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**NEWS RELEASE**

**For immediate release: February 8, 2017**

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**Groundswell Center for Local Food and Farming Receives Grant from Park Foundation to Support Incubator Farm & New ‘Farm to Plate’ Conference**

**Ithaca, NY—** [Groundswell Center for Local Food & Farming](http://www.groundswellcenter.org) has been awarded $65,000 from the Park Foundation to expand its efforts in supporting beginning farmers at it’s Incubator Farm and to develop a new ‘Farm to Plate’ Conference taking place May 11-13, 2017 in Ithaca and surrounding areas.

The Farm to Plate conference, originally conceptualized by community member, food producer and educator Damon Brangman, is a collaborative effort by Bloodroot Collective, Groundswell Center, Food, Agroecology, Justice and Well-being Collective at Cornell, community member and EVI resident Jay Smith, the Tompkins County Food Policy Council and the Youth Farm Project. Brangman had a vision to honor our ancestors, the land and local farmers, to share knowledge and resources about food production, preparation and community-wide resilience strategies, and build sustainable campus/community relationships. Details and schedule of the conference are still being planned. For more on the Farm to Plate conference, and to learn more about getting involved visit: **http://groundswellcenter.org/farm-to-plate-conference/.**

Groundswell’s Incubator Farm, located at the EcoVillage, creates pathways to ownership for aspiring farmers particularly from marginalized communities, including New Americans and people of color. As of 2017, the farm is at capacity and has been serving (among others) members of the Burmese refugee community and developmentally disabled individuals who are a part of Challenge Workforce Solutions. The Park award will assist Groundswell in an expansion, creating space to serve an additional 3-5 limited-resource aspiring farmers at the current Farm location. It will also expand training programs to support the array of farmers and foodshed entrepreneurs participating in the Business Incubator Program. For more on Groundswell’s Incubator Program please visit: **http://groundswellcenter.org/incubatorfarm**/

*The Groundswell Center for Local Food & Farming is project of the not-for-profit Center for Transformative Action. Support for Groundswell comes from individuals and businesses who believe in the importance of a strong local food system, and from the Park Foundation and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program under grant #11674923*. *For more information visit* [*www.groundswellcenter.org*](http://www.groundswellcenter.org)*.*

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