

## Strength to Love Farm II

[mostcenter.org/casestories](http://mostcenter.org/casestories)

### ■ Problem:

Strength to Love Farm II is an urban farm managed by members of the Sandtown-Winchester community in Baltimore. Urban farms require a large amount of water but are typically located in areas surrounded by high levels of impervious cover, which does not allow for rain to be absorbed into the soil and used for irrigation purposes. Rain water flows into storm drains before it can become available for growing plants – and even if it reaches the farm, its volume, speed and contaminants makes it prone to damaging the crops.

### ■ Solution:

Strength to Love Farm II developed an effective solution to this “feast or famine” water issue. The farm positioned four used shipping containers near the site; these containers capture up to 34,000 gallons of runoff from the farm’s hoop houses. Water is then used to irrigate the farm’s crops. This system turns a waste product (stormwater) into a valuable commodity (water for irrigation). Strength to Love Farm’s irrigation system won first place in the “Best Innovative BMP” category in the Chesapeake Stormwater Network’s 2015 Best Urban BMP in the Bay Award (BUBBA) competition.



Photo Credit: Alia Malek and The Parks & People Foundation, FarmAllianceofBaltimore.org



## Key Project Facts

**Awards:** Winner of 2015 BUBBA Award for Best Innovative BMP from the Chesapeake Stormwater Network.

**Cost:** \$90,500

**Scale** 900 gallons diverted per 1/2” rainfall

**Funding Sources:** MD Department of Natural Resources’ Chesapeake & Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund

**Partners:** Big City Farms; Biohabitats Inc; Parks & People Foundation

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## What is Polluted Runoff?

The growth of our cities has resulted in too many paved surfaces, which prevent rain water from being absorbed by the ground. Instead, the water runs off streets and buildings, collecting trash and dangerous chemicals on its way. This contaminated water overflows into our streams and rivers, creating public health hazards and toxic waters.

Storm water projects create safe paths for polluted runoff to be captured and filtered before it reaches our waterways. They keep communities healthy and the environment clean.

**When communities and their local governments work together to solve big problems like stormwater runoff, that’s a story worth telling!**