



Growing Your Own Food

Interested in growing your own food and joining more than seven million United States households in gardening?¹ Growing your own food offers a variety of benefits, some of which are listed below:^{2,3,4}

- Helps relieve stress
- Increases in physical activity
- Increases in access and consumption of fresh produce
- Improves the local environment
- Helps save money

The Franklin County Local Food Council offers this page to provide you with helpful links, highlighting best practices of growing produce, community gardening opportunities, local zoning policies, and much more. Feel free to explore these sites as you start on your adventure to growing your own food!

Growing Your Own:

National Gardening Association- “The National Gardening Association is a Vermont-based national nonprofit leader in garden-based education. Its’ mission is to empower every generation to lead healthier lives, build stronger communities, and encourage environmental stewardship through educational gardening programs.” The National Gardening Association provides educational resources, grants, and expertise in the gardening field. <http://www.garden.org/>

Ohio State Extension- The mission of the Ohio State Extension is to engage “people to strengthen their lives and communities through research-based educational programming.” They do this by providing workshops, online resources, and staff to answering your questions about gardening, preserving, and much more. <http://extension.osu.edu/topics/garden>

Ohio State Master Gardener- “The Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program provides intensive training in horticulture to interested Ohio resident who then volunteer their time assisting with educational programs and activities for Ohio residents through their local Ohio State University Extension county office.” If you do not have time to dedicate to this program, do not hesitate to call on your local Ohio State Master Gardener for expert gardening advice. <http://mastergardener.osu.edu/>

¹ <http://www.gardenresearch.com/index.php?q=show&id=3126>

² <http://www.cnn.com/2011/HEALTH/07/08/why.gardening.good/index.html>

³ http://www.communitygarden.org/docs/learn/articles/multiple_benefits.pdf

⁴ <http://www.gardenresearch.com/index.php?q=show&id=3126>



Local Matters- Growing Matters- Growing Matters is a program of Local Matters, a Columbus based non-profit whose vision “is to transform the food system through education and increased access to healthful, affordable and sustainable food; while inspiring individuals to consider the role of food in their lives. Growing Matters provides resources, education and support for partners and community members to create and care for food-production gardens. The program takes a holistic approach to growing food, working closely with a variety of small and large-scale models, from container gardening to urban farming.” <http://local-matters.org/what-we-do/growing-matters>

Rebuilding Together Central Ohio: Tool Lending Library- The Tool Lending Library “offers over 200 different types of tools and over 4,500 individual hand and power tools”. The Tool Lending library is available to Franklin County residents and is intended to serve property owners. <http://www.rtcentralohio.org/tool-library/>

The GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program- The GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program, launched in 2011 by the City of Columbus and Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District in 2011, encourages homeowners to install rain barrels to conserve water and energy. <http://stormwater.franklinswcd.org/>

Community Gardening:

- *American Community Gardening Association-* The American Community Gardening Association is a national non-profit dedicated to promoting community gardening to strengthen communities. The ACGA provides resources, programs, and events related to community gardening. <http://www.communitygarden.org/index.php>
- *Franklin Park Growing to Green-* “Growing to Green is Columbus' largest organized effort to promote and provide free community resources for community gardening and city beautification. Initiated in March 2000, Growing to Green has assisted in the start-up or renovation of more than 250 community gardens throughout the central Ohio area. Growing to Green assists individuals and groups interested in starting a community garden, neighborhood beautification project, or a school learning garden. For more information, contact Bill Dawson, Growing to Green Coordinator, at 614.715.8090.” <http://www.fpconservatory.org/The-Experience/Gardening-Programs/Growing-to-Green>
- *Greater Columbus Growing Coalition-* “The Greater Columbus Growing Coalition, GCGC, is a grassroots organization that supports the growing, processing, transportation, and distribution of local agricultural products.” If you would like to meet other community gardeners in the area, make sure to attend their monthly meetings, which are usually held the first Thursday of each month. <http://www.columbusgcg.org/>



- *Local Grant resources:*
 - **City of Columbus and Franklin County Community Gardens Grant Program**- “Recognizing the many benefits of community gardens, the City of Columbus and Franklin County have partnered with The Columbus Foundation to support existing gardens and encourage the creation of new ones.” “The City of Columbus or Franklin County, depending on garden location, will fund grants of up to \$4,000 for supplies and/or contractual services. Grants providing only partial funding may be awarded.”
<http://columbusfoundation.org/grants/columbus-foundation/city-of-columbus-and-franklin-county-community-gardens-grant-program/>
 - **The ScottsMiracle-Gro Community Garden Academy**- “The ScottsMiracle-Gro Community Garden Academy Grant provides support to begin and maintain thriving community gardens and green spaces.”
<http://columbusfoundation.org/grants/columbus-foundation/scotts/>
- *City of Columbus Land Bank Community Garden Program*- If you are interested in community gardening but don’t have the space, consider applying for a land bank property. “The City of Columbus Land Redevelopment Office is looking for community groups, non-profits, companies, and individuals to help organize and build community gardens on Land Bank properties. In a typical year, around 50 parcels are used by various community groups, individuals, garden clubs, businesses, and neighbors. Urban agriculture projects, rain gardens, community beautification projects and other types of projects that benefit the surrounding neighborhood are encouraged.”
<http://development.columbus.gov/landredevelopment/content.aspx?id=40112>
- *City of Columbus Code and Policy for Community Gardens*- If you are ready to start your own community garden, be sure to understand the relevant code and policy for Columbus.
http://columbus.gov/uploadedFiles/Area_of_Interest/Get_Green/Get_Involved/Garden%20code%20guide.pdf

Preserving and Cooking Your Own:

United States Department of Agriculture- National Center for Home Food Preservation- Complete Guide to Home Canning- This guide is extensive! Peruse the website to learn about canning, freezing, drying, and much more.:
http://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/publications_usda.html

Ohio State University Extension- Food Preservation- The OSU Extension not only offers basic fact sheets about food preservation, they also provide helpful resources about



food preservation. <http://defiance.osu.edu/topics/family-and-consumer-sciences/food-preservation>

Healthy Eating:

The internet hosts almost unlimited resources on the nutritional benefits of eating healthy. Knowing which websites to trust can be a challenge. A good place to start might be Ohioline, a collaborative project maintained by the Ohio State University Extension Office, the OSU College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, The Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, and the Agricultural Technical Institute. Ohioline is a one-stop website for hundreds of fact sheets and educational materials covering a broad range of food- and nutrition-related subjects.

Ohioline:

<http://ohioline.osu.edu/lines/food.html>

Food Sales:

Maybe by now you're starting to really get the hang of this grow-your-own stuff. If you're ready to take the next step into producing food for others, you'll want to become familiar with the food laws in Ohio. The Ohio Agricultural Law Blog is written by the OSU Agricultural & Resource Law Program and covers topics from Animals to Zoning.

The Ohio Agricultural Law Blog:

<http://ohioaglaw.wordpress.com/>