



Guide to Setting Up A Food Donation Program in your Community Garden

- Assess desire of community gardeners to give back via produce donations; get commitments
 - consider “Grow-a-Row” model
 - will it be one person collecting? A committee managing the process?
 - how formal or informal?
- Determine community partners
 - Consider local groups in your community garden’s neighborhood
 - find food pantries via Ample Harvest, Cooking Matters, calling the DUG office
 - relationships from current gardeners
- Meet with community partners to create action plan
 - Be sure community partners can accept raw, unprocessed food
 - What produce is most needed? What produce is not helpful? Minimum or maximum amount accepted?
 - When & where to drop off
 - What is the storage capacity? Is there refrigeration for produce or must it go out the same day it arrives?
 - What is the most convenient time to drop produce off? Align delivery time with when it is most convenient for pantry staff/volunteers to accept & process the produce.
 - Best contact on both ends
 - garden: garden leader or donations coordinator
 - pantry: staff or volunteer? who will be present at that regular drop off date/time?
- Share action plan with gardeners & involve them: balancing ease with engagement
 - schedule regular harvest days and times in the garden
 - same day/time each week for pickup
 - specific area of the garden designated for donation drop off
 - signage explaining where/when gardeners may leave produce
 - appropriate handling of produce; food safety protocols
 - recipes to give to pantries along with respective produce
 - how to keep freshly harvested produce cool
 - transporting produce to the recipient organization
- Track the giving
 - weigh and record donated produce weekly (or as often as you are donating)
 - take photos!
 - ... of gardeners
 - ... of clients receiving donation, if it’s OK by them and the pantry (use DUG photo waiver release)
 - because the personal touch matters!
 - keep online record via google docs
 - keep physical record in public garden space for others to see
- Deepen relationships
 - invite pantry staff and clients to garden events
 - volunteer at the pantry. Get a group of gardeners together to work at the pantry, or at Project Angel Heart, or to otherwise engage in the system fighting hunger in Colorado—find deeper ways to follow your food and the impact it is having on your neighbors in need.