



*from the desk of Joan E. Black  
FFGC 2009-2011 Chairman, Community Gardening*

## **FFGC Districts ... WEIGH IN TODAY!**

### **COMMUNITY GARDENING ... *It's all about PEOPLE!***

Dear FFGC friends and fellow gardeners,

Community gardening is having a wonderful resurgence across the nation and we have a unique opportunity to be a part of this right here in Florida! Although it is an ancient agrarian concept and a cooperative effort of many to cultivate a specific area for food production, it has now evolved into being more than just harvesting and sharing edible produce.

Your initial introduction to Community Gardening was with Community 'PEP' Gardens. Now we are going to build on this and expand our knowledge and purpose. I have put together the enclosed booklet to help you better understand the changing concept and role of Community Gardening. It provides some basic information as well as valuable reference and resource material.

Community gardening is an opportunity for us to create social change, and encourage intergenerational cooperation and interaction through awareness, education, experience, example, friendship and socialization. The more diverse group of individuals involved, the greater the opportunity to create a truly cohesive, self-sustaining (very important) ongoing community project that provides a specific sense of 'place' within a neighborhood or town... urban, suburban, or rural. It brings PEOPLE together and empowers them with a new sense of pride accomplishment and ownership as they learn about environmental issues, water conservation, organic gardening alternatives, pest control, and nutrition.

Community gardening is high on the list of priorities of the **National Garden Clubs** agenda. *Beautify Blight* is the NGC President's Special Project. Check out this link on NGC website:  
<http://www.gardenclub.org/SpecialProjects/BeautifyBlight.aspx>

**FFGC** is proud to be part of the **NGC** initiative to promote Community gardening, and we are reaching out to all of our District Clubs and Circles to get involved in our communities, and see where we can dig in and '*Grow Green, Productive and Beautiful*' together.

Florida is unique in that its climate allows us to 'plant' and 'grow' for most of the year. **FFGC** members, especially some of our more senior members, have a wealth of knowledge, experience, and resources to be at the forefront of expanding this new directive to include growing a community and their PEOPLE from the roots up. By lending a helping hand and reaching out and actually **MENTORING** as well as physically participating with people in the community **FFGC** clubs and circles not only encourage community involvement, but bring a greater awareness of the mission of **FFGC** and the many other diverse and exciting educational opportunities, programs, events, and projects that are available through membership.

- A Community Garden creates a specific sense of '*place*' within a neighborhood or town. It offers a defined area for gardening, food production, learning, play, socialization, and interaction.
- It brings people together, lifts the spirit, and strengthens the individual and the community.
- Gardening is an inclusive and intergenerational activity. Whether young or a senior; able-bodied or challenged; working or retired, there is something for everyone in a community garden.
- Community Gardening is people working together to cultivate a community, and harvest new friends along the way.

## *Where and How Does MY Garden Grow?*

As we expand our objectives for Community Gardening I will:

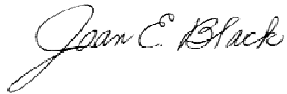
- Supply extensive resource and reference materials including books and Internet links.
- Provide direction in recognizing what 'is' and 'is not' considered a community garden.
- Encourage you to create interest in Community Gardening as you set goals, organize and identify resources that may already exist within your neighborhood or community.
- Help you to target, and utilize the unique talents and skills that exist within the membership of your own individual clubs and circles.
- Create a 'networking' system that will allow for questions, feedback, sharing (including photos), and communication among all of the District X Clubs and Circles as well as other FFGC Districts

So get ready to plant the seeds of a Community Garden in your area today! The possibilities are endless, and each garden will be unique to its location. Community gardening can be a tool for neighborhood revitalization, youth learning, recreation, and even therapy for seniors and the disabled.

I look forward to working with, and hopefully meeting many of you in the near future. I am always available to answer your questions or help in any way. I will be checking in often to see how you are doing and to share information.

*May all your weeds be wildflowers!*

Warmest personal regards,



Joan E. Black,  
*FFGC Committee Chairman/District X Committee Chairman for Community Gardening  
Member of District X; District X webmaster ([www.districtx.org](http://www.districtx.org)); The Garden Club of Indian River County and  
Allamanda Circle*

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Information and Resources for establishing Community Gardens is also available from the *American Community Gardening Association* at: <http://communitygarden.org>

*FYI*, in District X Visit the Garden Club of Indian River County Community Therapy Garden listing on the ACGA website at: <http://acga.localharvest.org/garden/M724>

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**Much of the material provided here is a compilation and adaptation of material from the organizations, websites or books listed. This reference and resource material is intended to help you get started and to promote a better understanding of the concept of NGC and FFGC Community Gardening incentives.**

**Additional information will be provided regularly. Remember to utilize many of the resources that are available to you through the other FFGC Committees listed in the BOI (Youth, Junior Gardeners, Environmental, Horticulture, Landscape Design, Master Gardeners, Butterflies, Garden Therapy, Grants, Civic, Water, etc.) There is an abundance of experience within our own FFGC community and many other elements can often be included in your community garden with a little help and MENTORING from your friends... *Finest Friends God Created.***

# Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

*Charter Member of:*  
National Garden Clubs, Inc.  
Deep South Region



## **COMMUNITY GARDENING**

### RESOURCES & REFERENCE MATERIAL

*Compiled by*

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*Dated: September, 2009*

## WHAT WOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED A COMMUNITY GARDEN?

First, there is a need to define and delineate what would and would not be considered a 'COMMUNITY GARDEN' as defined here.

Many Garden Club projects such as Civic, School, Youth or Therapy Gardening Projects to name a few, do involve a 'community of individuals', but basically projects are restricted to a defined group of people and has a limited scope that involves participation of Garden Club Members and these specific people within narrow parameters. However, many of the elements of these projects could be included in a Community Garden especially as it pertains to education.

## WHY A COMMUNITY GARDEN?

Community gardens foster cooperation among many while enhancing safety and environment. Community gardens can transform a run-down or blighted area into something productive where people can celebrate together and learn from each other while working in the garden and through outdoor events and social gatherings on site.

Community gardens:

- Increase community cohesion and pride
- Create foundation for Neighborhood Revitalization: transformation of vacant lots or blighted areas.
- Provide personal satisfaction
- Supplement food budgets by providing fresh food
- Encourages improved nutrition
- Youth learning
- Recreation
- Building relationships and cooperation
- Learn where food comes from
- Fosters creativity and sense of place
- Increase self-reliance

## WHAT IS A COMMUNITY GARDEN?

A community garden is an intergenerational COOPERATIVE gardening effort where people share land to grow food for themselves, their families, or their neighbors or to distribute to food cooperatives.

Community gardens may be established in many urban, suburban or rural neighborhood/industrial/city settings including community centers, churches, vacant lots, backyards, city parks, farmland, and more.

# HOW TO START A COMMUNITY GARDEN

Every garden site is unique to its local surrounding community. Considerations of this unique local culture are embraced in every step of the planning process.

Community gardens have so many functions! They teach where food comes from, encourage cooperation, grow fresh food to eat and share with neighborhood members, improve nutrition, beautify, build community, foster learning from each other, provide exercise, and reduce crime. Gardens offer a non-competitive activity for children after school, and can be developed into creative urban centers, and more.

To get a garden growing:

## **Step 1: Organize**

Organize a meeting with your District's Clubs and Circles who are knowledgeable, and can or should care about a garden. Help them to understand what work is involved in starting and caring for a garden and start right away to work to gain their commitment to the project.

*Here are some tips:*

- Talk to as many people as you can.
- Share your gardening ideas with neighbors.
- Once you have interested people, organize a planning meeting.
- Brainstorm about the skills and resources that already exist in your Club or Circle.
- Brainstorm about what people would like to do.
- As a group, make a decision and commitment to work together.
- What uses do you have in mind? Does everybody agree on these uses? Communicate about these ideas before the garden design is off the paper and the gardening begins.

## **Step 2: Decide on the Garden Goals**

A.) Utilize Garden Planning Worksheet (on following pages) to assess group needs and goals.

B.) Does the group want to own or lease the land to insure that it is protected as the desired gardening/green space? Ownership (or tenancy) is necessary in order to secure funding for improvements, which can be another goal.

C.) Does the group want to seek funding and donations to work on the property? Are they willing to assume the long-term responsibility for planting, maintenance and even potential liability for the site?

## **Step 3: Survey the Site**

A.) Is this the right place for a garden?

B.) Access to sun? Access to water? Access to bathroom facilities?

C.) Are nearest neighbors or businesses interested or willing to help?

D.) How is the site currently used? Will this interfere with the project? Get input from the surrounding neighbors or property owners who see the site *everyday*.


Get a soil test. Call *Cooperative Extension Service* for a test.

#### Step 4: Research and Gather Resources

- Create a list of items needed for the garden based on the design. Include tools, supplies, materials, and services like tilling, fencing, water lines, and lumber for beds, and signs.
- Come up with a budget for these things and then see what you can get donated or funded.
- Seek cooperation with community groups.

#### Step 5: Design the Garden

- Determine how you are going to set up the garden.
- See if you can get the assistance of a landscape architect or nursery to help with the design.

If not, make a map: 

- Measure the lot's length & width.
- Using graph paper, make a scale drawing of the lot.
- Determine how many boxes will equal one foot. For example, if the paper is 100 boxes long, and your lot is 50 to 100 feet long, let 1 box = 1 foot. If the paper is 300 boxes long and the lot is 100 feet let 3 boxes= 1 foot.
- Using the measurements you've worked out, draw the outline of the garden on the graph paper.
- Draw an arrow on your map pointing North. This will show where shadows of buildings and trees will fall.
- Mark where the closest streets, sidewalks, houses and hydrants are.
- Draw in anything else on the lot that's permanent. This includes trees, bushes, mounds of rubble that are too big to move, patches of concrete, large holes, and paths where people cut through the lot.
- Take your map to the site to check where things are. For large objects like trees, measure exactly where they are. Because of their large size they often fool you, so be sure to mark where the trunk is.

#### Garden Planning Worksheet: for (*\*name of Community Garden*)

*\*Once you have determined that you are going ahead with establishing a Community Garden try and give it a name. This will provide it with an 'identity', and will be useful in all of your soliciting, fundraising, and publicity.*

To plan the garden, answering the following questions might help:

**Who** is interested in the garden project? (list the names where you can- it is good to have at least 8 committed people to help keep up the garden.)

- Neighbors
- Nearby residents
- Businesses
- School or youth group
- Church
- Any other community-based, health or service organization

**Why** do I/we want to start a garden?

**What** is the purpose or use for this garden?

**What** kind of plants do we want to grow?

\_\_\_ Vegetables \_\_\_ Fruit \_\_\_ Annual Flowers \_\_\_ Herbs \_\_\_ Shrubs \_\_\_ Native Plants  
\_\_\_ Trees \_\_\_ (Other) \_\_\_\_\_

**When** do you want to start the garden?

**Who** will use the garden?

**How** will we inform the neighborhood about the garden, if needed? (flyers, newsletter article, word of mouth, hold a planning meeting?)

**Where** will the garden be located? Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**How** will you obtain permission to use the site, and for how long? Do you know how to gain permission, and is a land use contract needed

**How** will the garden be maintained? (Weekly/monthly work parties; Adopt-a-plot; Chores; Sign up list etc.)

**How** will the food and flowers, etc. be dispersed at harvest time?

**What** is the condition of the site now?

Does anything on the site need to be moved?

Trash  Soil  Rocks  Weeds  Structures  Appliances  
 Shrubs  Cement  Posts  Tree  Fence  Car  Other

**Are there the basics necessary for growing things?**

A.) **Sunlight:** (*check one*)

- Full sun, at least 6-8 hours of sunlight?  
 Partial sun, at least 4 hours of direct sunlight per day  
 Shady, site does not get much sunlight  
 Part sun/shade, part gets direct sunlight, part is shady

B.) **Water:** *where will water come from?*

Private home  Public/Commercial address  Apt. Building  Public Utilities  
 Store water in containers on site  Will need containers/rain barrels

C.) **Tools and Supplies:** (plants, soil, shovels, rakes, garden hoes, water hose, watering cans, tool shed, tarp, tiller, pick-up truck) Is the tool shed secured?

**What** tools does the group have already?

**What** tools does the group need?

D.) **Funds and Donations:**

**What** funds or donations are needed?

**Who** can offer funds or donations?

**What** additional garden features are desired?

Benches  Tables  Raised Beds  Sitting Area  Shade Structure  
 Fencing  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**What** are the things I/we don't know and need to know?

**What** things do we need and have to get? Where will we/how will we get them?

## Community Resources Worksheet:

Try to take advantage of things going on in your community. How can you involve all of these people in the garden?

- Who already knows about gardening?
- Who knows how to put up a fence or build raised beds or sign posts?
- Who has tools? a truck?
- Who will turn over the soil?
- Who sits out on their steps/porch?
- Who has a telephone?
- Who is your block captain/neighborhood watch commander?
- Who is home during the day?
- Who's the best cook on the block?
- Which kids ring your doorbell the most?
- What kinds of jobs do people have?
- Who works in an office and can make copies?
- Who works at a hardware store/home improvement center?
- Who works for the City/County?
- Who runs their own business?
- Who is home during the day?
- Who baby-sits?
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Remember**, the more you add to your garden, the more work and people will be needed to keep it up.

# RESOURCES

## **Horticultural information:**

- Florida Federation of Garden Clubs <http://www.ffgc.org>
- Cooperative Extension Service in your county
- Garden Clubs/Master Gardeners
- Horticultural Societies
- Garden Centers
- Local colleges or universities
- Agricultural businesses or corporations

## **Seeds:**

- America the Beautiful Fund
- 725 15th St. NW, Suite 605, Dept. AG
- Washington D.C. 20005
- (202) 838-1649
- [http://www.america-the-beautiful.org/free\\_seeds/index.php](http://www.america-the-beautiful.org/free_seeds/index.php)
  
- Garden Centers and Hardware Stores

## **Bedding plants:**

- Local nurseries
- Vocational-Tech Horticulture Department
- High school Horticulture classes
- Parks Department
- Seed cultivation

# BOOKS

## **\*Growing Communities: How to Build Community Through Community Gardening**

By: Jeanette Abi-Nader, David Buckley, Kendall Dunnigan and Kristen Markley (Author)  
Sold by: American Community Gardening Association \$40.00 Plus S&H: \$7.00

ACGA's publication, Growing Communities Curriculum, provides an in depth exploration of the practices and strategies community organizers can use to develop dynamic leaders and create strong programs using a participatory approach to community building. This 300+ page curriculum builds on the work of Cultivating Community and years of ACGA experiences, especially those of our From the Roots Up mentorship and training program.

This invaluable resource presents ten core principles of community building (chapter 1) that form the foundation for a participatory approach to leadership, community and organizational development. Strategies for implementing these principles are then discussed in terms of community organizing at the community garden level (chapter 2) and in how to create and strengthening a community garden organization (chapter 3).

Accompanying each of these core chapter concepts are a set of workshop curricula that walk the reader through the process of conducting a training on each topic. These curricula are based on workshops developed and presented by professional trainers. To strengthen the impact of these workshops, information on adult learning and workshop facilitation (chapter 4) is included. Finally, the Growing Communities Curriculum includes an appendix with resources lists, handouts and other useful information.

## **\*Cultivating Community: Principles and Practices for Community Gardening as a Community-Building Tool**

By: Karen Payne and Deborah Fryman (Author)  
Sold by: American Community Gardening Association \$8.00 US Plus S&H: \$5.00

In this ACGA publication, authors Karen Payne and Deborah Fryman explore basic principles and values of successful community empowerment programs of any kind, and illustrate how these principles have been applied to community gardens across the country. The document showcases how community gardening programs can advance community development, empower local leadership and nurture families, strengthen economic development and improve overall quality of life.

Funded by the Annie B. Casey Foundation it is intended as a resource for individuals, organizations and coalitions whose specific aim is to use gardens to empower people by building their skill and confidence to transform their lives and their communities. Cultivating Community provides useful tips on how to approach community gardening as an organizing tool and highlights specific practices and activities that have been proven to work. Stories and case studies from community gardens around the United States are featured.

## **City Bountiful: A Century of Community Gardening in America**

[Paperback]

By: Laura J. Lawson (Author)  
Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$16.99

## **Why We Garden: Cultivating a Sense of Place**

[Paperback]

By: Jim Nollman (Author)  
Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$17.95

## **Vegetable Gardening in Florida**

[Paperback]

By: James M. Stephens  
University Press of Florida <http://www.upf.com>  
ISBN 078-8130-1674-0 \$16.95

**Cubed Foot Gardening: Growing Vegetables in Raised, Intensive Beds**

[Paperback]

By: Christopher O. Bird (Author)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$12.89

**Square Foot Gardening: A New Way to Garden in Less Space with Less Work**

[Paperback]

By: Mel Bartholomew (Author)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$12.89

**Secrets of Companion Planting: Plants That Help, Plants That Hurt**

[Paperback]

By: Brenda Little (Author)

Sold by Amazon.com \$10.17

**Great Garden Companions: A Companion-Planting System for a Beautiful, Chemical-Free Vegetable Garden**

[Paperback]

By: Sally Jean Cunningham (Author)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$12.21

**Your Backyard Herb Garden: A Gardener's Guide to Growing Over 50 Herbs Plus How to Use Them in Cooking, Crafts, Companion Planting and More**

[Paperback]

By: Miranda Smith (Author)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$12.21

**The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Insect and Disease Control: A Complete Problem-Solving Guide to Keeping Your Garden and Yard Healthy...**

[Paperback]

By: Barbara W. Ellis (Editor), Fern Marshall Bradley (Editor)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$14.93

**The Edible Herb Garden (Edible Garden Series)**

[Paperback]

By: Rosalind Creasy (Author)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$11.21

**Edible Flowers: Desserts & Drinks**

[Paperback]

By: Cathy Wilkinson Barash (Author)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$13.22

**Accessible Gardening for People With Physical Disabilities: A Guide to Methods, Tools, and Plants**

[Paperback]

By: Janeen R. Adil (Author)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$16.95

**Healing Gardens: Therapeutic Benefits and Design Recommendations (Wiley Series in Healthcare and Senior Living Design)**

[Hardcover]

By: Clare Cooper Marcus (Editor), Marni Barnes (Editor)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$66.36

**Horticulture As Therapy: Principles and Practice**

[Paperback]

By: Sharon Pastor, Ph.D. Simson (Editor), Martha C. Straus (Editor)

Sold by: Amazon.com, LLC \$32.32

**The Easy-Care Gardening Expert**

[Paperback]

By: Dr. D. G. Hessayon (Author)

ISBN-0903505-44-4

Sold by: University Press of Florida <http://www.upf.com> \$16.00

*\*Also available through the FFGC Main Headquarters Store*

**The Pocket Vegetable Expert**

[Paperback]

By: Dr. D. G. Hessayon (Author)

ISBN-0903505-57-6 \$ 9.95

*\*Also available through the FFGC Main Headquarters Store*

**Vegetable Gardening in Florida**

[Paperback]

By: James M. Stephens (Author)

Sold by: University Press of Florida <http://www.upf.com> \$16.95

ISBN 978-0-8130-1674-0

**The Vegetable Gardener's Bible: Discover Ed's High-Yield W-O-R-D System for All North American Gardening Regions**

[Paperback]

By: Edward C. Smith (Author)

Sold by: Amazon.com \$15.72

*(W-O-R-D System means: **W**ide rows, **O**rganic methods, **R**aised beds, **D**eep soil)*

# LINKS

## **American Community Gardening Association**

1777 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43203-2040 USA

[info@communitygarden.org](mailto:info@communitygarden.org)

<http://communitygarden.org/learn/starting-a-community-garden.php>

Note: The ACGA has a wealth of information including downloadable Adobe Acrobat PDF files that include information on: Starting A Community Garden; Garden Action Plan; Food Systems Action Project; Starting Seeds; Art in the Garden; Fundraising, etc.

## **America The Beautiful Fund**

<http://www.america-the-beautiful.org/>

## **University Press of Florida**

<http://www.upf.com>

## **University of Florida**

<http://www.ufl.edu/>

## **Neighborhood Nutrition Network**

PO Box 12311, Gainesville, FL 32604

Phone: 352-377-6345 Fax: 352-377-8363 org Email: [nnn@nnninfo.org](mailto:nnn@nnninfo.org)

<http://www.nnninfo.org>

## **Nova Southeastern University**

<http://www.nova.edu/>

### **CNAP**

### ***Community Nutrition Awareness Project***

at the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Nova Southeastern University.

*A grant project dedicated to bettering people's lives through nutrition education and community building. contact us via phone at 954-262-3000 or through email at: [CNAP@nsu.nova.edu](mailto:CNAP@nsu.nova.edu)*

*The following steps are adapted from the American Community Garden Association's guidelines for launching a successful community garden in your neighborhood.*

## 10 STEPS TO STARTING A COMMUNITY GARDEN:

### **1. ORGANIZE A MEETING OF INTERESTED PEOPLE**

Determine whether a garden is really needed and wanted, what kind it should be (vegetable, flower, both, organic?), whom it will involve and who benefits. Invite neighbors, tenants, community organizations, gardening and horticultural societies, building superintendents (if it is at an apartment building)—in other words, anyone who is likely to be interested.

### **2. FORM A PLANNING COMMITTEE**

This group can be comprised of people who feel committed to the creation of the garden and have the time to devote to it, at least at this initial stage. Choose well-organized persons as garden coordinators. Form committees to tackle specific tasks: funding and partnerships, youth activities, construction and communication.

### **3. IDENTIFY ALL YOUR RESOURCES**

Do a community asset assessment. What skills and resources already exist in the community that can aid in the garden's creation? Contact local municipal planners about possible sites, as well as horticultural societies and other local sources of information and assistance. Look within your community for people with experience in landscaping and gardening. In Toronto contact the Toronto Community Garden Network.

### **4. APPROACH A SPONSOR**

Some gardens "self-support" through membership dues, but for many, a sponsor is essential for donations of tools, seeds or money. Churches, schools, private businesses or parks and recreation departments are all possible supporters. One garden raised money by selling "square inches" at \$5 each to hundreds of sponsors.

### **5. CHOOSE A SITE**

Consider the amount of daily sunshine (vegetables need at least six hours a day), availability of water, and soil testing for possible pollutants. Find out who owns the land. Can the gardeners get a lease agreement for at least three years? Will public liability insurance be necessary?

### **6. PREPARE AND DEVELOP THE SITE**

In most cases, the land will need considerable preparation for planting. Organize volunteer work crews to clean it, gather materials and decide on the design and plot arrangement.

### **7. ORGANIZE THE GARDEN**

Members must decide how many plots are available and how they will be assigned. Allow space for storing tools, making compost and don't forget the pathways between plots! Plant flowers or shrubs around the garden's edges to promote good will with non-gardening neighbors, passersby and municipal authorities.

### **8. PLAN FOR CHILDREN**

Consider creating a special garden just for kids--including them is essential. Children are not as interested in the size of the harvest but rather in the process of gardening. A separate area set aside for them allows them to explore the garden at their own speed.

### **9. DETERMINE RULES AND PUT THEM IN WRITING**

The gardeners themselves devise the best ground rules. We are more willing to comply with rules that we have had a hand in creating. Ground rules help gardeners to know what is expected of them. Think of it as a code of behavior. Some examples of issues that are best dealt with by agreed upon rules are: dues, how will the money be used? . How are plots assigned? Will gardeners share tools, meet regularly, handle basic maintenance?

### **10. HELP MEMBERS KEEP IN TOUCH WITH EACH OTHER**

Good communication ensures a strong community garden with active participation by all. Some ways to do this are: form a telephone tree, create an email list; install a rainproof bulletin board in the garden; have regular celebrations. Community gardens are all about creating and strengthening communities.