



MUSKINGUM SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

URBAN GREENS PROGRAM UPDATE

URBAN GREENS

Mission Statement: Growing food, growing community. Together we are working to develop and support urban agriculture projects in Muskingum County.



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2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The (MSWCD) employed past-summer intern Allie Murphy part-time from August until November to finish out the growing season. With an additional staff member leaving in November, Allie was hired full-time in a combined position of Education/Urban Agricultural Specialist.
- Volunteer Summer Interns Daniel Odette-Spillner and Kristin Roessler worked in Urban Greens and volunteered 80 hours assisting with the Urban Greens program. In appreciation, the MSWCD Board provided each a scholarship to use towards their continued college educations.
- Several other volunteers donated countless hours planting, weeding, harvesting, and cleaning up the sites.
- A group of Senior high school students (and their teachers) from the Summit Christian Academy from Lee's Summit, Missouri, helped clean up our gardens as part of their senior mission trip. We are grateful for all their help the two days they assisted us.
- Due to the on-going pandemic and lack of personnel until late in the year, no in-person events were held.
- Once again, the Free Plant and Seed Giveaway as held, in partnership with Eastside Community Ministry; it was a drive-thru event.
- Worked in partnership with the Muskingum County Veterans' Clinic at the Brighton Grows Garden. The entire garden was planted by Urban Greens and several staff and clients of the clinic. The 880 pounds of produce from that site was donated to various agencies, including Christ's Table, Salvation Army, Veterans' Clinic, Allwell Crisis Center, Transitions, garden volunteers and homebound veterans.
- The Farm to School Garden at Zanesville Community High School continued to produce and was worked by two dedicated volunteers and several clients from REA Enterprises. The 235 pounds of produce harvested was given to Christ's Table. In the fall, the ZHS Natural Resources program grew greens that were used by the school chef in the school lunches.
- MSWCD staff toured numerous community garden sites in Columbus, making valuable educational contacts and coming up with new ideas for Urban Greens expansion. Many planning sessions for 2022 have taken place!
- The MSWCD applied for a \$50,000 NACD Urban Agriculture grant; we will not know if we have received it until mid-March 2022.
- Thanks to Dollar General Warehouse for the huge donation of potting soil!

Urban Greens: growing food, growing community, growing with purpose.



2022 PLANS AND GOALS

- Urban Greens will be taking on the management of at least two additional gardens – Imlay Garden and Marshall Green. Harvests from these sites will be used to supply produce to the South Zanesville Food Pantry (the second largest in the county) and the Coburn UMC food pantry.
- The Imlay Garden site will need some beds rehabilitated but will then be used by community residents and VA Clinic staff. Additional Master Gardener volunteers have been identified and are ready to help plant and educate others on planting and caring for the gardens.
- The South Zanesville Food Pantry has received a Straker Foundation Grant to build two demonstration raised beds at the church. These beds will be used by the MSWCD to teach food bank recipients how to grow some of their own food.
- Working with The Ohio State University SNAP Educator, we will work to educate food bank participants and others how to use the fresh produce (how to cook and preserve it)
- Plans are to establish an outdoor classroom area at Restoration Park where children will be taught, using several of the raised beds, how to garden. The outdoor classroom will have a sailcloth canopy, tree stump seating, and a portable white board.
- Working with the Brighton Grows Garden surrounding community, including “The Manor” (Zanesville Metropolitan Housing Authority), residents will be invited to more fully participate in the garden and educational activities will be planned.
- A community garden and food pantry are in the preliminary planning stages for Duncan Falls.
- Urban Greens will be assisting Central State University Extension establish their “Beginning Farmer” program in Muskingum County, the first in southeastern Ohio. This program will take interested participants from how to plant a seed to how to market your product if you want to make a business of a small farm. The curriculum for this program is very extensive and select portions of it will be used for other educational events.
- Recruitment is on-going for volunteers, groups, and students to assist with the various different programs.



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