



MUSKINGUM SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

URBAN GREENS PROGRAM UPDATE

URBAN GREENS

Mission Statement: Growing Food, Growing Community, Growing with Purpose. Together we are working to develop and support urban agriculture projects in Muskingum County.



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2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

“Growing Food, Growing Community, Growing with Purpose”

GROWING FOOD

- **18,102.25 lbs.** of produce donated to local food pantries and hot food services, Muskingum County Center for Seniors, Veterans, and the Zanesville City Schools Summer Lunch Program!
- Over 150 volunteers and 940 volunteer hours spent in the gardens!
- Awarded a total of \$110,884 in grant funding to support this program since inception in 2016
- Brought on Abriana Newsom as an AmeriCorps Vista Member to indirectly support the Urban Greens program by increasing visibility and partnerships in the community (including volunteer programs) and securing grant funding for expansion and operations

GROWING COMMUNITY

Marshall Greens Garden

- Awarded a \$17,962 grant from **The J.W. And M.H Straker Charitable Foundation**, which allowed us to put in a water line to support an irrigation system, install over 4,000 feet of irrigation, put a new fence around the garden, add cattle panels and t-posts to Phase II for trellising, and lay 18,000 square feet of fabric in Phase III for expansion
- **Home Depot** employees spent two work days at the garden, first donating all the materials for and helping to build a platform for the 500 gallon water tank to support the irrigation system—and then to help pull and harvest 15 rows of green beans
- **West M FFA** sorted seeds donated by TSC and Rural King and started 2,000 tomato plants and 500 pepper plants for the gardens
- **REA & Associates** employees planted almost 500 tomato plants and 75 pepper plants in one day!
- **Eastside Community** “littles” visited for garden education and painted identification sticks for the garden
- **Tri-Valley County Kids 4-H** group helped with end-of-season garden clean-up
- Worked directly with the Hunger Network and other local pantries to get food to pantry pick-up days or arrange for pick-up at the garden
- Hosted a stop at our annual ATV Tour; spoke about community partners, conservation practices, and production
- With the help of garden coordinators **Keith and Joyce Dilley** and **Marcie Gibbon**, 14,040.5 lbs. of produce was donated from this garden alone!

Maple-Harding Garden

- (Boy Scout) **Troop 174** continues to be invested in this garden, this time weeding, filling raised beds with soil, and donating the lumber for and re-building the ramp to the shed. They also reserved and maintained two raised beds of their own for their Gardening Patch
- (Girl Scout) **Troop 8221** also reserved first two, then three beds to use for the same purpose and learned about square-foot gardening
- Thanks to the group from **CAIRN Recovery** who helped us transport 10-ton soil to roughly 55 raised beds throughout the garden!
- Harvested a 24", 43 lb. watermelon! (our biggest of all the gardens) which was served at the Center for Seniors
- Worked with **Melanie Imlay** and **Rita Swope** to engage more residents of the **ZMHA** site for the elderly, near elderly, and disabled
- Cleaned-up a new roughly 20x40 foot section of the garden and planted cover crop to get the soil ready for next season
- Installed a garden pantry to offer produce to those in need in the surrounding community
- With the help of garden coordinator, **Mariya Kemp**, this garden was able to donate 1,658.5lbs of produce!

Brighton Grows Garden (6 gardens):

- Continued our partnership with **Central State University** to offer the Spring, Summer, and Fall Beginning Farmer Series and now Ready, Set, Grow! Food and Farm Business Series (CSU Extension). The Beginning Farmer class visited **Rose Hill Farm** and Foodworks Alliance and continued to use the demo site at Brighton Grows for hands-on learning
- Partnership with **Foodworks Alliance** for the Ready, Set, Grow! Food and Farm Business Series
- Excavated a new site for the Veterans Garden; installed a fence and five new tall raised beds; huge thanks to veterans **Rhonda Talbott** and **Cathy Pennington** for all their time donated to this site
- Started our first annual community event with CSU in June
- Connected with **Frank Cook Senior Housing**; created an herb garden so they can easily harvest fresh herbs for cooking
- Awarded two grants to establish a new **Youth Garden** (**Operation Round Up Grant for \$3,673 and MCCF Grant for \$5000**) which allowed us to install a new fence and shed and purchase fabric and other garden supplies/tools for the youth
 - Started a Garden Club at **James Singer Center**; students have already planted garlic and are painting stepping stones for the new space.
 - **Rosecrans Key Club** helped with end-of-season clean up and plans to continue to be involved (Green Club)
 - **Careytown Preschool** also planted watermelon here this Summer and used it at the school
 - Produced an additional 323 lbs. for the community!
- Installed a garden pantry to offer produce to those in need in the surrounding community
- With the help of garden coordinator, **Megan Jones**, this garden was able to donate 700 lbs. of produce!

Restoration Park Garden

- Main site for Charlie Cart food demos with the **Muskingum County Library System**; a huge thanks to **Heather Phillips** and all other MCLS employees who came out to help with demos and events!
 - Harvesting for and preparing a simple salsa; provided seeds to plant your own salsa bed
 - Harvesting for and preparing a caprese salad
 - Delicata Squash samples and making caramel apples
- Planted a "salsa bed" demonstrating the square-foot gardening method
- Demonstrated use of solarization to contain thistles
- Demonstrated cover crop planting/provided cover crop seeds to those with reserved beds
- Demonstrated fall planting of garlic in the square-foot demo bed
- Fall Harvest potluck featuring produce harvested by the gardeners
- Installed a garden pantry to offer produce to those in need in the surrounding community
- Working with **Lori Wence** (**Putnam Business Association**) and the city about future plans for the garden

Zanesville Community High School Garden

- Heather Near's **ZHS** Ag class experimented with different ways to grow potatoes and spent some time prepping the garden in the spring

- Worked with Vicki Wheeler to grow food for the ZCS Summer Lunch Program
- Experimenting with growing strawberries in pallets
- Thanks to garden coordinator, Dylan McKnabb, this garden donated 820.5 lbs. of produce!

High Hill Presbyterian Church Garden

- Awarded an \$8,2094 grant from The J.W. & M.H. Straker Charitable Foundation which allowed for excavation of the site, installation of a fence around the entire garden, purchase and laying of fabric, and purchase of essential gardening materials and tools
- Created in an effort to give the vastly spread-out community (mostly elderly) easier access to fresh, healthy foods
- Members of the church played an integral role in not only growing this food, but also delivering it to those in need. They were inspired to volunteer at the Urban Greens High Hill Garden as a result of many conversations with older people in their community in which they expressed concern about a lack of access to healthy foods due to prices and/or an inability to produce crops (such as they had done in the past) due to age, disability, or a lack of resources.
- A huge thanks to Kristina Davis and members of the church who grew and delivered produce to 35 families, which fed 97 people in the surrounding community last year!
- With the help of garden coordinators, Keith and Joyce Dilley, this garden was able to donate 559.75 lbs. of produce!

GROWING WITH PURPOSE

- Attended Hunger Network meetings to connect with and better understand the needs of local food pantries and hot food services
- Were able to consistently provide healthy produce to 16 food pantries and hot food services in the Hunger Network
- Contacted by several other pantries who heard about what we're doing and expressed their own need for access to fresh produce, including Bethel Community Center, and many of whom either came to the garden to pick up or even worked to help harvest
- Worked closely with South Zanesville Food Pantry (surveyed clientele) to help meet their needs, including partnering with Monica Mohr (SNAP Ed) to bring food samples and recipes to SZFP
- Participated in the Plant & Seed Giveaway at Eastside Community Ministries
- At the end of 2022, The J.W. & 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.



MANY, MANY THANKS ON BEHALF OF MSWCD AND URBAN GREENS TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND ORGANIZATIONS (IN ADDITION TO THOSE ALREADY MENTIONED) WHO EACH PLAYED AN INTEGRAL ROLE IN THE SUCCESS OF THE URBAN GREENS PROGRAM THIS SEASON!

- Jim Marshall, the man behind Marshall Greens
- Randy Hutchison for mowing at Marshall Greens
- Dean Holtzclaw for loading up produce to take to the Hunger Network produce pick-up days on multiple occasions
- Lumbertown donated all lumber and materials for the three garden pantries we were able to install at our Maple-Harding, Brighton Grows, and Restoration Park Gardens
- John Long roughly designed the pantries in order to secure the lumber
- Gerry Kimpel donated 24 hours to designing and building the three garden pantries
- Adam Keirns donated a total of 27 hours to the program, including the completion of the food pantries on site, assisting with the platform for the water tank at Marshall Greens, and starting strawberries!
- Home Depot (Team Depot)—Donated around \$500 in lumber and materials and helped to build a platform to hold a 500 gallon water tank for the irrigation system at Marshall Greens
- Chris Lutz and Logan Spiker for assembling tall raised beds for the Veterans and Maple-Harding Gardens
- REA & Associates assisted in planting tomatoes, peppers, watermelon, and squash at Marshall Greens and pounded in t-posts to prep for installation of the chain link fence
- Raymond Ramos donated lumber and built a tractor for the Brighton Grows Community (Youth Garden)
- Kendra Kemp started many plants in her greenhouse that were planted throughout our gardens
- Muskingum County Center for Seniors--Bob Schlaegel, Terry Dusenberry, Paul Kelsey, and Ed Kessinger for helping us assemble 9 benches now placed in all of our gardens!
- Mark Sterling for providing the equipment for and helping with many projects in the gardens this year!
- Tim Miller for bringing his dump truck to pick up mulch for the Youth Garden
- Mark Weiser for much technical assistance at Marshall Greens
- Joe Lehman for help leveling the rocks for the shed, helping to set up the message board at Brighton Grows, and with projects at Marshall Greens
- Jodie and Phil Campbell for many hours in the garden, including the hard work of putting up the fence at Marshall Greens
- Jim Stafford and Elizabeth Reeb for volunteering weekly in the gardens
- Adam Crock for unloading stepping stones and spreading mulch at the Youth Garden
- Stella Rosser for many days of volunteer work throughout all the gardens
- Arlene Weaver, Amy Aurore, Diane Altman, Carrie Held-Batog, and Rocky Baker for their consistent volunteer hours at Marshall Greens
- Keith Dilley for working tirelessly for over 100 volunteer hours!—for his innovation, equipment, time, and so much more!
- Joyce Dilley for her dedication (and endless hours given) to the program and the use of her own resources (physical and otherwise) to ensure the success of both Marshall Greens and High Hill Gardens
- West M FFA for their continued partnership; they've already sorted seeds for the 2024 season and will be starting tomato and pepper plants soon!
- Ben Beebe/Ben Dosch (Troop 174) purchased 20-ton soil for the raised beds at Maple-Harding and purchased lumber for the ramp leading into the shed with funds raised from Eagle Scout projects
- Perry Backwoods Campground donated plastic for the high tunnel
- McDonald's Greenhouse donated pepper plants in the Spring
- Timber Run donated tomato, pepper, and strawberry plants
- Rural King and Tractor Supply Co. donated all their end of season seeds!
- Dollar General donated many bags of soil for the raised bed gardens!
- Shelly & Sands donated 7,500 lbs. of sand for sand bags used to secure garden fabric!
- Sams Club: \$4,000 grant
- Walmart North: \$2,000 grant
- Graham & Graham: \$100 donation

- Angela Searcy donated four tires to be used for play at the Youth Garden

Grant funds have allowed us to support the following local business; we thank each of you for your part in this impactful program:

- Limestone Valley Fencing, Youth Garden fence installation
- Matt Grimm, site work at Veterans' Garden
- Atkins Enterprise, installation of water line at Marshall Greens
- Kessler Sign Company, signs at all the garden sites
- Home Depot, where we purchase almost everything we need!
- Yoder's Produce, where we purchase the rest of everything we need!
- Zane Feed and Supply, supplies
- Tractor Supply Co., Zanesville, supplies
- Kencove, fencing supplies
- GM Trucking
- SLE Hauling Service
- The Stoneyard Co.
- Franklin Printing
- Paul's Farm Market
- Zemba, topsoil

***It's clear this project takes an entire community; we are so very grateful for all the volunteers (including many of whom are not individually mentioned), organizations and agencies who have helped us maximize the impact of Urban Greens in Muskingum County!**



2024 PLANS AND GOALS

- Assist and support CSU Extension by promoting their Ready, Set, Grow! Food and Farm Business Series at Foodworks Alliance
- Fencing demo at Brighton Grows (installing a new fence around the main garden) with Central State University
- Possible Pruning Workshop at Restoration Park with OSU Extension
- Small Farms, Small(ish) Equipment Demo Day for walk-behind tractors and more (at Marshall Greens) with Central State University
- Small Grain Plot Field Day (harvesting and processing on site at Marshall Greens)
- Working to get the previous two events on the OEFFA Sustainable Farm Tour and Workshop Series for 2024
- Support and Promote CSU Beginning Farmer Series: Spring, Summer, Fall at James Singer Center and Brighton Grows
- Use Marshall Greens for possible additions to the Beginning Farmer program, including season extension with a high tunnel, cover crops, and small grain/artisan grain plot
- Launch the 2024 Garden Olympics: a friendly season-long competition among corporate groups, nonprofits, community and church groups, homeschool groups, 4-H groups, and school organizations to promote volunteering in our gardens! *Follow our social media pages for more information
- The new Garden Club at the James Singer Center will be learning about growing and maintaining our new Youth Garden at Brighton Grows
- “Growing” program with Eastside Community Ministries Youth
- Rain Barrel Workshop + Conservation Craft Night; install rain barrel at the Youth Garden
- Tomato pruning workshop and competition at Marshall Greens
- Reusing lick tubs (for cattle) or pots to create small urban gardens at the Muskingum County Center for Seniors
- Continue to work with Muskingum County Library System and SNAP Ed to address food literacy by offering on-site food demos at the gardens and bringing samples and recipes to the pantries
- Continue to work with the MC Hunger Network and other local pantries to provide access to healthy foods and garden education in impoverished areas
- Roseville Elementary Field Day in the Fall (includes learning about and harvesting vegetables growing at Marshall Greens, packing boxes for Bethel or Roseville Food Pantry, pumpkin patch, stations for conservation education around soils, water quality, forestry, wetland exploration, possible follow-up meal at school to introduce parents to different types of squash)
- Essay or Poetry Contest
- Garden Storybook connecting all the Urban Greens gardens (working with Eastside and the Garden Club at James Singer)
- End of Season Harvest Party at Marshall Greens to acknowledge and celebrate all volunteers!
- Implement a \$75,000 Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation Grant that will help beginning agriculture career pathways programs at Maysville High School, Foxfire Community School and Franklin Local Schools while helping New Lexington FFA expand their programming



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