

# Gan Chaim

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8342 Tilly Hill Road  
Dunwoody, GA 30038

contact: Daron "Farmer D" Joffe  
phone: 770.299.2250  
e-mail: [daron.joffe@atlantajcc.org](mailto:daron.joffe@atlantajcc.org)  
website: [www.ganchaim.org](http://www.ganchaim.org)

board chair: Project of Marcus JCC  
budget: \$50,000  
inception: 2000

## Gan Chaim

Gan Chaim has developed a vibrant, Jewish, informal education curriculum; using an organic garden, this unique project teaches kids, adults, and seniors about Jewish holidays, values, and traditions as well as lessons about nutrition, ecology, and agriculture. The garden is located in Dunwoody, GA, on a small parcel of land on the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta property.

The Marcus JCC is a story of Jewish suburbanization unto itself, as the JCC has moved further away from the city center into the lush suburbs where the majority of Jewish families now live. The JCC is home to a residential summer camp and senior facility, and is the counterpart to other JCCs where Gan Chaim provides programming for the region.

A year ago, we had the benefit of visiting the Dunwoody Campus for a tour of Gan Chaim given by Daron Joffe. A true salt of the earth, "Farmer D" is the gardener, teacher, entrepreneur, and inspiration behind Gan Chaim. In person, one begins to understand why this program is "building slowly," but if you have the patience for organic growth, learn how you can transplant one of Farmer D's gardens in your community's JCC, summer camp, or senior center.