

## NEWS

# Occupy the Farm activists reoccupy UC Berkeley farm plot in Albany

By **JASON SWEENEY** | Bay Area News Group, Los Gatos Weekly-Times, Mercury News

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ALBANY — About 60 Occupy the Farm activists returned to the Gill Tract on Saturday morning to weed and harvest crops planted earlier this spring.

The activists broke a lock on a gate and entered the 10-acre plot of land around 9:40 a.m. and remained on the property until shortly after noon.

“We harvested over 50 pounds of cucumbers and more than 75 pounds of squash,” said Anya Kamenskaya, a spokeswoman for the group.

The group included children and people of all ages. Four UC police officers looked on while the activists weeded and harvested, Kamenskaya said.

The Gill Tract is owned by UC Berkeley and is used for plant biology research. Activists began farming the land April 22 to protest development plans by UC Berkeley and the city of Albany. They were eventually driven off in May and nine activists were arrested, although no charges were filed.

Kamenskaya said the vegetables and herbs harvested Saturday morning will be donated to local food banks. The group also deposited a pile of inedible bolts of lettuce on the doorstep of the UC Berkeley chancellor’s on-campus residence.



“The university is not taking care of the crops that we sowed,” Kamenskaya said. “You can’t take care of the crops if the gates are closed. We’re going to continue to make sure that there’s public access to these crops.”

“There were no arrests, no confrontations, and most importantly, no damage was done to the research projects going on there,” UC Berkeley spokesman Dan Mogulof said.

“We will continue to monitor the situation,” he said. “Our foremost priority is ensuring that our faculty and students can continue with their research work.”

Kamenskaya said her group decided to harvest the crops that were planted in the spring after learning that the city of Albany had planned a secret harvest with only a few people invited. She said when Occupy the Farm activists learned of the secret harvest, the city then canceled it.

“This whole time they claimed they were involving the community,” she said. “But they weren’t. Our presence there today was to highlight that fact.”

Kamenskaya said Occupy the Farm activists will attend a meeting of the Albany City Council on Monday night when a public hearing will be held on development plans for the property.

Contact Jason Sweeney at 928-847-2123. Follow him at [Twitter.com/Jason\\_Sweeney](https://twitter.com/Jason_Sweeney).

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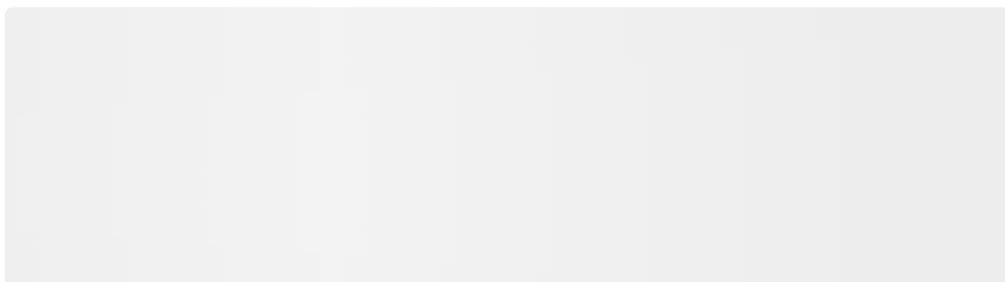
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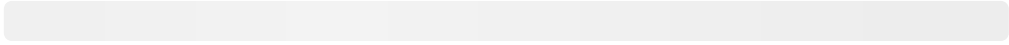
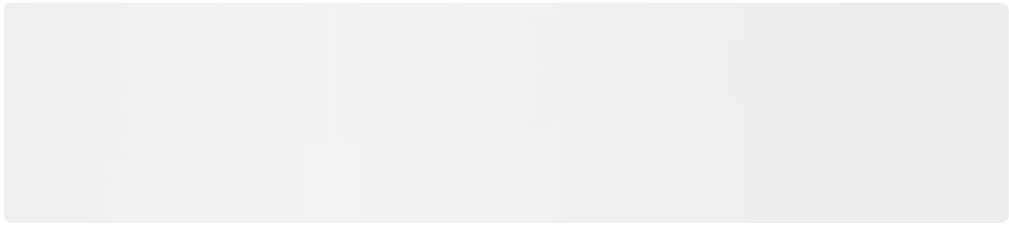
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**Jason Sweeney**





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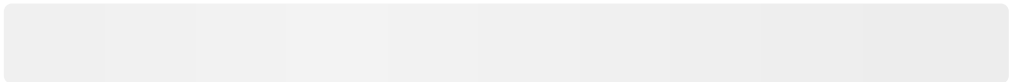


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