- Cultivate and harvest over 30,000 pounds of fresh, organically-grown produce across our farms and gardens;
- Recruit high school students to join staff as Growing Entrepreneurs who learn new skills and run social enterprises while representing Gather New Haven through their carpentry and agriculture work at farms and gardens throughout the city;
- Provide arts, nature, and educational programming in our six nature preserves; and
- Offer a dynamic coastal nature and sailing camp experience to over 400 children, supporting many through scholarships, or, if this is not possible in 2020, offer alternative programming for children and families to explore New Haven’s harbor and waterways.

**Why Gather New Haven?**

**Gather New Haven** is more than a combination of two organizations. It is a fresh take on our commitment to the people and natural places that make New Haven a treasure. Our name manifests the central importance of human relationships in our work: friendship, family, togetherness, community. It also conveys the diverse elements of our city’s ecosystem: food, people, gardens, preserves, Long Island Sound, rivers, and coastline. Like the rivers that gather into the Sound, our collective work is fed by strongly-held values of
opportunity, inclusion, belonging, equity, curiosity, learning, accountability, integrity, and power of place.

Last fall we convened three community forums to discuss our merger. Those conversations highlighted the value people place on the strong community connections they have created in our gardens, preserves and through our various programs. Graduates of our Farm-Based Wellness Program as well as our community gardeners are passionate about creating community spaces, growing food, and promoting community health. Our nature preserves attract families, neighbors and bird watchers engaged in protecting and enjoying the natural environment. Our new name and tagline reflects how important it is for people to connect with each other as they connect with the natural landscape.

In a time when collective health and safety demands physical distance and isolation, we are reaching out to our constituents and gathering our various resources to respond to emerging needs in our communities. We have offered our cooler space for food storage and are partnering with other organizations to expand food production this summer. We are also looking beyond the current crisis to a future in which Gather New Haven plays a critical role in cultivating opportunities, places, experiences, and events that once again bring people together in common purpose to build a strong, resilient, equitable, and healthy New Haven.

We invite our many supporters and funders to join us in the next stage of our work as we mobilize people and resources to become a more healthy and vibrant community where neighbors and nature thrive together.

Explore our new web site at www.gathernewhaven.org
Contact us at 203-562-6655 or info@gathernewhaven.org