

A woman with dark hair, wearing a bright red short-sleeved top and striped shorts, stands in a vibrant home garden. She is smiling and holding a green cucumber. The garden is filled with various green plants, including large-leafed squash or zucchini plants in the foreground. In the background, there is a wooden fence and a chain-link fence.

HOME GARDENS

HOME GARDENS' MISSION

Partner with diverse, multi-generational families and communities to build and sustain food-producing home gardens, which strengthen the health of people, communities and the environment.

WHAT WE DO

- Provide resources, education and support for households with limited resources to successfully grow, prepare and preserve food
- Hire and train past participants to work as Community Organizers in their own neighborhoods
- Serve diverse communities with culturally relevant, community-based, accessible programming and resources
- Partner regionally to expand home gardening education and support
- Farm to Community connection to local agriculture and fresh food access.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

In 2021, we were able to deepen connections with community and local farming communities. We continued our CSA program while continuing our Home Gardens Program.

THE HOME GARDENS PROGRAM HAS WORKED WITH 1,589 HOUSEHOLDS SINCE 1996



In 2021 we:

Welcomed 106 new families into our 3-year program and continued supporting 142 families in their second and third years of the program. **Total 354 families (952 individuals, 340 children)**

Partnered with 3 affordable housing community garden sites to provide gardening support and education to **44** new households. Supporting a total of **68 households at 6 partner sites.**

Have 8 graduates of the Home Gardens program working as food justice advocates in their own neighborhoods: recruiting families, organizing classes, working one-on-one with families, soliciting feedback and providing strategic direction for the program.

Continued virtual programming to provide

educational workshops and videos to support gardeners. We hosted 6 virtual gardening classes and created 13 informational gardening videos in English and Spanish.

Distributed over 8,000 plant starts and 5,000 seed packets to families in the program and community partner and incorporated a Fall Plant Distribution for Seasonal Crop Extension.

Started training all Home Gardens team in herbalism practices for medicinal plants with [Mariquita Medicinals](#).

We distributed approximately **886 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)** produce and pantry boxes to community.



ACCORDING TO OUR END OF YEAR SURVEYS:

- 83% of households reported increasing their consumption of fresh vegetables as a result of their garden.
- 76% shared extra produce with people outside of their family.
- 81% reported saving money on groceries.
- 53% decreased their use of emergency food services, with the inclusion of our CSA offerings due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.
- 83% increased their amount of weekly exercise
- 63% reported meeting new neighbors and community members
- 71% reported that their children increased their interest in eating fruits and vegetables

WHAT DO WE WANT TO DO IN THE FUTURE?

- Build collaborative partnerships with clinical and/or healthcare providers and promote gardening as a health and social community benefit
- Develop training and materials outlining best practices/replication of our model.
- Provide professional development opportunities for the Home Gardens team.
- Increase the program's accessibility and inclusivity for those who speak languages other than English and Spanish.
- Grow our team in Washington County to promote access to healthy food, gardening and wellness within the community.

WHERE WE WORK:

Multnomah and North Clackamas County; Portland, Gresham, Milwaukie, Clackamas and Oregon City.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT OUR WORK:

- Donate at www.growing-gardens.org
- Volunteer to build gardens, support beginning gardeners, teach classes, grow plants and more!

