

Building Healthy Communities

Washington, D.C.

November 15-17, 2010





Growing Healthy Food, People and Communities

Background

The Secretary of Agriculture launched the Initiative when he broke ground on the People's Garden at USDA Headquarters on February 12, 2009.

The Secretary challenges all employees to create similar gardens at USDA facilities or in their communities.





Growing Healthy Food, People and Communities



Why?

To commemorate Abraham Lincoln by demonstrating the Department's mission and values.

What is the goal of the Initiative?

To serve as a model for the connections we can make between promoting healthy lifestyles, fighting malnutrition, and reducing food insecurity while serving our communities and helping those in need.



What is a People's Garden?





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1 – A People's Garden is Sustainable



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2 - A People's Garden is a Collaborative Effort





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3 – A People's Garden Benefits the Community





Today:

- There are **561** People's Gardens, to view locations:

www.pubinfo.usda.gov/garden

- There is a garden in every state, the District of Columbia, three U.S. territories and two foreign countries.

- This year, USDA has donated over **130,000 lbs** of fresh produce to local feeding assistance programs through our **Share Your Harvest** effort.





People's Gardens Provide a Place for Community-based Agriculture

***To Grow Healthy
Communities and Neighborhoods***





Why Incorporate Agriculture into Communities?

We are facing a modern paradox of
Food Insecurity and Obesity

Both problems share a common cause: MALNUTRITION

FOOD
INSECURITY

MALNUTRITION

OBESITY



Why Incorporate Agriculture into Communities?

Diet- Related Disparities

Rates of obesity and diabetes are highest and have risen the most rapidly among people of color and in lower income neighborhoods (Health and Human Services).

- 1 in 4 Latino families struggles to put food on the table. Across our country, 26.9% of Hispanic families are food insecure as compared to the national average of 14.6% of families (USDA 2008).**
- African Americans develop hypertension at an earlier age, tend to have more severe high blood pressure and are less likely to receive treatment (American Dietetic Association).**
- Type 2 Diabetes is epidemic among American Indians. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness, non-traumatic limb amputation and kidney failure (Health and Human Services).**



Why Incorporate Agriculture into Communities?

Social Equity

Low-income families face numerous barriers, including:

- Food Insecurity
- Lack of Safe Places for Exercise
- Lack of Access to Fresh Healthy Food, especially fruits and vegetables – Food Deserts



The SIMPLE
act of
planting a garden
can...





Enhance Physical and Mental Health

- People who have access to fresh fruits and vegetables eat more fruits and vegetables
- Increased consumption of fruits and vegetables improves nutrition especially for diet related diseases such as obesity and diabetes
- Gardening provides a low impact exercise for people within a wide range of physical ability
- In many neighborhoods community gardens are one of few safe places for children and adults to play, relax or interact





Create Teaching Opportunities

Educate children and adults about a variety of topics
- agriculture, ecology, biology, soil science, nutrition,
and cultural traditions



- Children who garden have greater knowledge about nutrition and healthy eating habits
- Create the next generation of farmers and ranchers



Connect Races, Ethnicities and Generations

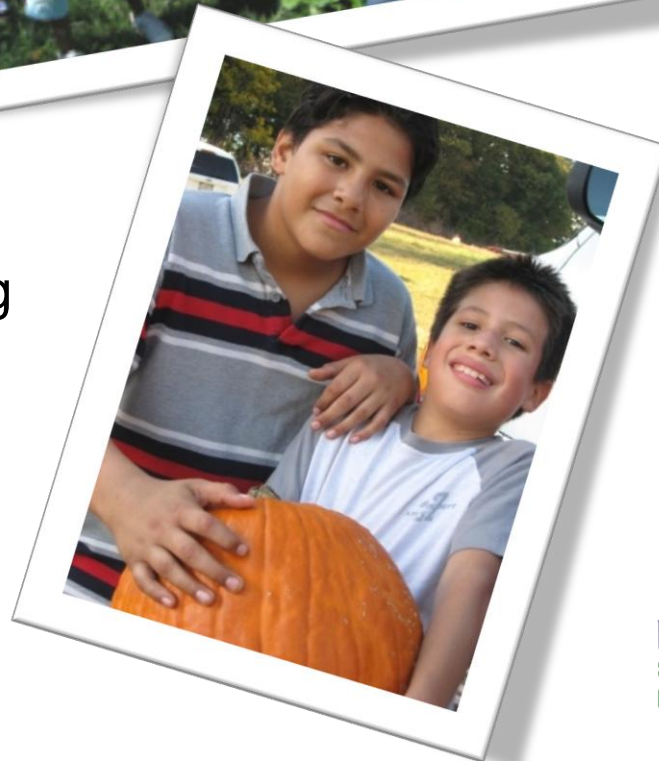
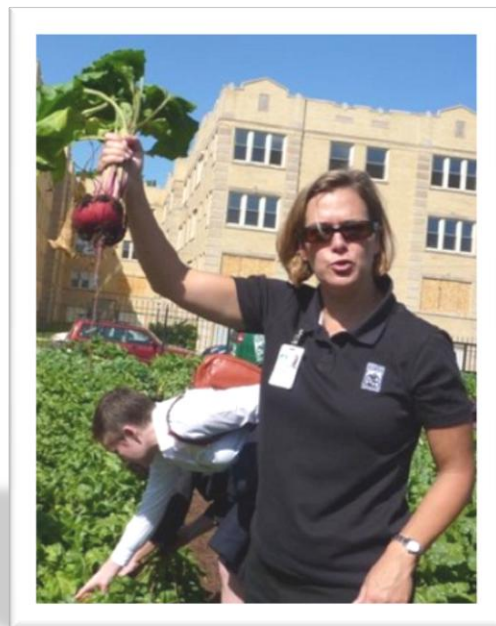
Expand the ability of citizens from all racial, cultural, ethnic, social and economic backgrounds to share their traditions and beliefs.



They are a safe and neutral gathering place in communities and foster interaction.

Promote intergenerational interactions and mentoring.





Foster Pride

- Cultivate self sufficiency –and feeling of self worth
- Provide opportunities for accomplishment and success for a range of abilities



Help the Environment

- Improve soil health
- Create habitat for wildlife
- Improve water quality
- Promote sustainable practices



The SIMPLE act of planting a garden can help make real and lasting change to improve food access and promote healthy lifestyles in communities with highest risk and greatest need.



Real and effective change starts small
and it starts in our communities.

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack



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“More grows in the garden than the gardener sows.”