



Garden Project is very grateful to Meridian Township for your partnership during the 2017 growing season. Your support has empowered gardeners in your community to grow food for their families this year. Together, we supported 10 community gardens with plant starts, seeds, and many other important resources to help our gardeners be successful. This report highlights some of the impact your partnership has made possible at each of these gardens. Thank you for your continued support.

Okemos International Garden at Central/Cedar Creek

The spring weather cooperated and Okemos Public Schools provided the garden an early till for Okemos International Garden, allowing the garden to open for the season on May 17th. Because of increased demand, the garden increased the number of gardening plots they offered from 24 to 48 with each plot offering approximately 200 square feet of garden space.

Garden Project supported the infrastructure improvements at Okemos International Garden this year. Staff worked to maintain the new garden fence we built last fall by grading, mowing, and controlling poison ivy. Okemos International gardeners were active users of the Garden Project Resource Center, accessing 25 seed packets per gardener and weekly, free plant distributions. Garden Project also provided on-site registration, garden plotting and assignments, as well as hosting volunteers to help with spring and fall clean-ups.



Okemos International Garden

Marsh Pointe Garden

Marsh Pointe's new Garden Leader, Carol, is known for being active, passionate, and knowledgeable. Garden Project worked with her to set a site revitalization plan for the season and coordinated a Michigan State University (MSU) volunteer group to visit the garden early in the season. The MSU group "adopted" Carol and the Marsh Pointe gardeners, revisiting them later in the season for a follow up work day. Garden Project supported improved infrastructure at the garden this year by providing tilling for an overgrown area of the garden that will now be maintained as a central gathering space.

Edgewood Village Community Garden

Garden Project provided tools, over 100 plant starts, and 160 seed packets this season to gardeners at Edgewood Village Community Garden. We also provided spring tilling and multiple site consultations this season to help them consider improvements to their garden, including adding a new compost station and moving their hoop house. Garden Project coordinated multiple volunteer groups to visit Edgewood this season. Their Garden Leader reported early in the spring that they had only one AmeriCorps member this year instead of the three members they usually host. Because of this, they fell a bit behind early in the season. Still, they managed to get good participation from their gardeners and even grow a few plots for donations at local pantries.

Garden Project is a big proponent of the Edgewood Village Community Center, which uses their garden to teach health and nutrition to their youngest residents. The local Public Broadcasting Station (PBS), WKAR, featured their work in a WKAR Cares segment, which can be viewed [here](#).

Edgewood Village was the host for this year's Fall Harvest Potluck on September 21st. Over 50 gardeners and community members braved the rain to attend. We are so grateful to everyone who attended, including Meridian Township Specialist, Darla Jackson.

Grange Acres

Garden Project helped Grange Acres protect their crops from rabbits this year, because they were beginning to have problems last year. Garden Project purchased 500 feet of rabbit fence and coordinated a group of volunteers from the Michigan State Police Department to come and install it on a work day this spring. Garden Project continued the tradition of hosting VIP open hours at the GP Resource Center for residents to pick up free seeds and plants this spring. We also provided 10 yards of Hammond Farm's "Closed Loop" compost blend for their gardens. Grange Acres also has new leadership this year, with their long-time resident and Garden Leader taking a much-needed break to enjoy the garden as a gardener.



Edgewood Village Harvest Potluck



Harvest Potluck Inside Gathering



Grange Acres

Wardcliff Garden

For the first time this year, Wardcliff gardeners could grow their fresh fruits and vegetables without fear of deer eating their crops. They now have the protection of a new, 10-foot tall deer fence. They had only a disintegrating plastic fence before this, which had been zip-tied together over the last couple of seasons.

Wardcliff Garden’s new Garden Leader expressed their gratitude with a note “We’re so happy with the fence at Wardcliff. Thank you for working on making this happen. The other week we wrapped a 2ft wide roll of chicken wire around the outside perimeter and attached it with zip ties, this should keep the rabbits out.” In addition to the new fence, Garden Project also purchased and delivered straw for the gardeners to use. This is important to help with weed suppression and water conservation.



Wardcliff Garden

Northwind Community Garden

Gardeners at Northwind Community Garden have steadily relied on water access from the East Lansing Food Cooperative (ELFCO) building next door, to supplement during dry times, when there hasn’t been water in the catchment system. With the sale of the ELFCO building to a new owner in the spring, we were unsure if the garden would still have water access going into the growing season. Fortunately, the new owner is supportive of the garden, and organic farming in general. They have continued to provide water for the gardeners. Garden Project provided straw bales for the gardeners as well as 12 yards of Hammond Farm’s “Closed Loop” compost blend.



Northwind Community Garden

St. Paul Lutheran Church

The garden at St. Paul Lutheran Church continued into their third growing season this year. While Interactions with Garden Project were minimal, garden leaders continued to receive resource emails from us listing support options ranging from volunteer groups, improvement funds, seeds, plants, trainings and more. St. Paul grows their garden for donation. Roughly 500 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables are harvested for their food pantry each year.



St. Paul Lutheran Church

Haslett Middle School

Garden Project staff have not had contact with Haslett Middle School Garden this season. Stephanie Chandel continues to teach there and receives our Garden Leader resource emails. We will connect in the winter to get an update on their progress.

Kinawa Middle School & Chippewa Middle School

Kinawa was the site of an abandoned garden until this year. It was “left to the weeds,” in the words of one mother. This past winter, a group of parents came together to form a garden leadership committee. They decided to rehab the garden and operate it as a community garden.

To support their first season as Kinawa Community Garden, Garden Project provided funding for mesh fencing to keep out wildlife. We also provided lumber and hardware for building four raised beds and for reinforcing existing raised beds that were in disrepair. One of the leadership members attended a Garden Leader Support Night at the Garden Project Resource Center in April. She has been a great liaison. We also continue to support the science program at Chippewa with seeds in the spring.

St Luke’s Lutheran Church, God’s Glory Garden

God’s Glory Garden at St. Luke’s Lutheran Church became part of the Garden Project network this season. They are in their third season of growing, primarily for donation at local pantries, but also with opportunities for community members to grow their own food.

God’s Glory Garden was originally two separate ministries. Last fall, St Luke’s joined with the congregation at Christ Lutheran Church in downtown Lansing to become one congregation. They also combined their garden ministries with hopes to plan educational opportunities around food preservation and gardening in the future. This year, Garden Project provided a donation of sunflower seeds to St. Luke’s this spring for their #500years500sunflowers project.