



Garden Project (GP) is grateful to Meridian Township for your partnership in 2020. With your financial support, GP helped to empower Meridian Township residents towards food security, self-sufficiency and community connection. The opportunity for township residents to participate in community and home gardening was especially important this year during the COVID-19 pandemic. In general, community gardens had to adapt the way they used their sites but were still able to have productive and meaningful seasons.

Garden Project was unable to open our Resource Center to the public but instead provided vegetable seeds and transplants through mail-order and curbside pick-up. All in-person educational events, including our annual garden tour, were cancelled but online options were made available.

Every year we collect feedback from gardeners across our network, asking what their experience was like and where they could use support. Here are the voices of 14 Meridian township gardeners that utilized Garden Project resources this year...

I have gardened with the project since the beginning at Wardcliff; an important part of my summer. Hope to continue as long as I am able. A treasure in our neighborhood	Mary, Wardcliff community gardener Wardcliff community gardener
Gardening was one of the few activities that was mostly unaffected by Covid-19 None of the above are available at the garden. Donating food by two gardeners - quantity has started this season only for the first time. We need more water	Greg, Lake O' the Hills community gardener Briarwood community gardener
I have been community gardening for two summers and it has been a great experience. This year we got bitter gourd creepers during the plant distribution and that was really great to have. This year the kids got more involved and excited about the harvest. Overall this is a great experience and I would like to thank the garden center staff and volunteers for making this year a success in spite of the pandemic.	Sawsen, Okemos International community gardener Nandan, Okemos International community gardener
I like the feelings to share the food grown in the community garden with other people, especially in this pandemic. Do not feel isolated or lonely any more. I enjoyed gardening and seeing families interacting and kids helping in the garden	Zhaoran, Okemos International community gardener Ruby, Okemos International community gardener
I love my time in the community garden and hope community garden access is increased so that more people can enjoy this wonderful experience. Our garden's plots looked better than in previous years but we rarely heard from gardeners since we couldn't have group work sessions or other gatherings.	Martha, Kinawa community gardener Erica, Kinawa community gardener
Overall, hand pump or not, i'm glad the garden was there. I will be moving to a garden with no hand pump for sure. Thank you for featuring our garden in your video tour project. It was very interesting to see the wide variety in the gardens you support.	Jason, Haslett resident at Towar Community Garden Vicki, Haslett resident at Willows of East Lansing
Thankyouforyourhelpsince1994 Thanks a lot for the plants and seeds.	Linda, Meridian Township home gardener (Haslett) Meridian Township home gardener (Okemos)

Grange Acres & Marsh Pointe Community Gardens



Both gardens, at senior homes in Meridian Township, were able to open safely this year to residents. Garden Project mailed seeds to residents at sites in the spring and in November, built a fence at Marsh Pointe due to increased deer pressure. Garden leaders at both sites, remain active and engaged with the administrators and gardeners.

Kinawa Middle School & Chippewa Middle School



Kinawa community garden leadership successfully worked with the school district to receive a waiver to keep the garden open to the community during the pandemic, despite the rest of the school grounds being closed. The garden was fully utilized and featured on Garden Project's virtual garden tour. The Kinawa Garden portion begins at 8:45 mark of the linked video [HERE](#).

Northwind Community Garden

2020 brought the sale of the property that has hosted Northwind Community Garden since 2010 and the garden's closure. (For the last 7+ years, the property has been up for sale and the community given annual permission, contingent on availability, to use.) In the early summer, gardeners disassembled the space, with GP helping on the larger infrastructure. The community expressed its gratefulness to the owner for a decade of growing opportunities. A few gardeners joined other area gardens, and some began gardening at home.

Okemos International Garden



Okemos International Garden was full again in 2020, with 48 plots available to the community. This year, staff installed a permanent, underground irrigation pipe for gardeners, with water generously provided by Cedar Creek Apartments next door. GP hosted volunteer groups in the fall to assist gardeners with clean-up.

St Luke's Church: God's Glory Garden and St. Paul Lutheran Church Community Garden

God's Glory Garden at St. Luke's Church grew exclusively for donation this season. Roughly 18 community members volunteered their time to grow over 1,000 pounds of tomatoes, along with green beans, zucchini, peppers, cucumbers, and butternut squash. They donated produce to Haslett Food, providing enough for 8 families a week, with the rest going to St. Luke Lutheran Church's soup kitchen in downtown Lansing and Cristo Rey. Most of the pepper plants and squash seeds were provided by Garden Project. Garden Leader Jude Barry shared, "Every year this garden blesses us in different ways. This year was no exception."

Edgewood Village Community Garden and Wardcliff Community Garden



Garden Project provided compost, straw and tilling coordination for Edgewood Village and Wardcliff gardens this year.



The Garden Director at Edgewood Village, with assistance from a dedicated Americorps member, grew an increased amount of produce to donate to residents on site since other garden activities were reduced during Covid-19 shut-downs. An unused, rocky area next to the community building was reworked to be a flower garden with a wandering path. Garden Project was able to provide transplants at no-cost for this special project and coordinate volunteer groups to assist with the multi-day install.