



GREATER LANSING  
**foodbank**

MEMBER OF  
**FEEDING  
AMERICA**

Fall 2017

# Garden NOTES

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### Garden Project Staff:

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Immigrant & Refugee Liaison

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Program & Education Coordinator

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Gardens & Buildings Maintenance  
Coordinator

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Garden Project Manager

**Majel Maes**  
Office & Administrative Coordinator

## End-of-season garden plot clean up

**DEADLINE: Sunday, October 22**



*Fall garden clean up at all GP community gardens makes it possible for us to get an early start next spring. Please follow these simple steps to prepare your plot now for spring tilling.*

### REMOVE ALL:

- String
- Plastic planting containers
- Tomato cages
- Large sticks & trellis materials
- Diseased plants
- Litter & trash
- Fencing
- Burlap & weed cloth
- GP corner plot stakes

- ▶ **Bring a bag to take home your trash and all other man-made items**
- ▶ **Chop up thick, woody stalks with a shovel or loppers** (sunflowers, corn, Brussel sprouts, etc.)
- ▶ **Harvest any ripe crops** (you can continue to harvest after the clean-up deadline)
- ▶ **GP will have straw available for \$2 a bale in early October for fall mulching. Stay tuned for delivery dates or call our office to reserve yours.**
- ▶ **If you do not clean your plot by the deadline, you will not be able to garden with us next year!**

**Other considerations:** If you are depositing your garden plants in the compost bin, take a moment to chop them up and turn the pile to speed up the decomposition rate. Cover fresh material with mature compost and alternate layers of brown and green materials for best results.

# Plant-A-Row • Grow-A-Row • Donate-A-Row!

Gardeners... We know that NOW is the time your plots are really coming into full production. As a program of the Greater Lansing Food Bank, we encourage all gardeners to give back to their local food pantry or community kitchen by donating fresh produce to those in need. To find a pantry and their open hours call the Garden Project, or go online to [glfoodbank.org](http://glfoodbank.org) and search "give food" for the Grow-A-Row listing.



## WHY GROW AN EXTRA ROW?

- ▶ Help provide fresh, healthy produce to those in need
- ▶ Contribute to the sustainability of agriculture
- ▶ Help create a future where everyone has access to nourishing food

## Additional List of Fall Garden To-Do's:

- ▶ If your old plants are still healthy after you are done harvesting, you may want to cut/shred them and then spread them out in a form of "sheet composting". Let Mother Nature take over from here, as she decomposes the organic material back into the soil.
- ▶ Cut back any plants that have developed serious diseases this year and discard in the trash. **DO NOT COMPOST THEM.** You don't want the spores to remain on plant debris or in your soil to re-infect plants next year.

### Do some fall planting!

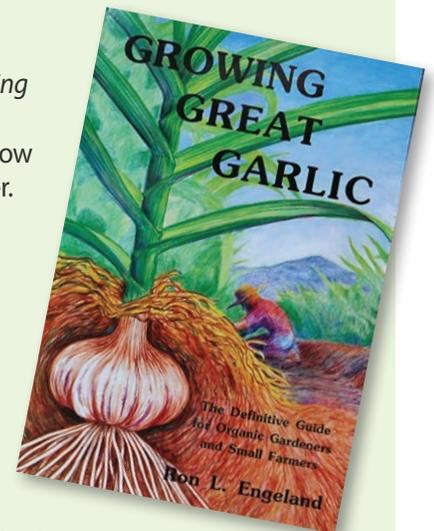
- ▶ Sow seeds now for a fall harvest. Tatsoi, beets, spinach, loose-leaf lettuce, mustard greens, swiss chard and even bush beans can be planted through early September for a fall harvest.
- ▶ In your perennial and no-till beds, herb plants such as sage, lavender, oregano and thyme are great choices. You can often get plants on sale at local nurseries this time of year.
- ▶ October is the time to plant garlic and leeks in perennial beds. Your local farmer's market is a great place to source your garlic, and the GP will have straw bales perfect for mulching beds for sale in early October. Expected yield is about 6 pounds for every pound planted (Be sure to choose the largest cloves for planting.) For more

information, read *Growing Great Garlic*, by Ron Engeland. You can borrow it at the Resource Center.

- ▶ End of season is a good time to plant a cover crop like rye and oats to improve your soil. This fall, cover crop seeds and planting instructions will be available at the Resource Center and in many of our garden sheds.
- ▶ Keep your garden well-harvested. Rotting veggies will attract disease, rodents and other pests. If you have more growing than you can use, you can:

### Donate to your local pantry

**Preserve your harvest.** Accessing free canning jars and canning equipment is easy. Call our office to let us know what you need and when you'll need it. We'll schedule a time to meet you at the Resource Center for pick up. Equipment includes water bath and pressure canners, food mills, and canning jars in various sizes.



# Garden Leaders Training

Annually, Garden Project provides leadership training for those looking to start a new community garden. Thanks to this training, the GP has increased the network of gardens from 40 in 2009 to over 125 gardens across 7 counties today. While we will continue to provide support to help new gardens get started, we are also looking to increase our trainings for existing Garden Leaders as they work through issues like engaging gardeners, sustainability, soil health, transitions in leadership and more. Stay tuned for more information! And please contact us if you have any topic requests.

If you are thinking about starting a new community garden or taking on a leadership role at an existing garden in 2018, please connect with us ASAP!

## Come glean with us!

Greater Lansing Food Bank gleans produce from local orchards and farm fields to feed those in need. To become a volunteer gleaner, call Sarah S. at (517) 908-3698 or email [volunteers@glfoodbank.org](mailto:volunteers@glfoodbank.org).



## Fall Garden Project Events

FOR ADDITIONAL INFO ON EVENTS LISTED BELOW AND MUCH MORE, VISIT: [letsgardenlansing.org](http://letsgardenlansing.org)

### Perennial Flower Exchange!

September 16 – 12-1:30 pm

GP Resource Center in Foster Park

Fall is a great time to plant perennial flowers for bloom next year. At the GP Demo Garden, we will be thinning and dividing perennials, and we know many home gardeners will be doing the same as they prepare for winter. For the Exchange, you may bring any healthy plants from home that you would like to trade in plastic pots or sturdy bags. Please label your plants! If you don't have any plants at home to trade, come anyway. You can still select perennials for yourself after the first two exchange rounds.

### Fall Harvest Potluck Dinner & Tours!

September 21 – 5-7:30 pm

5:00-5:45 – Tours of the Community Garden and the YMCA's Healthy Living Mobile Food Kitchen

6:00-7:30 – Potluck dinner and awards

Edgewood Village Community Garden  
213 Towar Gardens Circle, East Lansing, 48823

Celebrate the season at GP's Fall Harvest Potluck! Join the fun as we celebrate the end of a great growing season together. The event will be held at the beautiful Edgewood Village Community Garden. If you are able, bring a food item to share (garden ingredients are always encouraged) along with the recipe. But more importantly, bring yourself and some friends. Awards will be presented for crowd favorites.

For general information and to RSVP, call us at (517) 853-7809 or email [gardenproject@glfoodbank.org](mailto:gardenproject@glfoodbank.org).

# The Garden Project is thrilled to support your community garden

If you have an idea for a lasting improvement to your community garden, we might be able to help. Each year we make improvement funding available to community gardens. Contact your Garden Leader or the Garden Project for help with developing your ideas. Here are a few highlights from the season so far.



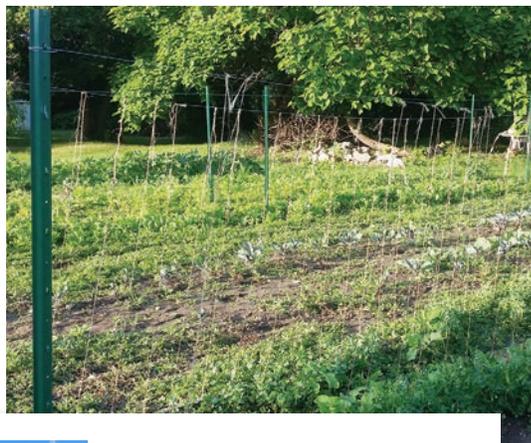
*"The water line installation... has already made a huge difference! Thank you so much for your support! We will be able to give away so much more food because of this water!!"*

**Jamie DeCatur**, Garden Leader at Coleman Community Garden, serving Isabella County (received improvement funding to install an irrigation line).



*"Thank you for all your help getting us up and running!! Everything is going really well. We have community support and everyone is really excited about it at the school!"*

**Danielle**, Garden Leader at Dansville School Garden (2017 Startup Garden).



*"Wow - you made my day - thank you so much for your generosity! These are just the resources we needed, at just the right time. You've saved us time, money, and energy that we can now devote entirely to better serving our community."*

**Justin**, Garden Leader at Central Free Methodist Church (received improvement funding for permanent trellising materials).



*"Kinawa School Garden... is one of the only NEW community/school gardens in the Township this year. That is super exciting, inspires others, and also keeps the Township's attention and support for community gardens alive!"*

**LeRoy**, Recycling & Energy Coordinator for Meridian Township (received improvement funding for fencing and raised beds).

We want to express a heartfelt thank you to all our Garden Leaders and volunteers! Your hard work and generosity are astounding, and you are making a difference in this community! If you would like to get involved, please contact us at 517-853-7809 or [gardenproject@glfoodbank.org](mailto:gardenproject@glfoodbank.org).

# Garden Project Gardener Survey 2017

Please return by Tuesday, October 31st

Save a stamp!

Complete the survey online at:

<https://tinyurl.com/GardenerSurvey2017>

*This survey will be used to report back to our funders and get your opinions on your gardening experience so we can improve it for you and others. We are interested in your honest feedback. All questions are optional. This survey can be confidential. You do not need to give your name unless you would like a response back or would like to be entered in the raffle. Please fold in half, affix stamp, tape shut and mail by Oct. 31.*

**Thank you for your time!**

1. Were your grocery bills reduced because you gardened this year?  Yes  No
2. Did your diet improve because of your garden this year?  Yes  No
3. Where do you garden?  Home  Community Garden-please name \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is your home zip code? \_\_\_\_\_
5. In my household, I/we:  Have enough food to eat  
 Have enough food to eat, but not always enough *fresh fruits and vegetables*  
 Sometimes do not have enough food to eat  
 Often or usually do not have enough food to eat

6. Number of people eating food from your garden plots: \_\_\_\_\_

**How important is the garden is to your family's diet:**

- Essential – More than 50% of our fresh produce comes from the garden
- Very important – 10%-50% of our fresh produce comes from the garden
- Not very important – Less than 10% of our fresh produce comes from the garden

7. What did you do with your produce? (check all that apply)

- Ate Fresh  Canned  Froze  Dried  Sold
- Gave away by:  Donating to pantries/community kitchens  
 Giving directly to those I know are food insecure  
 Sharing with my neighbors or friends

8. Check the TOP 5 REASONS you garden:

- To eat more fruits and vegetables.....
- To provide food for my family and myself.....
- To grow food for donation.....
- To spend less money on food.....
- To eat more foods that are traditional for my culture/family background.....
- To improve my mental well-being.....
- To be more physically active.....
- Just to be outside.....
- To improve community/neighborhood engagement.....
- For community/neighborhood beautification.....

**Your completed survey enters you in a raffle to win Garden Project prizes!**

Gift certificates

Johnny's harvest knives

Garden Project t-shirts

Favorite gardening books

Continued on back page

**9. Please rate each of the following aspects of working in your Community Garden:**

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor Comments

The location of the garden(s) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
How well the shed with stocked with the tools you need ....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The quality of the garden resources (soil, water, etc.) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The organization/management of the garden .....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The social atmosphere at the garden.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The helpfulness of GP staff/volunteers.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					

**10. What is the biggest challenge you face in growing food in your garden?**

**11. How could we better support you?**

- More tools/equipment   
  More materials (compost, mulch etc.)   
  More staff time in gardens  
 More plant starts/seeds   
  Other:

**12. Will you garden with us in 2018?**     Yes     No     I don't know

If No/I don't know, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Any final comments on your overall gardening experience, or stories you'd like to share? (please attach)**

*To enter the GP prize raffle, please write your name and best way to contact you.*

Please  
Place  
Stamp  
Here

**The Garden Project  
PO Box 16224  
Lansing, MI 48901**

# 2017 Highlights from the GP network of community gardens

A dedicated group of leaders from **St. Mike's Church** in south Lansing attended Garden Leaders Training this winter and envisioned expanding their garden to serve their neighbors. That vision came into fruition this spring. They plowed an additional 12,000 square feet for six new Bhutanese families, installed a crushed limestone path to improve access, ran an additional irrigation line and purchased a picnic table to increase engagement.

On June 3rd, Garden Project visited **Clare County's Mobile Food Distribution** and the **Read and Feed Garden at the Harrison Library**. Along with the 77 pounds of food per family that was delivered from the GLFB warehouse, 960 pepper starts, 960 tomato starts and 600 seed packets were also distributed, supporting low-income home gardens across Clare County.

**Hammond Farms**, in its second pilot season of their Scraps to Soil Program, generously donated nearly 200 yards of finished compost to local community gardens. Twelve yards went to the **Feed My Sheep Garden at the South Church of the Nazarene**. Compost was used to top off their renovated raised beds, adding nutrients to increase yields.

The **GP Demonstration Garden**, across from the Resource Center in Foster Park, is home to many plantings and techniques, including a donation garden, a small fruit tree orchard, and a cover crop demo space. Perennials, including a lily collection gifted by the **Hagamans**, are cultivated for display and sharing with the community through events such as our upcoming Perennial Exchange on September 16th. High-raised beds provide wheelchair accessible gardening for our friends from **Transitions North**. A big thanks to **Jean**, our valued AmeriCorps member, **Casey**, our Summer Intern, and the dedicated volunteers, including the indispensable and remarkable **Alice**, for their ongoing work. If you are interested in helping at the Demo Garden, please contact Donny at (517) 853-7802 or email him at [dcomer@glfoodbank.org](mailto:dcomer@glfoodbank.org).

**Garden Tour** was hot this year! Literally! Temperatures were in the 90s as 100+ participants spread out across the city to visit over a dozen gardens. These were gardens that support youth, families, refugees and more. Highlights included visits to productive youth gardens on the Southside, homesteader's plots on Ingham County Land Bank lots and bike riding over to the renovated Slater Park Garden behind the fire station in the Grosebeck neighborhood. **We remain so impressed by the passion and generosity of our garden leaders and the community they serve.**

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**FROM TOP – LEFT TO RIGHT:** *St. Mike's Community Gardeners with new families; Volunteers distributing veggie plant starts in Clare County; Raised beds, topped with compost, at Feed My Sheep Garden; Emily with her Southside Community Coalition Gardeners; Sweet Jabu, at her plot at Webster Farm; Sara & Wilson, Foster Community Garden Leaders at Tour.*



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GROWING HEALTHY FOOD, CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS

**Thank you to our donors and supporters!** Your generosity is appreciated more than you will ever know!

**INDIVIDUALS**

Marcie Alling  
 Sharon Avery  
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 James & Nancy Ballard  
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 Janette & John Boughman  
 Dennis & Alexis Branoff  
 Roger & Mary Bresnahan  
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