

SHARING ABUNDANCE

P-Patch TIPS are reference documents that address topics related to the development and ongoing management of P-Patch Community Gardens.

Land Acknowledgement: We would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People past and present and honor with gratitude the land itself and the Duwamish Tribe.

Abundance vs. Scarcity

P-Patches have a long tradition of growing organic food to share with others. We challenge the idea of “scarcity.” Community gardens are a place of abundance – abundance of plants, healthy food, people caring for the land and their neighbors. Gardeners are encouraged to make sharing food part of their regular activities.

Many people in our city don’t have their basic needs met:

- In 2019, about 13% of adults experience food insecurity. Approximately 11,200 people are experiencing homelessness.*
- Some people are not able to access their local food bank or have access to other fresh food.

Most gardens experience some amount of “theft” of food or plants from individual plots. This is a reality of growing food on public land. Think about how you can create space in common areas for the larger community to harvest from.

- When someone takes food from your garden, recognize that having a plot is a privilege not all have access to (some people don’t have the time, money, or housing stability to care for a plot).
- Consider **not** reporting “theft” of food or plants in your garden to the police.
- If you catch someone picking food from your plot, talk to them about sharing in the garden, how to get involved, sign up for a plot or other food resources in your neighborhood, and **be respectful**. If you need resources, reach out to P-Patch staff.

TIP

PP501

10/2/20



Organizing

There is no one way to share food with your community. Use any combination of these approaches that work best for your P-Patch.

- Giving Garden Beds
- Growing to Share
- Open Harvest
- Free Farm Stand

P-Patch staff can provide garden space and seeds, and link you to other gardens with successful giving programs.

*Sources: Healthy Food Availability and Food Bank Network Report (<https://rb.gy/oyfhzx>) and All Home KC (<https://rb.gy/wpop1l>).

P-PATCH COMMUNITY GARDENING

Recipe for Successful Giving Gardens

Below are the ingredients that make a successful Giving Garden. Think about how you'll engage people in your garden and neighborhood to carry out these activities.

People: volunteer recruitment and appreciation

Growing: planting, caretaking, harvesting

Sharing: prepping, cleaning, weighing, logging produce totals, delivering donations to local food bank or feeding program, or organizing areas for community harvest.

Organizing

- Create a dedicated Food Bank "Giving Garden" Bed: individuals work together to care for, harvest, and deliver.
- Identify a team willing to coordinate, plant, water, weed, harvest, prepare for donation, and deliver.
- Find gardeners that are skilled growers and ask them to share their expertise with others.
- Include Giving Garden work at whole garden work parties.
- Pick a consistent location, time, and day for donations.
- Find a cool spot for gardeners to put produce (some gardens use coolers or a shady storage area).

Where to donate

- 1) Connect with the program you are growing for. Learn who uses the meal program, food bank or a mutual aid effort. If you have the relationships, the food will be better received.
- 2) Find a list of Seattle-area food banks, meal programs, and low-income apartment buildings that accept fresh produce donations, including contact information, best hours to donate: http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/PPatch/Where_to_Donate.pdf
- 3) Take items in before they open to give volunteers and staff time to process the donation.

Growing to Share

Create a system to glean from individual plots*

Sometimes a garden might only be able to donate from individual plots. Consider organizing gardeners to plant a row specifically for donation.

There is much food that goes to waste in P-Patch plots every year.



- Be clear about what should be harvested.
- Use different color flags or signs in individual plots to show gleaning team which crops to harvest.
- Actively scan individual plots for food that needs harvesting and reach out to them for donating.
- Focus on gardens that have not been visited for a while and have veggies ready to be harvested. Reach out, provide a deadline, and if they don't respond or harvest, go in and harvest ripe veggies to add to other giving/sharing efforts.

*When gleaning, treat each garden as it is your own. Step back and look at the garden layout and then tread lightly in each plot.

Open Harvest

Open Harvest model can look like community beds, even a whole garden, where neighbors can pick what they need.

Strategies for successful open harvest:

- Clearly mark the areas available for the community to harvest from. "This space is open for the community. Pick what you need and leave some for others."
- Highlight what, and how to harvest.
- Track and report what is being harvested.

P-PATCH COMMUNITY GARDENING

Free Farm Stands

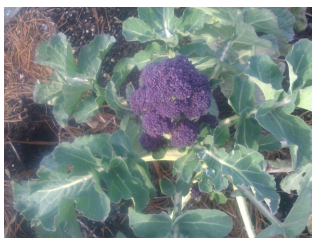
Create a space to share the abundance on site for the whole community. Think about sharing seeds, too.

- Set up a table with extra produce for neighbors to come take what they need.
- Create a schedule for gardeners to put food out
- Make flyers and post them at the garden and in the neighborhood.
- Hold events for the whole community and highlight the free farm stands.

Door-To-Door: There may be people in your community that can't leave their home to get fresh food. Try delivering extra produce from the garden to your neighbors.

Planting Tips

- 1) **Plant fewer crops.** For example, in a 100sf garden, plant 2 crops at a time. It is easier to harvest and will be more impactful for food banks and feeding programs.
- 2) **Batch harvest.** Plant crops that can be harvested at one time if you aren't in the garden everyday. Example: green onions vs. peas or beans.
- 3) **Successive plantings.** Many crops can be grown several times a year (lettuce, green onions, spinach, radishes, carrots, cilantro, etc.).
- 4) **Think about sharing herbs.** Package them well in small amounts tied together. Please label herbs; lots of folks have never seen them fresh!
- 5) **Label produce** that is not 'basic' such as kale, chard, fancy greens, and odd colored squash.



Tracking your donations

Help the P-Patch Program track your great impact by using our tracking sheets - available at: http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/PPatch/Produce_tracking_Sheet.pdf

All donations of fresh produce are given and accepted under the legislative guidelines as outlined in the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act of 1996 which states: *A non-profit organization shall not be subject to civil or criminal liability arising from the nature, age, packaging, or condition of apparently wholesome food or an apparently fit grocery product that the non-profit organization received as a donation in good faith from a person or gleaner for ultimate distribution to needy individuals.*

Additional Resources

Organic Gardening information:

- [“Organic Gardening 101”](#)
- <http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/PPatch/Organic-Gardening.pdf>

Join the citywide P-Patch Giving Garden e-mail discussion listserv: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/programs-and-services/p-patch-community-gardening/contact-us/mailling-list>

Seattle's Giving Garden Network:

The “GIVINGGARDENS” list serve and Seattle's Giving Garden Network www.sggcn.org is a good place to look for updates related to getting starts. It also provides opportunities to connect with other gardeners working on giving gardens.

Visit their website at SGGN.org.

Contact the Giving Garden Network directly: SeattleSGGN@gmail.com

Other P-Patches

Ask P-Patch staff for connections with other gardens that are running successful giving programs.