



Grow to Give

A Guide to Creating Community Service Gardens

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from
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Long Island **CAN**
Community Agriculture Network

Grow to Give

A Guide to Creating Community Service Gardens

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Long Island Community Agriculture Network

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We also wish to thank the ten Long Island based congregations who rose to the challenge in 2012 of growing vegetables to give to people in need. Their experiences working with their congregations and in their gardens demonstrated creativity in meeting challenges and maximized the benefits to everyone involved. They have transformed the seed of an idea into a practical reality.

This guide is a living document that will hopefully be refined and expanded as we gain further experience. While its narrative focus is on the religious congregations with whom we worked, any membership organization can use it as the basis for building a service garden.

The intention of this guide is to share our experience in the hopes that others will learn from what we have discovered and establish more *Grow to Give* gardens.

Note: At several points in this guide, readers are directed to websites for information. Some of these websites are operated by commercial, for-profit companies. LICAN is not endorsing these companies, but has found the information they present worthwhile. Similarly, the catalog pages of organic pesticides in the Appendix are examples of what is available, not an endorsement of purchasing from those catalogs.

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INTRODUCTION

There are times when an idea seems to enter our collective consciousness and takes a shape that seems intuitively sensible and necessary. Such is the case with the renewal of interest in vegetable gardening in the U.S. and the concept that religious congregations could build community service gardens.

On Martin Luther King Day, 2012, at an interfaith celebration focused on ending childhood hunger, LICAN co-founder and storyteller, Heather Forest, spoke to the assembled congregations and suggested, through stories and song, that they take action to end childhood hunger by utilizing their congregational land and their congregants as volunteers to grow fresh produce for the needy.



With so many people still suffering the results of the Great Recession, and only 10% of donations to food banks consisting of fresh produce, the need remains acute. Food pantry clients usually receive mostly canned and boxed food, much of which is highly processed, salted, and sweetened. This puts nutritious, fresh produce out of the reach of economically stressed families.

At the same time, feeding the hungry is a central mission of religious congregations, regardless of denomination. In fact, some actively operate soup kitchens or food banks or serve suppers to the hungry. The missing piece of this circle of generosity and food equity is for pantries to obtain a source of fresh vegetables.

“Close the loop,” Forest suggested. “Dig up some of your congregational lawn and grow food for the needy. Not only will this effort fulfill your mission to help others, the congregation will also reap a cornucopia of benefits.”

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Greenfaith, an organization whose mission is to inspire religious people to be leaders for environmental stewardship, asserts that religious traditions see the sacred in nature and that people grow spiritually through a strong relationship with the earth.

A *Grow to Give* garden, Forest explained, presents a unique opportunity for a religious congregation. The act of gardening is inherently spiritual. A garden creates a relationship to the earth, and can bring congregants of all ages together in meaningful activity. In community, congregants, both young and old, can learn the life-long skills and joys of growing food, interacting, and cooperating. A garden offers a chance for recreation and exercise. For children, it brings about a connection with the natural world that many youngsters lack. Children who garden can improve their scientific knowledge, learn to eat healthier food, and build positive character traits.

Recognizing the many potential benefits, ten Long Island congregations rose to the challenge. With funding from the Long Island Community Foundation and the Horace & Amy Hagedorn Fund, LICAN held educational meetings for congregational representatives, trained mentors to help establish the new gardens and coach the gardeners, facilitated the construction of several gardens, and developed this guide to help others down the path to establish gardens.

This Guide reflects LICAN's experience in nurturing those new gardens. We believe it will be useful to any organization, religious or secular, interested in starting a *Grow to Give* garden. Gardens speak to us of the mystery of life and powerfully connect us to nature, regardless of our religious beliefs.

Community
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caring.

Community service gardens are spiritual, beautiful, and productive, symbols of caring.





Chemically treated lawns disrupt the chain of connection between native plants, insects, and wildlife.

About that Lawn

Contemporary fixtures of modern American suburban living, lawns date back to the land practices of medieval European aristocracy. Some of the earliest lawns were the grasslands around medieval castles in France and England, kept clear of trees so castle guards could see the King's enemies approach. By the 17th century, wealthy English landowners, imitating the monarchy, showed their status by surrounding their manor houses with closely cut lawns. The lawn symbolized the wealth and disposable income of the landowner whose resources were sufficiently abundant that the land about the manor house was not needed to raise food. Instead, these greens were used for bowling games. Those bowling games grew into the modern sport of golf when brought in the late 1800s by Scottish immigrants to the "New World."

In 1915, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, collaborating with the newly developing golf industry, funded research on turf. This short grass, free of weeds, thistle and dandelions later became the standard horticulture for the lawns encouraged after World War II by suburban developer William Levitt. In an effort toward the democratization of neighborhoods, free of fences, Levitt developed the first cookie-cutter suburb and promoted the manicured lawn as part of a new culture of home ownership.

These days, ads by lawn chemical companies encourage pristine lawn maintenance, which can be both expensive and labor intensive. Many congregations are currently taking steps toward "going green," yet overlook the symbolic swaths of turf just outside their doors. Deceptively lush and natural, lawns maintained with pesticides and herbicides are virtual deserts from the point of view of song birds and beneficial insects. Lawn maintenance chemicals kill everything but one or two species of grass, destroy both good and bad insects, and pollute ground water or coastal water. By disrupting the chain of connection between native plants, insects and wildlife, chemically maintained lawns also contribute to an alarming decline in the numbers of migratory birds who swoop down to pristine lawns on their long journeys and find the territory devoid of seeds and insects.

Questions to Consider

- How much does your congregation spend on maintaining these green deserts?
- How much lawn do you use for play and other purposes at your congregation?
- Can some be replaced with vegetables?
- Can some be returned to meadows of native plants for the benefit of wildlife?



Benefits of Faith Based Donation Gardens

- Fulfills the moral/spiritual commitment to feed the hungry
- Stimulates social interaction & cooperation among the Congregation
- Teaches life-long skills that are a defense against hunger
- Beautifies congregational property
- Improves health & fitness of volunteers
- Reduces food budget if some produce is kept for congregational use
- Reduces costs of and environmental impact of lawn care
- Creates opportunity for recreation, exercise, therapy, and education
- Opens up possible career paths for youngsters
- Provides opportunities for intergenerational and cross-cultural connections

Benefits of Gardens for Children

A garden is an outdoor classroom laboratory, attracting countless organisms, each a great opportunity to teach children about the complex and fascinating ecosystem of which we are a part. Gardening provides opportunities for children to explore, create, and inquire. It is remarkable how quickly children establish connections with nature by planting seeds, turning compost, or examining butterflies. Both anecdotal and research-based evidence show that the use of an outdoor or indoor garden can improve science test scores, build positive character traits, motivate children to eat healthier foods and fight obesity, and develop an appreciation for the environment. Opportunities abound to improve reading and math skills through gardening. Best of all, gardening is fun!

Source: American Community Gardening Association

www.communitygarden.org

FROM IDEA TO ACTION: ORGANIZING FOR THE LONG TERM

Turning an idea for a *Grow to Give* garden into an integral and accepted part of the work of your congregation requires both community organizing skill and gardening skill. The first step is to unite the members and their leaders in an enthusiastic desire to provide fresh food for the needy.

- Obtain endorsement of the project from congregational leadership, such as the Board of Trustees, the Pastor, Rabbi, Priest, or other religious leader.
- Draw support from people working in committees related to social justice, the environment, and food ethics.
- Engage the participation of children through the integration of the garden into religious education classes and religious lessons.
- Establish a team of two to lead the *Grow to Give* garden effort: an experienced community organizer and a hands-on experienced gardener or garden mentor.
- Expand support by consistently communicating the story of the *Grow to Give* garden at public gatherings, in newsletters, and on bulletin boards.
- Use the garden as a focal point for social activities.



Experience has shown that once the garden is embraced as part of your congregational mission to feed the hungry, volunteers to build, cultivate and maintain the garden will emerge when asked to participate.

Meaningful endorsement by the congregation's religious leader is essential. Hands-on involvement by the congregation's religious leader is especially effective in building a base of volunteers.

Curate at St. John's Episcopal Takes the Lead

At St. John's Episcopal Church in Cold Spring Harbor, Rev. Luke Fodor saw building a garden as a Christian formational program, a way of tying Scripture and Christian values to concrete, meaningful action. He used an existing Episcopal curriculum for children, *Abundant Life Project*, for weekly sessions that tied aspects of gardening—water,



seeds and soil—to stories from Scripture and Christian values.

Rev. Fodor modeled volunteerism and pitched in at garden workdays during the first growing season. He also made communication and social activities connected to the garden top priorities. As a method of outreach, he filmed a video of the inaugural day of the garden project when volunteers built the first raised beds, and then emailed it to all members of the congregation.

The annual parish picnic took place next to the garden, and congregants built a scarecrow for the occasion. At Easter, Rev. Fodor blessed the garden and organized the egg hunt around it.



The church's Hunger and Outreach Committee was engaged in the garden effort, and this older group of congregants participated in cooperative work with youngsters, a long held goal. Rev. Fodor took pictures frequently and published them in the congregational newsletter to ensure constant feedback. His personal contact was crucial to the garden's success. Each family that volunteered to take responsibility for the garden for a week during the summer received his personal attention. He spent a half hour to an hour orienting each family to the garden's requirements, while using the opportunity to do pastoral work.

Religious Gardening Eco/Justice Curricula

- **All Denominations: Eco-Justice Ministries** has a database of 91 curricula for pres-school to adult that can be searched here: www.eco-justice.org/CurricReview.asp
- **Episcopal: *Abundant Life Project*** (<http://www.er-d.org/Children#Abundant>)
- **Jewish: Developed by the Asheville, North Carolina, Jewish Community Center:** <http://www.jcc-asheville.org/index.php?src=gendocs&ref=Children%27sEducationalGarden&category=programs>
- **Presbyterian: *Just Eating? Practicing Our Faith at the Table***, Presbyterian Hunger Program Curriculum with versions for middle school students (available in English and Spanish) and adults www.pcusa.org/justeating/
- **Unitarian Universalist: Enter the search term, “gardening” here:** <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/search/index.php>
- **Others:**
 - **National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program Resources:** <http://nccecojustice.org/resources/>
 - **Earth Ministry suggested curricula:** <http://earthministry.org/resources/suggested-publications/by-type/curricula>
 - **Greenfaith's *SPLENDOR* interfaith adult environmental education curriculum:** <http://greenfaith.org/resource-center/spirit/religious-environmental-education/splendor>

“I spent a long time talking to families,” he said, “with great results. The garden served the purpose of bringing young and old together and fulfilled the gospel mandate of feeding the hungry.”

Create a Story and Communicate It

What Rev. Fodor accomplished, among other things, was to create a story about the garden, one in which the characters were members of the congregation working together to advance their shared mission. Professional storyteller Heather Forest, a co-founder of LICAN, advises garden organizers to take pictures at the earliest opportunity showing garden work being done by congregants.

“Create a visual story in posters and social media that people want to enter, in which they can imagine themselves as a character,” she says. “Because the storyline documenting the success of the *Grow to Give* garden is consistent with the organization’s mission, it will have power to attract volunteers.”

At Temple Beth El in Huntington, the driving organizer was the Temple’s Youth Group Chairperson, Amy Podhurst, who used every opportunity talking to members to mobilize institutional support. The rabbi made his approval and endorsement publicly clear. The rabbi’s wife planted and cultivated the garden along with other volunteers.

Podhurst frequently communicated the need for volunteers and supplies, as well as the progress of the garden. Every Temple bulletin and newsletter had articles about the garden. An announcement was made at every service. The result was that between six and twelve volunteers came to each work day, and often six or more children and teenagers came as well.

Podhurst thanked the volunteers by email after every garden session, not only the ones who attended for that session, but everyone who had volunteered at any time. She sent pictures with her emails and posted them on her Facebook page. By using a combination of social media and traditional media, she made sure she reached different age cohorts to acknowledge and celebrate their participation.

“The whole effort,” she says, “strengthened the Temple community. Everyone leaves the garden dirty and sweaty and

Create a visual story in posters and social media that people want to enter, in which they can imagine themselves as a character.



with a sense of accomplishment and camaraderie,” she says. “We are making connections with congregants we didn't know before and building friendships that may not have existed without the garden as a focal point. Furthermore, some of the people drawn into the project were not regular attendees at weekly services. They got involved in the garden, and now they feel more comfortable coming to a service or an event.”

At Bethany Presbyterian in Huntington Station, a small group of people initially volunteered to help build the garden. The group grew when photos of their efforts were used in a flier advertising an upcoming meeting about the garden. Seeing their friends already engaged in the work of constructing the raised bed garden motivated many more congregation members to volunteer. By mid-summer, the garden became a gathering place for congregants after Sunday services, and provided an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the vegetables and harvest them for donation.

Bethany Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Dr. James B. Rea, Jr., Pastor 425 Maplewood Road, Huntington Station, NY 11746

GROW to GIVE PROJECT

Bethany Presbyterian Church is part of the Interfaith Community Service Garden Project of the Long Island Community Agriculture Network. This project facilitates the creation of community service gardens on congregational land that are tended by congregants to produce vegetables for donation to local food pantries.

Harvesters! Weeders! Waterers!

To Volunteer Contact Service Garden Coordinators.

The Community Service Garden Beds are Planted!

Volunteers Welcome!

This community agriculture project is facilitated by LICAN, a not-for-profit project of the Open Space Institute's Citizen Action Program and partially funded by The Long Island Community Foundation and the Horace and Amy Hagedorn Fund

LONG ISLAND COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE NETWORK www.lican.org



**Step-by-Step:
Building Support for Your
Grow to Give Garden**

- Present the idea to your Board of Trustees (or similar lay governing body). Stress the benefits; explain the costs and your plan for implementation. Be prepared to overcome objections.
- Ask your religious leader to make the garden a priority for the congregation by participating actively and tying the garden to your religious values.
- Hold a meeting for all stakeholders, and speak about your vision for the garden. Include members of your hunger-related outreach group; your religious education and youth groups; and landscaping/maintenance volunteers. Ask them to participate, explaining how the garden fits into their missions.
- Tell the garden story constantly, using announcements at services, flyers, email blasts, Facebook pages, newsletters, and bulletins. Remember that anything new needs many repetitions to become familiar and habitual.
- Use the garden as the scene and setting for social events connected to holidays, community service projects, and educational opportunities.

Overcome Objections: Invite Everyone

Creating change can be a challenge. Some people long accustomed to the pristine appearance of lawns surrounding religious buildings may object to the idea of digging up some grass to make way for a garden, particularly if it's in plain sight from the road or walkways. In our experience, other objections that can surface when presenting the idea of a service garden on congregational property include:

- Resources could be utilized better elsewhere.
- It's cheaper to buy vegetables at a supermarket.
- If the garden falls into disuse, it will become unsightly.
- Even if tended, a vegetable garden certainly doesn't belong on the front lawn near where we might have a wedding or other event.
- How much food can a small garden provide anyway?
- This wasn't my idea and now you want me to work!

It is important to consider how diverse objections might be countered at a planning or informational meeting. Someone who is passionate about creating a garden should be selected to address a meeting to which all stakeholders are invited. We have found that stressing the benefits of the garden—fulfilling the mission to feed the hungry and inter-generational cooperation—can be persuasive. In addition, emphasizing the injustice of the fact that food banks are rarely able to give fresh produce to needy families can also encourage the initiation of a service garden. It can also be persuasive, if the facility is landscaped with a lawn, to talk about the history of lawns as an affectation of the rich and to point out the cost to the congregation of maintaining a lawn. Be sure to note that typical lawn care with pesticides creates green deserts for birds and other wildlife and also pollutes ground water or coastal bays.

All religions traditionally view the obligation to feed the hungry as a fundamental value. When congregants learn that so little fresh food is available from food banks, they often embrace the idea that donating only packaged food deprives needy children and adults of the healthiest kinds of food.

Still, objections must be answered. Showing examples of neat and well kept raised bed gardens can ease concerns about appearance. Raised beds have neat edges by design, bring the plants closer to eye level, and are easier to maintain than in-ground beds. Remind people that many vegetable plants are beautiful, with colorful flowers and leaves in different shapes. Vegetable beds can be beautified with flowers like marigolds that contribute to insect control and edible flowers, like nasturtiums. Herbs, which are particularly expensive to buy and thus can be unaffordable to people struggling with a low income, awaken our senses of smell and taste, and can draw congregants into discussions of recipes and food traditions.



If the motivation to grow vegetables disappears in the future, the garden could be used to grow flowers to beautify the congregational building.

Will the amount that is grown really matter? The average American, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, eats about 200 pounds of fresh vegetables a year. But this average obscures the fact that low-income people eat fewer fresh vegetables than those with higher income because of cost.

The idea of collecting packaged foods for donation is well accepted, even though no single congregation's collections can meet the overall need. It is the cumulative effect of each small donation that matters.

In its first year, starting with just three small raised beds, St. John's Episcopal Church was able to donate an estimated 200 pounds of vegetables. Now with five beds planned for next year, and covered frames over three of them, that garden's yield will probably more than double in year two.

Overall, the ten small congregational gardens participating in the *Grow to Give Project* in the first year donated more than 2,200 pounds of vegetables, a ton of fresh produce, to people in need.

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Key People: The Community Organizer and the Gardener

To be successful with a congregational garden, a partnership between someone with community organizing skills and someone with gardening skills is needed. Fortunately, a congregation is a community where organizing for all kinds of purposes is a necessity, so it's likely you have a pool of these special people.

To the organizer falls the responsibility of consistently communicating the garden story in all forms, managing the volunteers, and creating work schedules. The lead organizer could be a religious leader, like Rev. Fodor, or a layperson like Podhurst at Temple Beth El, but the duties could certainly be shared with others.

The other essential person in the *Grow to Give* garden effort is someone with vegetable gardening experience who can show volunteers how to plant, manage, and harvest the crops. Some congregations are fortunate to have such a gardener as a member. Others do not.

Recognizing a need for gardening skills, LICAN used grants to train experienced gardeners and pay them to be mentors to some of the congregations that started gardens in 2012. The mentors met the volunteers at their gardens and assisted them at every stage from planting to harvest.

So if your congregation does not include an experienced gardener, the budget for your garden for at least the first year should include money for a mentor.

Use the garden as the scene and setting for social events connected to holidays, community service projects, and educational opportunities.

BUILDING THE GARDEN Location, Location, Location

Position Projects Priority

The place you choose to position your garden will speak volumes about the priority your congregation places on the garden. Placing it prominently near the entrance where all see it regularly projects the pride and importance placed on this charitable project. Tuck it out of sight somewhere and you'll have to work hard be sure it is not out of mind also, unimportant and unnoticed.

Ideally, the location of your service garden should encourage its use and enjoyment by your congregation and integrate well with the rest of your grounds. LICAN encouraged all the participating congregations to consider their overall master plan for their campus when choosing a garden location. If at all possible, someone with a landscaper's eye should choose a spot that harmonizes with flowerbeds, trees and other features of the congregation's site. Beyond aesthetics, the garden should not create conflict with other important uses of your campus: events

like weddings, funerals, outdoor fairs, or children's play. Within these constraints, the garden can serve as tangible evidence of your congregation's connection to the earth and to each other.

If you want children in your nursery school, or who attend your religious education program to learn about where food comes from, place the garden close to their classrooms. The Huntington Jewish Center, for example, built a raised bed within the fenced play area that serves its day care and nursery school. Playtime thus became garden time, and every day the children watched the progression from seeds to sprouts to vegetables that they could taste and admire.

At the Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center in Commack, the perfect place for the garden turned out to be right outside the classroom wing, used during the summer for a camp program. Even in inclement weather, the children had a close-up view of the garden throughout the season.



Adult members of your congregation will get a similar close-up view if the garden is built near a main walkway or other pedestrian area that gets frequent use. Bethany Presbyterian Church, for example, built three raised beds near its main entrance. The beds were aligned carefully to match the angles of walls and fences, ensuring that they would integrate harmoniously with the overall picture the building and grounds present. However, the beds are not so close to the entrance as to impede any other activity.

Besides integrating into the landscape and pedestrian flow of a facility, a garden location must also meet basic criteria for growing food:

1. Sun—at least 6 hours per day
2. Water nearby
3. Level land, or nearly so
4. Proximity to a road or driveway so a truck can deliver soil and compost as opposed to carrying it in wheel barrows (not essential but desirable)

If there is simply no room at your congregation to build a separate garden, perhaps you can squeeze some vegetables into flowerbeds, as Temple Kehillath Shalom did in Cold Spring Harbor. Another choice is to find a community garden outside your congregation and use space there to grow vegetables. Temple Beth El, whose site has little lawn and open space, planted four beds in the Soergel Memorial Community Garden in

A partial list of community gardens on Long Island can be found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/s Tonybrookcommunitygardens/info>

Greenlawn, which LICAN has been rebuilding and managing under license from the Town of Huntington. St. Hugh of Lincoln Roman Catholic Church planted beds there as well to grow produce for their soup kitchen.

In-Ground Garden or Raised Bed Garden?

One of the first choices when planning a garden is whether to dig your new garden into the ground or to build one or more raised beds in which to grow vegetables.



LICAN recommends the use of raised beds if your garden is in a prominent place where neat appearance is a priority. Furthermore, older people may be more likely to participate in a garden that doesn't require stooping down to the ground. If intergenerational contact is a goal, raised beds have an advantage.

In-ground beds, however, are most suitable for vegetables like squash and cucumbers that need a lot of space and quickly climb over the sides of a raised bed. Root vegetables like potatoes and turnips are better off planted in the ground as well. Consider combining the two concepts and design both types of garden layouts based on your setting and space.

Consider that in addition to the new beds you build, you may also already have places suitable for some vegetables. Use an existing fence or set up a trellis to support a planting of pole beans or cherry tomatoes for example, which will bear delicious produce throughout the growing season.

	Pros	Cons
In-Ground Gardens	No cost to build boxes Spacious for spreading vegetables like squash	Not as neat; More bending Harder to maintain; Appearance
Raised- Bed Gardens	Neat; Less Bending Easier maintenance	Substantial cost to build Less space for spreading vegetables

Budget Time

If you decide on raised beds, you will need to raise some money for construction services, wood, hardware, and soil. Remember that once built, a raised bed will last for many years. Materials for one raised bed, five feet wide by twenty feet long, cost between \$300 and \$400 in 2012, with the lumber and fasteners purchased at a discount. Investigate if there are congregants who work in the lumber, hardware, or construction businesses who can donate time or materials. Investigate if there are suppliers who would support the project with donated or discounted building materials.

Raised bed gardens can be made out of a wide variety of differently priced woods including cedar, untreated or treated construction lumber, or black locust. The pressure treated lumber that will last over time and can be safely used for agriculture is ACQ (alkaline copper quaternary) Pressure Treated Lumber. Standards for certified organic gardens do not allow use of any type of pressure-treated lumber, but experts generally agree that use of ACQ lumber presents little if any risk. Pressure treated CCA lumber (chromated copper arsenate) is not to be used for agriculture and has been banned by the U.S. Environmental Protection agency.

For more information on pressure treated wood:
<http://www.finegardening.com/design/articles/pressure-treated-wood-in-beds.aspx>

Labor

Another decision to make is whether volunteers from your congregation will build the beds or whether you will hire someone to do it. Building a raised bed is not difficult for people with some carpentry experience. Resources abound on the internet on the topic of building raised garden beds. There are many ways to construct a planting box with many options for corners, trellising supports, and PVC hoop house covers to extend the season. For construction ideas see:

<http://tipnut.com/raised-garden-beds/>

Whether or not your garden will be in the ground or in a raised bed, you will need to consider the quality of the soil in which the vegetables will be grown. The soil of in-ground gardens can be enriched with organic matter such as

Sample Material Wish List for One Raised Garden Bed, 16'x4'x1'

Lumber

(Cedar, Locust, or ACQ Pressure Treated Lumber)

2 (2" X 12"X 16')

2 (2" X 12"X 8')

1 (4" X 4" X 8')

Hardware

48 Head Lock screws for **each** bed

Soil/Compost – 2.5 cubic yards
Mulch

To Plant the Bed:

Seeds

Seedlings

Tomato cages & bamboo poles

Short stakes

Useful Garden Tools:

Hand trowel, rake, shovel

Clippers or scissors

String for tying vegetables to
stakes

Watering hoses

Wheelbarrow

LICAN has
found that
a 50-50
mixture of
topsoil and
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compost. All in-ground garden sites should be tested for contaminants. A raised bed garden offers the beneficial opportunity to control the composition of the soil content. LICAN has found that a 50-50 mixture of topsoil and compost will yield positive results.

BUDGET WORK SHEET GROW TO GIVE GARDEN

MATERIALS	SUPPLIER	SIZE	QUANTITY	ITEM PRICE	SUBTOTAL
LUMBER					
HARDWARE					
SOIL/COMPOST					
DELIVERY COSTS					
MULCH					
TOMATO CAGES					
BAMBOO POLES					
STAKES					
TOOLS					
SEEDS					
SEEDLINGS					
LABOR: CONSTRUCTION					
LABOR: PLANTING					
MENTOR SERVICES					
				GRAND TOTAL	

SUSTAINING THE GARDEN AND YOUR TEAM

To garden is to practice the skills of nurturing—patience, persistence, and close attention to needs as they develop. Sustaining a congregational *Grow to Give* garden requires embedding a system for nurturing the garden that lasts from the early spring planting of the first seeds to putting the garden to bed for the winter.

To make that happen requires that you first nurture your volunteers. The goal should be that everyone shares the workload, no one is unduly burdened, and everyone experiences the rewards.

Gardening is inherently rewarding. The act of gardening brings awareness of the forces of nature and humility as we realize that we do not “make” things grow. We are simply midwives facilitating the growth of seeds that already contain the potential for life. It is both spiritual and thrilling to tug on a carrot top, for example, and pull a beautiful orange root from the ground.

First
nurture
your
volunteers.



A donation garden cultivated collectively offers additional rewards. Behavioral scientists have verified what we know from our own experience: it feels good to help other people. Even when all we do is write a check or drop a jar of peanut butter into a food collection box, we understand that we are fulfilling a need, and that brings pleasure. The desire to feel good again becomes the motivation for continuing to help.

When volunteers labor to grow food and then deliver beautiful, fresh vegetables to the people who need them, the satisfaction is multiplied. Connecting directly to the people you are helping and seeing their appreciation is a powerful motivator.

“It’s been very fulfilling to help people who don’t have enough food, to see it go from a thought to given to people,” said Podhurst, of Temple Beth El. Beth El’s donations went primarily to a food-sharing event set up every week on a street in Huntington Station by Food Not Bombs. Fifty to 200 people line up at this pop-up free market and walk away with bags of food.

“Seeing all the people there, it’s scary,” continued Podhurst. “My kids were amazed. They had no idea how many people were in need.”

To reward your volunteers and increase their motivation, encourage all of them to take turns delivering the vegetables to food pantries, especially if the ultimate recipients of the food will be there.

ATTRACTING & KEEPING VOLUNTEERS For Faith Based Gardens

1. Volunteers want you to be prepared for them.

Make sure you have the materials and tools necessary to build/plant your garden before scheduling a workday.

2. Volunteers want to feel welcomed.

Treat your volunteers as guests. Let them see your plans. Introduce them to each other.

3. Volunteers want good training.

Take the time to explain each task, demonstrate it, and mentor the volunteer. If possible, provide a buddy, an experienced volunteer to help the new one.

4. Volunteers want to know they are making the world a better place.

Most volunteers are willing to roll their sleeves up and do physical labor as long as it is meaningful. Remind them of the need for healthy fresh produce, and encourage all of them to make deliveries of the donated vegetables.

5. Volunteers want to know up front how much time the job will take.

Project-oriented or time-limited assignments work much better than open-ended commitments. Decide how much time a job will need and include that when you publicize it. Assign a different volunteer to care for the garden for one week of the summer, for example.

6. Volunteers want to be appreciated.

Praise your volunteers frequently and publicly. Don't overlook the power of a simple gesture such as providing food and beverages on a workday, for example.

7. Volunteers want communication.

The lack of regular communication is one of the chief reasons volunteers become dissatisfied. Be ready to listen to them and respond to their concerns. Take pictures, use flyers, email, Facebook, announcements at events, newsletters—everything! Make your volunteers characters in the story of your congregation doing good.

9. Volunteers want to be socially connected.

Gardening is a great way for people of different age groups to appreciate each other, and is a new way to meet and get to know members of your congregation. Group volunteers you think will get along to do a job together.

10. Volunteers want to learn something new.

Gardening is a skill learned over time, through experience and contact with other gardeners. Knowing how to grow food is a defense against hunger and a way to enjoy the healthiest, best tasting, pesticide free food that will make you proud.

Taking It Week-by-Week

When is the best time for volunteers to work together on the donation garden? One good answer is to take advantage of the timing of your services and religious education classes for some aspects of tending the garden.

Bethany Presbyterian, for example, harvested vegetables on Sundays after services and Sunday school. With the congregants already present, and the garden so visible near the front entrance, harvesting became a shared social event, a time to discuss the virtues and beauty of the vegetables, talk about recipes, and delight in the success of the garden.

But congregants may not be dressed appropriately after services to take on the other chores of gardening. Other work times need to be scheduled by the garden leader that coincide with the needs of the plants in the garden. Weeding and watering, once the soil warms up, usually must be done more than once a week. When plants are flowering and setting fruit they should not be allowed to dry out. Frequent harvesting of vegetables such as beans, tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants, encourages the plants to set more fruit.

One effective way to handle garden care responsibilities is to ask individuals and families to commit to garden duty for one week at a time.

One effective way to handle these garden care responsibilities is to ask individuals and families to commit to garden duty for one week at a time. A one-week commitment is manageable and gives each set of volunteers the experience of “owning” the garden for that period of time.

In fact, setting limits on the amount of involvement expected from volunteers is key to attracting and keeping them. A new volunteer may become wary of a responsibility that seems open-ended. Volunteers are attracted to projects that teach them something new; that have clear benefits to the community; and that otherwise prove rewarding.

It is also most important to make sure that each volunteer receives enough coaching to feel comfortable caring for the garden. One way to ensure this is to have a mentor present at the garden once a week to help the volunteers. Again, the mentor can be a member of your congregation or someone hired for the purpose. If hiring a mentor is your choice, add about \$1,200 to the garden budget to pay a mentor to spend a couple of hours a week with your volunteers throughout the growing season.



Watering Wisdom

By Larry Foglia

Too little water or too much water—either mistake can be fatal to your vegetables or seriously inhibit their growth. Some basic understanding of plants' needs and a willingness to get your hands in the earth should forestall bad results.

How to Water Seeds & Seedlings. You should never be able to take a handful of soil and squeeze drops of water out of it: that would be over-watering. You should not plant in or plow/till soil that stays in a clump when squeezed in your hand. Wait until it drains and crumbles easily after being squeezed.

Most newly planted seeds or transplants especially need to be evenly moist to sprout or to take hold in the soil. So moisten the soil before planting, but don't saturate it.

Watering Maturing Plants. In general plants do not like to have their leaves too wet, especially in hot weather. Wet leaves are vulnerable to bacterial and fungal diseases...but alas, it rains on leaves as well as ground and we cannot control this. But we can avoid contributing to these problems by aiming the water at the ground without wetting the leaves. If you do use an over-head watering system, schedule your watering time early in the morning so the sun will dry off the leaves as soon as possible.

Too little water will stress plants and slow their growth, but they can usually handle a little stress and recuperate after watering. Too much water, on the other hand, will rot the roots, foster disease, and kill the plants.

Once established, different vegetables need somewhat different watering schedules. In general, when plants are flowering, they need to be watered to keep the flowers from wilting. Once fruit has set they need even moisture to swell and mature the fruit. Fruits

that grow quickly such as cucumbers and summer squash tend to need a bit more watering. Plants that produce extended crops such as peas or pole beans need even moisture to keep successive generations of flowers healthy and attractive to pollinators while previous generations of fruit mature. Long-term crops such as melons and winter squash should not be allowed to dry out and do well with trickle irrigation systems.

How much water should you add to your garden?

That depends on:

- How much rain has fallen.
- The kind of soil you have and how much organic matter it contains.
- The nature of the mulch with which you cover your garden beds.

In general, plants like evenly moist soil. The more organic matter in the soil, the better it will retain water and nutrients. The sandier your soil, the quicker it will drain and dry out. For in-ground gardens, most Long Island soils need about **one to one-and-a-half inches of water a week**, best split between two watering sessions of about three quarters of an inch each time.

If you use overhead watering (sprinklers or spray hoses) you can measure this with either a rain gauge or any straight-sided can or container. Test your system by turning your water on for a fixed amount of time, such as half an hour, and measure how deep the water is in the gauge or containers. You will then be able to figure out how much time you need to leave your system on to be able to put down three quarters of an inch of water. Variables such as type of watering system, size of hose, and water pressure in your area will affect the timing of your system.

REAPING THE BENEFITS

Planting for Maximum Harvest: Succession Planting and Backwards Design

Most *Grow to Give* gardens are relatively small so getting the most out of your garden is vital to the mission of producing as much food as possible. You can do that by planning ahead, and not just for the initial planting at the beginning of the season, but also for the entire gardening season.

The Growing Season: Considering the Frost Dates

Planning a garden includes considering the first and last frost date for your region as well as the harvest times of different crops from early spring to late fall.

It is generally considered safe on Long Island to plant seedlings for tomatoes, peppers and eggplants in your garden without fear of frost damage after May 15th. Earlier cool weather crops like sugar snap peas, tatsoi, arugula, lettuce, and radishes can be planted by seed before this date, some as soon as the ground is warm enough to work in April.

The first frost date of autumn is approximately October 15th. This is the end of the official growing season without season extenders like hoop houses and greenhouses.

Getting Started

Start your garden plan by choosing the places you wish to establish some long-term crops such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, swiss chard, collards, and kale. Leave space for a succession of plantings for short season crops like string beans, greens, and radishes.



An online resource for planning a SQUARE FOOT GARDEN with a simple planting design based on dividing your raised bed into 12-inch squares) can be found at

<http://www.gardeners.com/on/demandware.store/Sites-Gardeners-Site/default/Page-KGPJS>

This site offers an interactive square-foot grid and information on growing individual vegetables.

More Watering Tips.

1. Do not allow yourself to be tempted to water your vegetable plants every time you see them wilt in the hot afternoon sun. Trust the soil...if it is moist enough, the plants will perk up as the day cools off and the sun goes down.
2. If you use mulch on your garden or a trickle system, push the mulch aside and check the soil often to make sure it is not being over watered.
3. Read and research about the water needs of the particular vegetable plants you like to grow.
4. Take notes, record difficulties and successes.
5. Pay attention to the weather reports and mark amounts of rainfall and irrigation volume on a calendar for reference.
6. Remember to empty your rain gauges or measuring containers after a rain or irrigation session so you can accurately measure the next event.

Succession Planting

An effective planting plan makes use of a technique called *succession planting* or *double-cropping*. This approach maximizes production by sequentially planting short season vegetable crops every few weeks in order to efficiently utilize garden space. For example, space planted with cool weather, short-season crops like spinach, tatsoi, lettuce, or radishes, can be re-planted with a warmer weather, short-season crop like green beans.

Maximize production by following an early spring crop with a planting of a second or third short season crop to keep the production going for months instead of a few weeks. Take time to learn about each vegetable's growing patterns. Read the seed packages for crop information about maturity times and heat tolerance.

An example of a succession plan in the same space could be a sequence of planting first spinach, then string beans, then tatsoi. Or, first radish, then arugula, then string beans. Sequencing combinations are abundant.



Planning a planting succession requires thinking ahead. For a continuous crop of beans, for example, set aside an area in which to grow string beans and plant just a few short rows at the end of May leaving empty space beside each row for a second planting two weeks later. When the first group of bean plants are finished producing beans, the beans from that second planting will be ready for harvest. Plant a few short rows every two weeks for a supply throughout the summer.

Some short season crops to consider for succession planting include

Radish	21 days
Arugula	38 days
Asian Greens	45 days
Escarole	45 days
Kohlrabi	45 days
Mustard Greens	45 days
Spinach	45 days
Lettuce	48 days
Bush Beans	57 days
Beets	40 days

Maturity dates vary by crop variety.

Backwards Design

Another approach to designing an effective planting plan is the creative planning concept of *backwards design*. Strategically consider the desired end results and then, thinking backwards, devise the steps to arrive at this destination. In this approach to gardening, the first step is to

consider the first frost date of winter in your region (Oct 15th) and then make a planting calculation based on the maturity dates of the crop varieties you wish to grow.

To utilize backwards design for the planting of a fall crop like arugula, for example, count backwards 38 days, the time it takes arugula to mature, from Oct. 15th, and mark September 7th as the arugula planting date. (The maturity dates of crop varieties can be found on their seed packets.)

You can further extend the growing season by planting vegetables in the late summer (beginning of August) that can withstand lower temperatures and possible frosts in the fall. Vegetables such as kale, swiss chard, collards, mustards greens, bok choy, lettuce, or tatsoi are suitable fall harvest choices. Kale and swiss chard yield extraordinarily nutritious greens late into the fall, and are sweeter after a touch of frost.

You can further extend the growing season by planting vegetables in the late summer (beginning of August) that can withstand lower temperatures and possible frosts in the fall.

Beating the Bugs—Organically Read the Labels, Please

Invisible to us as they invade, insects and plant diseases find their way into every garden, bringing the potential to damage or ruin your beautiful vegetables.

These bugs and blights attack softly at first and may escape your notice. The key to pest control is to be vigilant. Anything that changes the appearance of formerly healthy leaves, flowers or fruit must be noticed and given attention. Look underneath curled leaves for clusters of insect eggs or tiny larvae; closely observe any flying insects that land on your plants. Learn to distinguish beneficial insects like ladybugs from the destructive ones, like Mexican Bean Beetles. Keep a hand magnifier in with your garden tools to help identify bugs. The arsenal of remedies available to organic gardeners deliberately lacks the broad-spectrum poisons that kill the good with the

bad. These broad-spectrum pesticides mimic hormones and have far-reaching harmful effects on human and animal life.

Start the season with a small inventory of widely effective remedies that you can use without delay.

But that doesn't mean that the organic gardener is helpless: far from it. Experienced, organic gardeners know that healthy plants start with good quality soil. That means soil that contains appropriate amounts of organic matter, macro- and micro-nutrients, and appropriate levels of acidity or alkalinity, or pH. Macro-nutrients include elements like nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorus, for example; while micro nutrients include elements that are necessary in much smaller amounts, such as iron and boron.

The only way to be sure if your soil meets plant needs is to test it. Testing for pH yourself is easy with inexpensive test kits.

For \$12.50 you can purchase a Cornell pH test kit; for \$45 (as of 2012) the Cornell Nutrient Analysis Lab will do a soil profile that covers organic matter, levels of macro-

and micro-nutrients, and more. Information about both is here:
<http://cnal.cals.cornell.edu/>

Here are other tips for beating the bugs:

- *Choose good quality seeds and healthy seedlings without signs of stress or disease. Look for the letters V, F, and N next to the name of the variety; these letters mean the plants have been bred to resist common diseases. Especially if you are a new gardener, do not plant heirloom varieties that might taste better but are more susceptible to problems.*
- *Practice good garden sanitation. Clear away dead leaves and other debris where bad bugs can hide; eliminate weeds; and space plants so they receive good air circulation.*
- *Use an inexpensive rain gauge to track rainfall and help you figure out how much water to add. Some vegetables require more water than others.*
- *Add plants to your garden that attract good bugs that will kill the bad ones.*
- *For blights, mildew and other diseases caused by fungi and bacteria, spray organic controls at their very first appearance (or even before to prevent these diseases) and then at regular intervals throughout the growing season.*
- *For insects, similarly take action as soon as you spot the first signs of infestation. If you act quickly enough, you may be able to pick the bugs or larvae off the plants with your fingers and either squash them or drop them into a container of water mixed with a few drops of detergent.*

Start the season with a small inventory of widely effective remedies that you can use without delay. Insecticidal soaps, for example, help control aphids, mites, squash bugs and many more. Fungicides made to spray on leaves will cure mildew and prevent early and late blight. You can also make your own fungicide at home with harmless and inexpensive products you already have.

Commercial organic pest control products are available from Johnny's Seeds (www.Johnnyseeds.com) and Fedco Seeds (www.fedcoseeds.com), among other sources. Both are also suppliers of organic seeds. (See Appendix for sample catalog pages.) It is essential to carefully read seed labels for instructions and cautions.

Check out websites like these to identify both beneficial and destructive insects in the garden:

<http://www.organicgardening.com/learn-and-grow/good-bug-bad-bug>

<http://www.mnn.com/your-home/organic-farming-gardening/stories/good-bug-bad-bug-how-can-you-tell-the-difference>

A Simple Cure for Powdery Mildew

One common fungal disease is powdery mildew, a white coating on leaves that often afflicts squash, lilacs, or zinnias. You can prevent it—and slow it down if it gets going—by spraying plants with a mix of:

1 Tbsp. Baking Soda

1 Gallon water

2 drops of liquid soap
(like dishwashing soap)

Put the mix in an ordinary spray bottle and wet the tops and undersides of leaves.

Be careful to water early in the day so leaves have a chance to dry off.

There are also a variety of physical barriers—like mulch and floating row covers—as well as cultural practices—like crop rotation—that fend off diseases and pests. If your plants are being eaten by visiting animals such as rabbits or deer, put up a small fence.

Experience, reading, and talking with other gardeners will lead to choices that work. Here's one website that offers information about physical barriers:

http://boldweb.com/gw/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=24&Itemid=25

Ripe & Ready

After your congregation has put in labor and money to create and cultivate your garden, it is important to harvest frequently so that your delicious vegetables don't go to waste. However, experience has shown that sometimes novice gardeners need to learn when a vegetable is ripe to be picked.

Vegetables can also go to waste if they are not kept from deteriorating between picking time and the time when they are handed out to needy people. Store them in a cool place or deliver them to a pantry shortly after picking.

It is important to recognize the prime harvest time for particular vegetables. Most people know that a red tomato is ready to pick, but color won't help with green beans or cabbage or melon, for example. For these, you will have to touch and feel and smell and even listen. Feel the pods of your green beans so you pick them when the beans inside are still small and tender.

Peppers should be firm. They can be picked when unripe and green or allowed to fully ripen red. Cabbage is ready when it feels solid—and don't wait too long or it will split into pieces. With a watermelon, thump it and listen for a dull, hollow thud.



A HARVEST CALENDAR can offer a quick reference, but take the time to read more here about each vegetable you've planted:

(<http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/factsheets/vegetables/harvestguide.pdf>).

This publication, prepared by Cornell Cooperative Extension, covers most common vegetables. Then, use your senses and gain intimate knowledge about your plants through observation and care.

Vegetable Harvest Calendar

	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV
ASPARAGUS								
BEANS								
BEETS								
BROCCOLI								
CABBAGE								
CANTALOUPE								
CARROTS								
CAULIFLOWER								
CELERY								
CORN								
CUCUMBERS								
EGGPLANT								
KALE								
LETTUCE								
ONIONS								
PEAS								
PEPPERS								
POTATOES								
PUMPKINS								
RADISHES								
RHUBARB								
SPINACH								
SQUASH, Summer								
SQUASH, Winter								
TOMATOES								
TURNIPS								
WATERMELON								

Timing Donations: The Circle of Care

LICAN's interest in helping religious congregations to establish *Grow to Give* gardens was sparked by the awareness that several local congregations host food banks or pantries or invite low-income people from their community to a soup kitchen or a sit-down dinner. A *Grow to Give* garden at a congregational facility is an ideal circle of care that starts with a garden and ends with needy people enjoying the healthiest food possible right where it has been grown.

Regardless of whether a congregation or independent entity is running a food outreach program, most do not have sufficient, if any, refrigeration that enables fresh produce to be stored.

This means that donations must be given just before or during the hours when people arrive to receive food. It follows that harvesting must occur as close to the time of distribution as possible. Learning the necessary timing is a simple matter of contacting the people running the target program and asking them when it is best to bring the vegetables to accommodate their distribution procedures.

A Grow to Give garden at a congregational facility is an ideal circle of care that starts with a garden and ends with needy people enjoying the healthiest food possible right where it has been grown.

If this is impractical, another option is to contact Island Harvest, (<http://www.islandharvest.org/page.aspx?name=contactus>) one of the largest providers of food to hunger programs on Long Island. Island Harvest will arrange to pick up donated vegetables at your convenience and even provide bags and containers for them. The organization has the capability to make sure the produce gets quickly to clients somewhere on Long Island. Among the non-profits it supplies with food, besides food banks and soup kitchens, are senior citizen and child care centers and community houses for people with mental disabilities or chronic illnesses. Other effective organizations that will provide pick up and distribution include Long Island Food Not Bombs (<http://www.lifnb.com>) and LI Cares (<http://www.licares.org>).

Preparing Vegetables for Donation: Edible Bouquets



When you buy vegetables in a store, you probably expect them to be free of dirt, dead leaves and all but minor blemishes, and presented in heads or bunches that can be easily handled.

People who reach out to food banks for grocery help have similar expectations about donated food. Muddy vegetables or vegetables that are wilted are likely to be refused or thrown out, so send vegetables to food banks or pantries that are as clean and fresh as possible.

A good way to think about preparing leafy vegetables for donation is to imagine them as edible bouquets.

Wash them, trim them and use a rubber band or twist tie to gather their lovely leaves into irresistible bunches.

Use bags for fruiting vegetables like tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and green beans. If you have the time, separate them into family sized portions. The better your congregation's vegetables look, the more likely they will be eaten.

To further encourage fresh vegetable use, gather some simple recipes, put them on index cards and put them in with the vegetables. Offering recipes can encourage the use of highly nutritious but less commonly served vegetables.



Best Vegetables to Grow and Give

The list below is based on conversations with people who have long experience running food banks. Consider which produce is most popular and recognizable to recipients (and this may vary with culture or ethnicity, for example); which vegetables are most productive, i.e. which vegetables will yield the most, given the available space; which can be replanted successively as the season goes on; and which are sturdy enough to survive handling without deteriorating.

Most Popular Produce

Tomatoes—plant cherries for early harvest, full-size for summer harvest

Green Peppers—fryers or globe

Cucumbers

Basil

Collards

Green Beans

Carrots

Hot Peppers

Zucchini

Lettuce

Less Popular Produce

Some of the healthiest vegetables and easiest to grow are not necessarily most familiar to many people.

These include:

Kale

Eggplant

Broccoli

Spinach

Swiss Chard

Escarole

Kale

Most Productive Vegetables

Pole Beans

Tatsoi

Bush Beans

Zucchini

Spinach

Collards

Kale

Swiss Chard

Lettuce

Turnips

Tomatoes

Peppers

The Membership Bonus

As described earlier in this guide, establishing a *Grow to Give* garden brings new feelings of unity and camaraderie to religious congregations. The mission to help others comes alive, actualized by the garden over the first season and every one thereafter.

Maintaining existing membership and attracting new members is an on-going challenge for every denomination. An established *Grow to Give* garden may be just the extra element that convinces a potential member to join, or causes a wavering member to rethink a decision to leave.



A reason to position your garden where members and non-members can see it, even if they are just driving by, is that your garden is a public statement of concern and solidarity with the community where you live.

It proclaims, in living color, “Yes, we care.”



CONCLUSION

Even though most of their gardens did not get planted until late spring or early summer, the ten congregations that LICAN assisted in 2012 donated 2,235 pounds of vegetables to people who are victims of food insecurity. That's more than a ton of food that helped keep people healthy.

Your congregation can add to that total. Among your members, perhaps there are people who know how to grow food or do so at their homes. If you have the will, you can raise the money and other resources you need for a garden, perhaps in social justice funds or special grants from your denomination. You can be resourceful and ask members for donations of money, tools, and equipment, and reach out to local merchants who might be willing to help with a project that benefits the community.

Remember that after the first year when you build the garden, the expense and labor for the years following will be much less costly. After the initial investment of constructing the garden and obtaining the basic tools and maintenance supplies, yearly expenses will center primarily on seeds, seedlings, and soil amendments.

Many congregations have already risen to the challenge of nurturing our planet by greening congregational purchases, saving energy, and using natural cleaners, for example.

Establishing a *Grow to Give* garden takes those congregational greening efforts to a new and deeper level. A vegetable garden creates connection to the earth and heightens consciousness about the weather and the climate. Organic gardening exemplifies connection with nature. Avoiding the use of environmentally damaging chemicals is an idea that can hopefully spread to congregants' homes, yards, and gardens. Gardening supports the concepts of eating locally grown food and the importance of communities developing the capacity to be self-sustaining. An engagement with growing food using organic techniques raises awareness about the industrial food system with its reliance on a barrage of chemicals that can destroy long-term soil fertility.

It is our hope that inspired by the experiences of our 10 pioneer gardens, religious congregations will recognize that growing food to give to those in need can be a powerful way to unite a community in positive social action.

"The man/woman who has planted a garden feels that he/she has done something for the good of the world."—
Vita Sackville-West

Appendix

- *Grow to Give* Meeting Handout Used for Garnering Support
- Sample Outreach Fliers Used to Attract Volunteers
- Book and Seed Resources
- Catalog Information on Organic Pesticides and Fungicides



Long Island Community Agriculture Network

The Interfaith Community Service Garden Project

GROW to GIVE

The Long Island Community Agriculture Network (LICAN) is piloting a project to help local religious organizations, churches, synagogues, and mosques create community service gardens on their congregational lands and, using congregational volunteers, grow fresh vegetables to contribute to local food pantries and soup kitchens.



LICAN Can Facilitate
Garden Mentoring • Garden Bed Construction • Community Outreach

Congregational sites for this project need arable land, water, volunteers, fundraising capacity, and the infrastructure to support a service garden.

For further information contact: heather@lican.org or larry@lican.org

This community agriculture project is facilitated by LICAN, a not-for-profit project of the Open Space Institute's Citizen Action Program and partially funded by The Long Island Community Foundation and the Horace and Amy Hagedorn Fund
LONG ISLAND COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE NETWORK www.lican.org



<http://www.lican.org>



Benefits of a Community Service Garden

- Provides food for a food pantry
- Fulfills the moral/spiritual commitment to feed the hungry
- Stimulates Social Interaction & Cooperation
- Teaches life-long skills that are a defense against hunger
- Beautifies property
- Improves health
- Reduces food budget if some produce is kept for organizational use
- Reduces costs of and environmental impact of lawn care
- Creates opportunity for recreation, exercise, therapy, and education
- Opens up possible career paths for youngsters
- Provides opportunities for intergenerational and cross-cultural connections

Benefits of Gardens for Children

A garden is an outdoor classroom laboratory, attracting countless organisms, each a great opportunity to teach children about the complex and fascinating ecosystem of which we are a part. Gardening provides opportunities for children to explore, wonder, inquire, create and experiment. It is remarkable how quickly children establish connections with nature by planting seeds, nurturing plants, creating compost, or examining insects. Both anecdotal and research-based evidence show that the use of an outdoor or indoor garden can improve science test scores, build positive character traits, motivate children to make healthier foods choices, and develop an appreciation for the environment. Opportunities abound to improve reading and math skills through gardening. Best of all, gardening is fun!

Source: American Community Gardening Association

www.communitygarden.org

Long Island Community Agriculture Network

A project of The Open Space Institute, Inc., Citizen Action Program

OSI is a nonprofit public charity exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c)(3) and 509 (a)(1) of the IRS code.

LICAN Executive Committee

Frances Cerra Whittlesey, Lawrence Foglia, Heather Forest

50 Summit Drive, Huntington NY 11743 • www.lican.org



Long Island Community Agriculture Network

GROW to GIVE *Participating Congregations* **2012**

Temple Beth El, Huntington, NY

Saint Hugh of Lincoln Roman Catholic Church, Huntington Station, NY

St John's Episcopal Church, Cold Spring Harbor, NY

Huntington Jewish Center, Huntington, NY

Dix Hills United Methodist Church, Dix Hills, NY

Bethany Presbyterian Church, Huntington Station, NY

Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center, Commack, NY

Kehillath Shalom, Cold Spring Harbor, NY

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington, NY

Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock, Manhasset, NY



You Can Grow Fresh Produce for Food Pantries & Community Kitchens



Less than 10% of the food donated to Island Harvest, the largest distributor of food to pantries and kitchens, is fresh produce. You can make a difference by starting a congregational community service garden to provide vegetables to Long Islanders in need. Island Harvest will arrange to pick up regular, scheduled donations from your garden (call 516-294-8258). You can also donate your fresh produce to *Long Island Food Not Bombs* (www.lifnb.com), a group of volunteers that distributes fresh food each Tuesday night, year-round, to hundreds of people at 7PM on the corner of East 5th Street and Fairground Avenue in Huntington Station and, on other nights, to diverse locations across Long Island. You can also set up a relationship with particular food pantry or community kitchen near your garden and deliver the donations to them.

Partner with Local Food Pantries

Call in advance to find out whether the pantry is able to take fresh produce, since some cannot, and find out when to bring it to accommodate their distribution procedures.

For Example- In the Huntington Area:

- **Helping Hand Rescue Mission**, 225 Broadway, Huntington Station 631-351-6996
Tues-Fri. 10:00 am-12:00 pm and 1:00pm-4:00 pm (they can deliver directly to needy families)
- **Community Food Council**: 90 East 5th Street, Huntington Station 631-549-1329
Mon-Fri 10am-12pm
- **Long Island Food Not Bombs**: Distributes fresh food, year-round to people at 7 PM on the corner of East 5th St. and Fairground Ave. in Huntington Station. (www.lifnb.com)
- **The Refuge- A Christian Fellowship**: 235 Elwood Road, East Northport, NY 11731
Joseph's Storehouse Food Pantry (serving Huntington Residents) (gardeners can drop off fresh vegetables on Friday or Saturday morning)
- **Bethel AME Church**, 291 Park Avenue, Huntington, 631-549-5014
- **St. Hugh of Lincoln Parish Outreach**, 21 East 9th Street, Huntington Station 631-271-8986
- **St. Patrick RC Church**: 400 Main Street, Huntington 631-385-3311 X 213.
- **St. Elizabeth RC Church**: 181 Wolf Hill Road, Melville 631-271-4455 X 124.
- **Suffolk Y JCC Food Pantry**: 74 Hauppauge Road, Commack. (631) 462-9800

Websites to help you get started growing vegetables

- Plant a Row: <http://www.growarow.org/tips.htm>
- Plant a Row Junior: <http://www.growarow.org/tips.htm>
- A Community Garden Toolkit:
<http://extension.missouri.edu/explorepdf/miscpubs/mp0906.pdf>
- American Community Gardening Association :www.communitygarden.org
- Cornell University Gardening Resources: Vegetable growing guide:
<http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening/scene0391.html>
- Cornell Cooperative Extension Suffolk <http://ccesuffolk.org/horticulture-leaflets/>



Long Island Community Agriculture Network: A Project of The Open Space Institute Inc, Citizens Action Program.

<http://www.lican.org>



LONG ISLAND COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE NETWORK

Connecting people to the land, gardening skills, and fresh, locally grown food

Seeds of Success for a Community Service Garden

There are some essential prerequisites to ensure successful outcomes in a congregational community service garden.

- The members of the congregation and the administration need a unified desire to establish a service garden to provide fresh produce to a local food pantry or community kitchen.
- The organization needs to have access to an appropriate site to raise vegetable produce with an adequate supply of water and sunlight.
- Necessary funding should be dedicated for the establishment of high quality soil and to provide gardeners with the infrastructure, tools, equipment and materials necessary to garden successfully.
- Though there are various styles of garden management, one person needs to be determined as a paid or volunteer garden supervisor or manager. A team of two, a gardener and a community organizer, who can share responsibilities, works well.
- The size of the garden will determine the number and schedule of volunteers necessary to successfully grow vegetables.
- The garden will function smoothly and productively only if there is a well-established and coordinated system of communication between the supervisor and the volunteers to schedule the various tasks in planting, maintaining, harvesting and delivering the produce.

Long Island Community Agriculture Network

A project of The Open Space Institute, Inc., Citizen Action Program

OSI is a nonprofit public charity exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c)(3) and 509 (a)(1) of the IRS code.

50 Summit Drive, Huntington NY 11743 • email: Frances@lican.org • www.lican.org

heather@lican.org • larry@lican.org

Bethany Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Dr. James B. Rea, Jr., Pastor

425 Maplewood Road, Huntington Station, NY 11746



Long Island **CAN**
Community Agriculture Network

GROW to GIVE PROJECT

Bethany Presbyterian Church is part of the Interfaith Community Service Garden Project of the Long Island Community Agriculture Network. This project facilitates the creation of community service gardens on congregational land that are tended by congregants to produce vegetables for donation to local food pantries.



The Beds are built!
It's Time to Plant Our
Vegetables!

Community Service
Garden Volunteers
Welcome!

To Volunteer Contact:



Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center
74 Hauppauge Road, Commack, NY 11725
631-462-9800 • www.suffolkyjcc.org



Long Island CAN
Community Agriculture Network

GROW to GIVE PROJECT

The Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center is part of the Interfaith Community Service Garden Project of the Long Island Community Agriculture Network. This project facilitates the creation of community service gardens to produce vegetables for donation to local food pantries.

A community service garden has been built and planted on-site at the Suffolk Y JCC that will produce fresh vegetables for the Suffolk Y JCC Food Pantry!



Volunteer Gardeners of all ages and experience can participate!

For information contact:
Service Garden Coordinator

This community agriculture project is facilitated by LICAN, a not-for-profit project of the Open Space Institute's Citizen Action Program and partially funded by The Long Island Community Foundation and the Horace and Amy Hagedorn Fund
LONG ISLAND COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE NETWORK www.lican.org



Huntington Jewish Center

510 Park Avenue
Huntington, NY 11743
Phone: (631) 427-1089 · Fax: (631) 427-8118



GROW to GIVE PROJECT

The Huntington Jewish Center is part of the Interfaith Community Service Garden Project of the Long Island Community Agriculture Network. This project facilitates the creation of community service gardens on congregational land that are tended by congregants to produce vegetables for donation to local food pantries



**Community Service
Garden Volunteers
Needed!**



Gardeners of all ages and experience welcome!
Contact:

This community agriculture project is facilitated by LICAN, a not-for-profit project of the Open Space Institute's Citizen Action Program and partially funded by The Long Island Community Foundation and the Horace and Amy Hagedorn Fund
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Helpful Gardening Resource Books

- Ausubel, Ken. Seeds of Change : The Living Treasure: The Passionate Story of the Growing Movement to Restore Biodiversity and Revolutionize the Way we Think about Food. 1st paperback ed. San Francisco, Calif.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994.
- Ball, Jeff. Rodale's Garden Problem Solver: Vegetables, Fruits, and Herbs. Emmaus, Pa.: Rodale Press, 1988.
- Bradley, Fern Marshall, and Barbara W. Ellis. Rodale's all-New Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening : The Indispensable Resource for Every Gardener. Emmaus, Pa.; New York: Rodale Press; Distributed in the book trade by St. Martin's, 1992.
- Coleman, Eliot, Four-Season Harvest: Organic Vegetables from Your Home Garden all Year Around. White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green Pub., 1999.
- Coleman, Eliot. The New Organic Grower : A Master's Manual of Tools and Techniques for the Home and Market Gardener. Rev. and expand ed. White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green Pub. Co., 1995.
- Coleman, Eliot. The New Organic Grower's Four-Season Harvest : How to Harvest Fresh Organic Vegetables from Your Home Garden all Year Long. Post Mills, VT: Chelsea Green Pub., 1992.
- Harper, Peter, Chris Madsen, and Jeremy Light. The Natural Garden Book : A Holistic Approach to Gardening. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994.
- Martin, Deborah L., Grace Gershuny, and Jerry Minnich. The Rodale Book of Composting. New, rev. ed. Emmaus, Pa.; New York: Rodale Press; St. Martin's Press distributor, 1992.
- Massingham, Rhonda. Bugs, Slugs & Other Thugs : Controlling Garden Pests Organically. Pownal, Vt.: Storey Communications, 1991.
- Morash, Marian. The Victory Garden Cookbook. 1st ed. New York: Knopf, 1982.

Philbrick, Helen Louise Porter, and John H. Philbrick. The Bug Book : Harmless Insect Controls.

Charlotte, Vt.: Garden Way Pub., 1974.

Riotte, Louise. Carrots Love Tomatoes: Secrets of Companion Planting for Successful

Gardening. Charlotte, Vt.: Garden Way Pub., 1981; 1975.

Smith, Miranda. Backyard Fruits and Berries: Everything You Need to Know about Planting and

Growing Fruits and Berries in Your Own Backyard. Emmaus, Pa.; New York: Rodale Press;

Distributed in the book trade by St. Martin's Press, 1994.

Smittle, Delilah, Dayna S. Lane, and Rodale Press. Rodale's Complete Garden Problem Solver :

Instant Answers to the most Common Gardening Questions. Emmaus, Pa.; New York:

Rodale Press; Distributed to the book trade by St. Martin's Press, 1997.

Stein, Sara Bonnett. Noah's Garden: Restoring the Ecology of our Own Back Yards. Boston:

Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

Stein, Sara Bonnett. Planting Noah's Garden : Further Adventures in Backyard Ecology. Boston,

Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Vegetable Seed Catalog Sampler

Catalogs are useful sources of gardening information

Johnny's Selected Seeds (www.johnnyseeds.com) 1-877-JOHNNYS

Fedco Garden Supplies (www.fedcoseeds.com) 207-426-9900

Harris Seeds (www.harriseseeds.com) 1-800-544-7938

Tomato Growers Supply Co. (www.tomatogrowers.com) 1-888-478-7333

Burpee Gardening (www.burpee.com) 1-800-888-1447

Long Island Cauliflower Association (www.licauliflower.com) 1-631-727-2212)

Free Vegetable Seeds are sometimes available for Not-For-Profit Organizations.

America the Beautiful Fund will donate 100 packets for the \$14.95 cost of shipping.

<http://healthyshasta.org/downloads/gardening/Free-Seeds.pdf>

High Mowing Seeds will send 50 packets of organic seeds for the \$10 cost of Shipping.

<http://www.highmowingseeds.com/machform/view.php?id=7>

Insecticides

PYGANIC®:

Broad spectrum knockdown power. Pyrethrin spray flushes insects and mites from hiding and provides rapid knockdown and kill of more than 40 greenhouse and outdoor insect pests.

NOTE: Cannot be shipped to Canada or Alaska. Restricted uses in CA.

9192 Pyganic® 1.4% Qt.
Treats 1/2-2 acres/qt. **\$73.50.**

9532 Pyganic® 5% Qt.
Treats 2-7 acres/qt. **\$189.00.**
Case of 6 Qts. @ \$166.85 ea.



Pyganic®

AzaGuard®

7046 SAFER® BRAND

DIATOMACEOUS EARTH:

NEW Fast, effective control of crawling insects. Kills ants, earwigs, cockroaches, silverfish, crickets, fleas, millipedes, centipedes, and even bed bugs. Contains fossilized remains of diatoms. Kills by ingestion or by contact with the powder, which cuts the exoskeleton, causing dehydration within 48 hrs. Insects cannot develop a resistance to it since there are no chemicals to which they can build up an immunity. **4 Lb. \$12.25.**

9370

SAFER® INSECT SOAP:

Organic control of aphids, whiteflies, and spider mites. Clear, soap-like liquid composed of fatty acid salts, with no petroleum additives. Leaves a pleasant saddle soap scent. 16 oz. bottle makes 6 gal. of spray. NOTE: Per DOT regulations, this item cannot be shipped outside the continental U.S., must ship via ground transportation, and is limited to 1 per order. **16 Oz. \$13.95.**

9713 DIPEL® DF:

An excellent control for leaf-eating caterpillars. A dry-flowable formulation of Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt var. kurstaki), it dissolves better in water than wettable powders. Granulated. Use 1/4-2 lb./acre. Includes mixing rates for smaller areas. Potency of 32,000 IU/mg. **1 Lb. \$26.95.**

7138 SUFFOIL-X®:

NEW Effectively controls a broad range of insects, mites and fungi. A unique concentrate of pre-emulsified, highly refined, high paraffinic, low aromatic oil that suffocates eggs, larvae, nymphs, and adults of soft bodied insects and mites. Excellent compatibility with pesticides labeled for use with oil. Cannot ship to AK and NV. **Gal. \$34.95. Case of 4 @ \$31.00 ea.**

9068 ENTRUST®:

Extremely effective against Colorado Potato Beetles. A formulation of Spinosad that can be used alternately with Bt to reduce the chances of creating resistant insect strains. It has a two-year minimum shelf-life and covers between 8 and 16 acres. 1-lb. package contains 4 4-oz. bags. NOTE: Cannot ship to Canada. **1 Lb. \$649.00.**

9045 MYCOTROL® O:

Contact insecticide absorbed through the pest's cuticle (skin). Containing Beauveria bassiana strain GHA, a fungus commonly found in soil, it controls the nymphal and larval stages of a wide variety of soft-bodied insects in greenhouse, field, and nursery crops. Thorough coverage is required to achieve control. Typical usage rate: 1/2-2 qt. /100 gal. of water. **Qt. \$109.00.**

AZAGUARD®:

Broad spectrum insecticidal control. A 3% Azadirachtin formulation derived from Neem Oil, it can be used to effectively reduce many different insect infestations in/around your facility, including aphids. For greenhouse or field use. May be applied with sprayers and foggers.

7037 NEW AZAGUARD® RTU:

Cannot ship to CA. **\$16.95.**

9239 AZAGUARD®: Qt. \$139.00.

MONTEREY

GARDEN INSECT SPRAY:

Powerful weapon against Colorado Potato Beetles. The active ingredient, Spinosad, is very effective, and when used alternately with a Bt-based insecticide, helps prevent the creation of resistant insect strains. Labeled for residential use.

9107 16 Oz. \$17.95.

9481 Qt. \$26.95.

9484 Gal. \$78.50.

SLUGGO®:

Kills snails and slugs organically, while fertilizing your soil. A unique blend of mollusk bait and iron phosphate that breaks down into fertilizer. Ingestion causes feeding to cease for immediate plant protection, and death within 3-6 days. Granular. Covers 1,000 sq.ft./lb. Non-toxic to children, pets, or wildlife. NOTE: Cannot ship to Canada. Please allow 5-7 business days for delivery of #9208.

9003 2.5 Lb. \$19.95.

9184 10 Lb. \$62.50.







































***9208 40 Lb. \$188.00.**

Zone A add \$9.00. Zone B add \$24.00.



Follow our blog for pest and disease control tips

GrowingIdeas.Johnnyseeds.com

Insecticides																										
P=Preferred by Johnny's Research Farm																										
Insect graphics courtesy of: Texas AgriLife Extension Service																										
Azaguard® 		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●		●	●	●	●
Dipel® DF  			●		P	P					P													P	P	
Entrust®  			●	●	●	●	●	●														P	●	●		
Monterey Garden Insect Spray 			●		●	●	●	●	●														●	●	●	
Mycotrol® O 		●			●	●	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●					●		●			●
Pyganic®  		●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●		●	P	P	P	●			P	●	P	●	P		●	●
Safer® Diatomaceous Earth 																		●								
Safer® Insect Soap 		P		●	●	●	●		●		●			●	●	●	P		P				●			P
Sluggo® 																		P								
Suffoil-X 		●													●	●	●						●			●

