



MUSKINGUM SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

URBAN GREENS PROGRAM UPDATE

URBAN GREENS

Mission Statement: Growing food, growing community. Together we are working to develop and support urban agriculture projects in Muskingum County.



Contact us:
Muskingum SWCD
Urban Greens Program
225 Underwood Street, Ste. 100
Zanesville, Ohio 43701
740-454-2027
urbanag@muskingumswcd.org



2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Volunteer Summer Interns Jade Kimberlin and Dylan McNabb worked in Urban Greens and volunteered 77 hours assisting with the program.
- The MSWCD took on the management of the Maple-Harding Garden. This site had been a thriving community garden several years ago but was abandoned and fell into disrepair. Much work has been done at this site, with more yet to accomplish. Grant funds were used to replace 15 shorter raised beds.
- The MSWCD was granted use of approximately an acre of land we've named Marshall Greens. This site was a vacant piece of farmland, with a fence around part of it. One-third of this site was put into production this year and we ran an experiment for growing food for the South Zanesville Food Pantry (SZFP), our county's second largest food pantry. We were able to provide over 6000 pounds of produce that went to the SZFP, and also Christ's Table, The Salvation Army, True Light Ministry, Coburn UMC Food Pantry, and the Muskingum County Center for Seniors.
- The MSWCD received a \$50,000 NACD Urban Agriculture Grant. Some of those funds allowed the MSWCD to hire six seasonal, part-time Garden Coordinators to oversee the different gardens. Combined, they worked over 711 hours.
- Joyce Dilley, Garden Coordinator, worked with Naomi House, a residential recovery house for women, to place and plant two raised beds at their facility.
- 63 individuals and four groups volunteered, donating 455 hours planting, weeding, harvesting, and site work (prep and clean-up). Central State University (CSU) Staff also contributed 142 hours, and a Veterans Administration staff member contributed an additional 25 hours.
- Boy Scout troop #174 had two scouts raise funds and replace 14 taller raised beds at Maple-Harding Garden, thus earning their Eagle Scout Badges. Other members and parents of the troop contributed greatly to the clean up of the garden.
- We partnered with Central State University (CSU) Extension to bring their "Beginning Farmer" program to this part of the state. Several people attended the educational sessions and contributed 52 hours in their garden.

***Urban Greens: growing food, growing community,
growing with purpose.***

- Once again, the Free Plant and Seed Giveaway was held, in partnership with Eastside Community Ministry. Other educational events were held in the gardens and were taught by CSU-Extension professionals.
- One entire garden at Brighton Grows was planted, maintained, and harvested by several staff and clients of the Veterans' Administration clinic. The 231 pounds of produce from that site were donated to various veteran volunteers, homebound veterans, and veterans receiving assistance from the clinic.
- The Farm to School Garden at Zanesville Community High School produced 352 pounds of food, which was donated to the Zanesville City Schools Summer Lunch Program and Christ's Table.
- The MSWCD received a \$1,000 Veterans Grant from The Energy Cooperative. These funds, along with some funds from the NACD Grant, will be used to create a new, more accessible garden plot for our veterans at Brighton Grows.
- The MSWCD received a Spring 2022 Muskingum County Community Foundation grant for \$2,867. These funds were used for signs, raised beds, topsoil, fencing, and pop-up shade canopies and a white board for educational events in the gardens.
- USDA-NRCS granted the MSWCD a \$4,000 Peoples' Garden Grant, which allowed for the purchase of lots of garden tools, trellis parts, and starter plants.
- Thanks to Dollar General Warehouse for the huge donation of potting soil, equating to an approximate value of \$2,250!
- Urban Greens was featured on WHIZ news at <https://whiznews.com/2022/08/24/muskingum-soil-water-garden-for-food-pantries/>
- Not only do we want to teach people to grow their own food, but we want them to know what to do with it as well! Joyce Dilley, Garden Coordinator, gave a "Basics of Canning" presentation in cooperation with The Muskingum County Library System. Several people attended and asked for a repeat session and more information in the summer of 2023.
- At the end of 2022, The J.W. and M.H. Straker Charitable Foundation announced that they were awarding a \$17,962.26 grant to the MSWCD for the Urban Greens program, specifically site improvements and efficiencies at Marshall Greens so that more land can be brought into production for the good of our local food pantries.



THE MUSKINGUM SWCD AND URBAN GREENS WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2022:

Mr. James Marshall, Ms. Melanie Imlay, Zanesville Metropolitan Housing Authority, Zanesville City Schools and Community High School, Putnam Business Association, Muskingum County Community Foundation, The Energy Cooperative, the National Association of Conservation Districts, USDA – Natural Resource Conservation Service, Naomi House, Rhonda Talbott, The Veterans' Administrations, Central State University Extension, West Muskingum FFA, McDonald's Greenhouse, Eastside Community Ministry, Dollar General Distribution Center, The Muskingum County Library System, Muskingum County SNAP Educator Monica Mohr, South Zanesville Food Pantry, Christ's Table, Coburn UMC Food Pantry, True Light Community Ministry, Salvation Army, Muskingum County Center for Seniors, Nashport Irville UMC Youth Group, Humble Hands Co-op Group, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Business Networking International Muskingum Chapter, Boy Scout Troop 174 and especially Ben Dosch and Ben Bebee, Nancy Barker, Mike Faria, Jesee Parmer, Alex Lorentz, Goss Supply, Mark Sterling, Mark and Debra Weiser, Pat Michel, Raymond Dennis, Tractor Supply Company, Rural King – Heath, Cairn House, and the Muskingum SWCD Board of Supervisors for all the support. Also, a huge thanks to our seasonal part-time Garden Coordinators for all their hard work this year: Joyce Dilley, Keith Dilley, Marcella Gibbon, Kade Hambel, Megan Jones, Jade Kimberlin, and Dylan McNabb.



2023 PLANS AND GOALS

- Additional site work will be done at Maple-Harding Garden to rehabilitate it and bring the entire site into production.
- During the winter/early spring of 2023, the new Veterans' Garden site will be created, completed with a graveled parking spot, gravel paths, raised beds, and an in-ground plot.
- We will be working with the South Zanesville Food Pantry and the Muskingum County SNAP Educator to provide healthy food cooking demonstrations, samples, and recipes to those receiving fresh produce from the pantry.
- We will work with the food pantries to teach their clientele how to grow some of their own fresh food.
- The Muskingum County Library System has a "Charlie Cart" mobile kitchen; we will be working with them to address food literacy.
- Working with the Brighton Grows Garden surrounding community, including "The Manor" (Zanesville Metropolitan Housing Authority), residents will be invited to fully participate in the garden and planned educational activities.
- Have "Little Free Produce" pantries built and installed at Restoration, Maple-Harding and Brighton gardens.
- A community garden and food pantry are in the preliminary planning stages for Philo.
- Apply for and hopefully gain an AmeriCorp VISTA employee to build capacity for the Urban Greens program.
- Apply for and hopefully gain an AmeriCorp Direct employee to help in the gardens June – August.
- Urban Greens will continue assisting Central State University Extension advertise and promote their "Beginning Farmer" program in Muskingum County, the first in southeastern Ohio. This program will take interested participants from how to plant a seed to how to market their product if they want to make a business of a small farm. The curriculum for this program is very extensive and select portions of it will be used for other educational events.
- Recruitment is on-going for volunteers, groups, and students to assist with the various different programs. We will create a corporate/business sponsorship program.
- Obtain grant funds to create a youth garden at Brighton Grows Garden, complete with a fence and gate, a storage shed, benches, a pollinator patch, sensory garden areas, and other things that will make the site appealing to children. Educational programs will be held at the youth garden.



The SWCD & NRCS prohibit discrimination in any program activity or employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, retaliation, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status, or genetic information. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication (Braille, large print, etc.) or who need special accommodations for meetings should contact the SWCD office at (740) 454-2027.