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**MAYOR BOWSER ANNOUNCES KATE LEE AS DIRECTOR OF NEW DOEE OFFICE OF URBAN AGRICULTURE
Director Lee will focus on urban farms in the District becoming a national model**

**WASHINGTON DC,** March 6, 2020 — Today, Mayor Bowser announced that Kate Lee will serve as the inaugural Director of the Office of Urban Agriculture within the DC Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE). The Office will aim to create a national model for urban farming by increasing food production in all eight wards of the District and supporting a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient food system.

“Kate has been a leader in DC’s urban farming community for nearly a decade, so we are excited to have her lead our Office of Urban Agriculture,” said DOEE Director Tommy Wells. “Her expertise in urban food production and passion for community engagement will play a vital role in cultivating a national model for urban agriculture here in the District.”

By boosting urban agriculture on public and private lands, the Office of Urban Agriculture will work to improve access to fresh, healthy local foods that improve public health, reduce health-related disparities, reduce the environmental impact of food production, and empower District communities by shaping farms that support local priorities. It will also create educational, small business and green jobs opportunities for District residents.

The Office includes the Urban Farming Tax Abatement Program, which provides tax relief on private properties that are certified as urban farms, and the Urban Farming Land Lease Program, which makes public lands available for farming in collaboration with the Department of General Services.

 With over nine years of experience in urban agriculture in the District, Kate has in-depth understanding of DC’s agricultural landscape and has partnered extensively with agencies such as the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and Department of Parks and Recreation. In her immediate past position as Farm Director for DC Greens, Kate led operations, development, and community engagement around several urban farms. This included working with government and community partners to design The Well, an urban farm and community wellness space in Oxon Run Park, and managing the one-acre K Street Farm.

Kate will begin serving as Director on March 16, 2020.

The Mayor’s Sustainable DC 2.0 plan released in 2019 includes several goals and actions related to urban agriculture, including:

* Putting 20 additional acres of land into cultivation for growing food by 2032
* Developing food-producing landscaping on five acres of District public spaces throughout all eight Wards
* Developing and supporting school gardens and garden-based food system education to engage DC public school and charter students

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