

COMMUNITY GARDEN

In partnership with
Jackson County Community Health Action

Project Goal/Objectives:

1. Increase awareness about the importance of fresh fruits and vegetables.
2. Build a Community Garden
3. Increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables

Project Scope/Narrative:

The idea of a Community Garden isn't a new concept yet in Jackson County it is an innovative approach to increasing physical activity and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables while at the same time fostering relationships. The Jackson County Community Health Action Team (JCCHAT) had wanted to host a community garden a couple years ago but lacked in financial support. When funding became available through the WIC Mini Grants we were excited about taking advantage of the opportunity to fund our idea.

The message we all hear is to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables. However, to a low income family or even a middle class family with 3 plus children, it's easier said than done. Fresh fruits and vegetables are considerably more expensive. This was one of the reasons behind the community garden. Individuals living in the neighborhood are invited to work in the garden. In return for their time investment and hard work they are able to harvest the produce. As mentioned before, we are hoping to not only see an increase in physical activity and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. We hope to see a relationships developed among neighbors, elders and youth and parents and children.

OSU Extension has planned educational events at the garden on topics such as planting, soil and healthy foods. There has also been some interest in starting a 4-H club in this neighborhood with their initial project being the community garden. We will take advantage of every opportunity to provide education about eating habits and the importance eating fresh fruits and vegetables daily as well as healthy lifestyle choices.

A local Hispanic Church owns a large portion of a vacant city block and they have donated a portion of their land for the garden. Many of the members of the church work and plan to reap the benefit from the garden.

The primary focus of the project is to increase fruit and vegetables consumption however, we anticipate many more benefits of the garden.

Participating Partners:

Jackson County Health Department
Templo Sinai Assembly of God Church
OSU Extension
Interested Community Members



Target Audience:

- Hispanic Community
- Residents living in the targeted low-income neighborhood

Project Outcomes:

If you have visited southwest Oklahoma this year, you will know that we have seen very little rain. If you have very tried to build a community garden you will easily see the correlation between the worse drought we've seen in years and the difficulty of building a community garden. We tried to break ground many times and found that "breaking the ground" was easier said than done. The plow on the tractor literally skipped across the ground. So, we waited and waited and waited and until one glorious day rain fell from the sky. Immediately we went out and began working the soil. We have added top soil and plowed the 50' x 75' garden. A new water tap was installed to water the garden. The garden will be secured with railroad ties and have a fence to keep animals out. Cotton seed hulls will be plowed in and planting will begin early spring.

OSU Extension has planned educational events at the garden on topics such as planting, soil and healthy foods. There has also been some interest in starting a 4-H club in this neighborhood with their initial project being the community garden. We have seen considerable community support for this project and look forward to harvesting the first crops.

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