

The Columbus Green Patch

[Harvest Awards](#) Applications and Nominations are now open! | [VIEW IN BROWSER](#)



Meet a Community Garden

SALEM GARDEN COLLABORATIVE

The Salem Garden Collaborative was created out of a shared vision between the neighborhood of Salem Village and Salem Elementary School to build a community garden on the grounds of the school that benefits both the school and community. This project is transforming a patch of open lawn into a landscape for growing food as well as creating space to facilitate educational and social activities that promote the health of the local school and community.

How the idea developed:

In July 2023, a group of neighbors decided to clean up an existing raised bed garden at Salem Elementary. It was installed in 2019 but had sat neglected since the pandemic. We got donations from local businesses and neighbors showed up with plants to share from their

gardens. In one day, we transformed an overgrown weed patch into a beautiful experiential learning space for the school. We realized there is incredible interest in gardening in our neighborhood and many people shared a dream to build a true community garden. This sparked a project to build a community garden on the school grounds in the spring of 2024.

In May, we broke ground on our new community garden! Team of volunteers have been working hard to bring the vision to life by installing a new raised bed vegetable garden as well as rain and pollinator gardens. The space will also feature a mural, an outdoor pavilion, and a natural play area featuring native fruit trees.

This community garden project has already been transformative to our community - bringing together a diverse group of people around a common mission. We envision that the Salem Garden will cultivate a flourishing community in Salem Village that uplifts our whole neighborhood.



Community Garden Mixer

Wednesday, July 24!

Come join us for an evening of light refreshments, community, and engaging conversation in the serene ambiance of our community garden. Connect with

your neighbors, share your passion for gardening, and cultivate new friendships in this charming gathering.

We are excited to introduce our NEW **Interactive Garden Map**, which includes innovative tools to help your garden get involved with our community initiatives. The Growing to Green program has collaborated with the Ohio State University Knowledge Exchange and Extension services, the City of Columbus Land Bank, the CCS Farm to School Program, and the Local Food Action Plan Council to manage the Franklin County Community Garden Map.

Location:

Scotts Miracle-Gro Company Community Garden Campus
1846 Franklin Park S, Columbus, OH 43205

Date:

Wednesday, July 24, 2024, 6–8 PM

Cost:

FREE, please register for all guests

Contact Lauren Preston with any questions: lpreston@fpconservatory.org

[RSVP HERE!](#)



Community Garden Mapping Initiative

Fill out this link to add your garden spaces to our map. The garden can be marked as private so the general public will not see it, administrators will be able to share resources and upcoming events with these spaces. It only takes 2-3 minutes to fill out.

All participants you will be entered in to win a **FREE** family membership to Franklin Park Conservatory & Botanical Gardens.

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Communal Garden Class

CHECK OUT THE FREE COMMUNAL GARDEN CLASS SERIES

This free class series is open to all in the community and is part of larger Conservatory initiatives that build capacity, knowledge and enthusiasm for the joys of gardening. To learn more about all the ways that the Conservatory supports community gardeners, check out our Growing to Green program and discover how you can get involved!

Cut Flower Gardening: July 23, 6–7:30pm

Brighten up your home and yard with the colors of a cut flower garden that thrives all year long. Learn how to grow flowers that last after being picked, create beautiful bouquets for yourself and friends, all while saving money by growing them in your garden!

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Harvest Awards

APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR 2024!

All applications and nominations must be complete and submitted **by Thursday, August 15th at 11:59pm**. Award winners will be announced at the Harvest Awards Ceremony on **Thursday, September 26th, 2024 at 6pm** in the Wells Barn at Franklin Park Conservatory & Botanical Gardens. Save the Date!

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Conservatory Farmers Market

**3:30–6:30PM WEDNESDAYS
JUNE 5–SEPTEMBER 11
IN THE WELLS BARN PARKING LOT**

Vendors offer a mix of local produce, baked goods, specialty foods, handmade items, and health & beauty products. EBT is accepted for all qualifying purchases and incentive dollars through the Produce Perks Columbus program for fresh produce are offered for all EBT participants.

Kids can also participate in VEGGIE CHAMPS, a weekly activity that rewards kids with Veggie Bucks to spend at the market.

Markets will occur if it rains but will be canceled in the case of dangerous weather:

high winds, lightning, or extreme heat.

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Urban Agriculture Summer Experience

This summer, the Growing to Green team was thrilled to partner with Berwick Elementary School's 5-7th graders for an unforgettable Urban Pathways: Urban Agriculture Summer Experience. Our mission was to cultivate a deeper understanding of community gardening, food systems, and the joy of growing one's own food.

Together, we explored the wonders of our garden, where students learned the art of watering, planting, harvesting, and weeding. We savored the sweet taste of fresh cucumbers, radishes, broccoli, and carrots, sowing seeds of appreciation for the hard work that goes into growing nutritious food.

As we delved into the world of community gardening, students discovered that these green spaces are not only a place to grow food but also a platform for building connections and fostering a sense of community. We discussed the pressing issue of food insecurity and the importance of accessible nutrient-dense foods, inspiring students to think creatively about what can be grown in their own community gardens.

Through observation and exploration, students snapped photos with Polaroid cameras, capturing the beauty of nature and sparking curiosity about the wonders within it. They then wrote about their findings, sharing their thoughts and wonderings about the natural world.

To further deepen their understanding of the seed-to-table process, we analyzed seed packets together. Students learned about planting schedules,

seed care, and vocabulary words like "germination" and "sow". Many had never set foot in a garden before, but through hands-on learning, they discovered the magic of growing their own food.

One student shared that they felt a sense of peace in the garden and had no idea how much fun it would be to care for one! We celebrated many 'firsts' with these young gardeners as they embarked on their urban agriculture journey.

The Growing to Green team welcomes inspirational stories, art, and artistic expression. Thank you to 2024 OSU Master Gardener Volunteer and new community gardener, Lou Picknell, for submitting this self written poem.

The Grieving Garden

Lou Picknell

6-26-2024

*I go to the garden to touch the ground
It makes me feel comfortable as I have found.
To pull out the weeds to plant things that grow
From baby little plants or a small seed to sow.*

*I know things can live as I know all things die
I grieve from my heart – to feel better I try.
To find some sort of freedom from the chains that I bear
I wish things were different, from my eyes flow a warm sad tear.*

*I bury the grief and the pain for the love of my life
Oh so gently I pat the soil knowing I'm still your wife.
I am grateful for memories that push me to live
I harvest more hope so I have more to give.*

*The garden is brown, the garden is green
The process of grieving – the changes I have seen.
To make my life whole again the quiet garden helps me
To be a part of the circle, a need to be just to be.*

Local Gardening Events

FIND OUT WHAT IS HAPPENING FOR GARDENERS IN CENTRAL OHIO



[VIEW BULLETIN BOARD](#)



Dear garden friends and colleagues,

It is with a mix of sadness and excitement that I am announcing my departure from Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, where I have had the privilege of serving as the Growing to Green Program Coordinator.

I am grateful for the incredible opportunities I've had to work with each and every one of you, and I am so proud of the progress we've made together in promoting community gardening and city beautification in Central Ohio. From garden visits to garden presentations, from Harvest Awards to working in the gardens, it's been an honor to be a part of this journey with all of you.

As I move on to new adventures, I want to express my deepest gratitude to each of you for your support, collaboration, and friendship. Your dedication to this work has inspired me every day, and I will carry the lessons I've learned from you with me always.

Please know that the Growing to Green program will continue to thrive under the care of our dedicated team at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. I have every confidence that they will continue to provide the same level of excellence and enthusiasm that we've come to expect from this program.

As I bid farewell, I encourage you all to stay in touch and continue to nurture the seeds of community gardening and city beautification that we've planted together. Your work matters, and I know that together, we can make a lasting impact on our communities.

Thank you again for being an integral part of my journey at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. I wish each of you all the best, and I look forward to staying in touch.

Take care of yourself and someone else if you can,

Sean McKay

**Interested in applying for the
Growing to Green Coordinator position?**

Growing to Green Program Coordinator
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Growing to Green Program Coordinator oversees the Growing to Green Program, supporting independent community gardens and promoting the benefits of gardening and fresh, local, and healthy food through education and outreach. This includes consultation site visits for local community gardens, developing and teaching garden-related classes or programs, organizing yearly Harvest Awards, Community Garden Mixer, We Dig symposiums, Green Patch Newsletter, and administering Franklin County community garden grants. The coordinator supervises the Growing to Green Educator responsible for the Conservatory's Community Garden Plots, Community Connections (volunteer program), and Franklin County Community Garden Map project. This position works with various neighborhood organizations, civic associations, community gardeners, food banks, donors, grantors, school teachers, and government officials. The Coordinator is an engaged and contributing member of a dynamic education team, working to support departmental goals and initiatives.

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Franklin Park Conservatory
and Botanical Gardens

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