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The Feed afield: Roberta's raises the roof(top)

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The saying is "it takes a village," but in New York, it takes a borough to raise a rooftop farm. Last night [Roberta's Pizza](#) called together urban agrarians, locavore enthusiasts and some of Brooklyn's best artisan purveyors to raise funds in support of a one-acre rooftop farm they'll break ground for early next year.

"We would need 60 acres to keep up with the demand of the restaurant," said co-owner Chris Parachini, who plans to sell the farm's produce in a market for the community. "It'll be open [to the public], volunteer labor... The idea for us is to do it as sustainably as possible so it can be replicated all over the place."

"We made friends this summer through farming," said Rooftop Farms' Ben Flanner, who has been offering guidance since Roberta's decided to expand their agrarian operations beyond its backyard veggie patch and hoop-house tomatoes that ripen in beds atop the restaurant's radio studio.

The evening's locally sourced menu featured pork-jowl-topped pizza, butternut squash roasted in sage, some of the meatiest mussels we've ever tried and tremendously tender pulled pork over polenta. Plates of apple crisp made the rounds for dessert, but we were busy roasting marshmallows.

"How would you describe this scene? Like 1970s Berkeley?" mused Brian Halweil, publisher of [Edible Brooklyn, Manhattan, and East End](#), as he looked past revelers around the bonfire and into the Heritage Radio Network studio where Patrick Martins (Heritage Meats) was shooting the breeze on-air with foodie friends like Tom Mylan (the Meat Hook) and Darin Bresnitz (*Dinner with the Band*). Back inside, Joe Bastianich joined in on six strings with the rollicking band, Free Advice, and Shane Welch of Sixpoint Craft Ales (who donated all of the beer for the night's event) chatted up friends over bottles of home brew.

Brooklyn's urban farmers are planning future fund-raisers for the winter with that goal that, come spring, they'll have a new skyline to look up to. —[Jeanne Hodesh](#)