

The Benefits Derived from Community Gardens

Community gardens are encouraged by many cities because of the benefits they provide:

- **Healthy, fresh food:** Locally grown food is higher in nutrients than food that has to be transported long distances. You can also pick what you need, so there is usually less food waste. People who grow a garden often eat more vegetables.
- **More affordable food prices:** While there is an expense for seeds or starter plants, growing your own food is more affordable.
- **Food security:** During the growing season, garden grown food is readily available. Often, an 'extra row' is planted and that food is donated to a local food bank.
- **A neighbourhood meeting place:** The community garden is a public space that usually has seating areas. It can be a gathering place for neighbours to enjoy each other's company while gardening, and an opportunity to make new friends.
- **An opportunity to develop new skills:** Planting and maintaining a garden requires knowledge that new gardeners can learn from the more experienced. Young people can learn about possible careers in the field of horticulture.
- **Increased health of the environment and the people:** Through the process of photosynthesis, green plants take in carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, from the atmosphere, and release oxygen. People need sunlight to produce vitamin D, an important nutrient in maintaining healthy bones.