

From the Ground Up – Cultivating Community Gardens

APRIL 10, 2015
2015 NIHB PUBLIC HEALTH SUMMIT
KARRIE JOSEPH, MPH, CHES

Background in CG

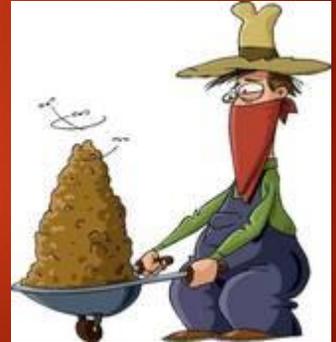
- ▶ Fort Berthold Community College Community Garden, ND
- ▶ Sylva Community Garden, NC
- ▶ Cherokee Youth Garden, NC
- ▶ Cherokee Central Schools gardens, NC

You Might Be a Gardener If.....









Ancient farming in eastern North America

T. Douglas Price¹

Laboratory for Archaeological Chemistry, University of Wisconsin, 1180 Observatory Drive, Madison WI 53706; and Department of Archaeology, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB24 3FX, Scotland

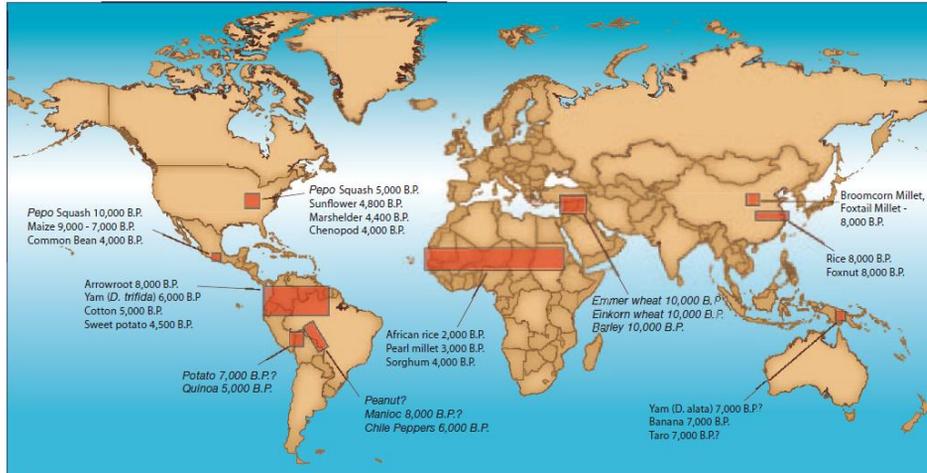


Fig. 1. The major centers of primary domestication and dates for the earliest domestication of various plant and animal species. Illustration by Marcia Bakry.



Patrick J. Alexander, hosted by the USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

Example: Role of Corn in Indigenous Cultures

- ▶ Creation stories – people who came from corn
- ▶ Stories of how corn came to people
- ▶ Stories that teach how to care for corn
- ▶ Ceremonies around planting, growing, harvesting corn
- ▶ Corn spirits
- ▶ Corn clans
- ▶ Calendars based on growing corn

“Food Sovereignty”

“**Food sovereignty**”, a term coined by members of Via Campesina in 1996, asserts that the people who produce, distribute, and consume food should control the mechanisms and policies of food production and distribution, rather than the corporations and market institutions they believe have come to dominate the global food system.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_sovereignty#Wrong_baseline_assumptions

According to the Traditional Plants and Foods Program of a Northwest Indian College, communities that exhibit *tribal food sustainability* and *food sovereignty* as those that:

- ▶ Have access to healthy food;
 - ▶ Have foods that are culturally appropriate;
 - ▶ Grow, gather, hunt and fish in ways that are maintainable over the long term;
 - ▶ Distribute foods in ways so people get what they need to stay healthy;
 - ▶ Adequately compensate the people who provide the food; and
 - ▶ Utilize tribal treaty rights and uphold policies that ensure continued access to traditional foods.
- ▶ <http://www.nativefoodsystems.org/about/sovereignty>, accessed 3/29/15

Positive Trends and recent landmarks

- ▶ Increase in funding available to tribal communities specific to farming, community food projects, traditional foods, gardening (USDA, CDC, FNDI)
- ▶ Keepseagle vs. Vilsack settlement
- ▶ Increase in tribal Healthy Food policies (Navajo, EBCI)
- ▶ More gardens in tribal communities
- ▶ Increased focus on traditional foods
- ▶ Increase in traditional and local foods being served in schools
- ▶ Annual Food Sovereignty Summits (sponsored by tribal orgs)

Learning Objectives

- ▶ Participants will be able to identify at least 2 models of community gardens.
- ▶ Participants will be able to list 2 evidence-based health benefits of participating in a community garden.
- ▶ Participants will be able to identify 3 strategies to sustain a community garden.

What is a community garden?



- ▶ A place where a group of people come together to grow something

Classifications (types) of Community Gardens

WHO they serve:

Youth gardens
Senior gardens
Intergenerational gardens
Refugee gardens

Classifications (types) of Community Gardens

WHERE they are located:

Neighborhood gardens
School gardens
Church gardens
Community Centers
Nursing Homes
Detention Centers
Domestic Violence Shelters
Substance Abuse Treatment Centers

Classifications (types) of Community Gardens

WHAT is the main purpose:

Therapy/Healing gardens
Donation gardens
Demonstration gardens
Educational gardens
Seed/plant preservation

Published Research on CG

Carrie Draper and Darcy Freedman (2010)

- ▶ Reviewed 55 published scholarly articles on CG
- ▶ Only 1 study was of CG in a NA tribe
- ▶ Only 2 studies indicated that part of the pop were NA

Review and Analysis of the Benefits, Purposes and Motivations associated with Community Gardens in the United States, Journal of Community Practice, 18:4, 458-492, DOI 10.1080/10705422.2010.519682

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10705422.2010.519682>

Draper and Freedman

- ▶ CG can fulfill multiple goals within a community
 - ▶ Health (physical activity, healthy eating, reduces stress)
 - ▶ Food security
 - ▶ Crime prevention
 - ▶ Leisure and recreation
 - ▶ Preserve cultural heritage
 - ▶ Social change

National Association of Social Work (NASW), 2008

- ▶ Community gardens are a “Powerful tool to help fulfill the overall mission of SOCWK: to enhance the basic needs of all people, especially the vulnerable, oppressed and impoverished.”

Why Join a CG – Research, Draper

- ▶ Access to fresh and better tasting food
- ▶ Time to enjoy nature
- ▶ Health benefits
- ▶ Opportunities to socialize
- ▶ Chance to beautify and give back to the community
- ▶ Efforts to support the conservation of green space

University of Utah study

- ▶ People who participate in community gardening have a significantly lower body mass index (BMI)--as well as lower odds of being overweight or obese--than do their non-gardening neighbors

Harvesting More Than Vegetables: The Potential Weight Control Benefits of Community Gardening

Cathleen D. Zick, Ken R. Smith, Lori Kowaleski-Jones, Claire Uno, Brittany J. Merrill
American Journal of Public Health: June 2013, Vol. 103, No. 6, pp. 1110-1115

Van der berg et al.

- ▶ Study conducted with adults in allotment CG:
- ▶ After a half an hour of gardening on the allotment, elevated salivary cortisol levels decreased by 22 percent, against a decrease of 11 percent in a control group assigned to a passive indoor reading task.
- ▶ 84% reported feeling healthier after a visit to the garden
- ▶ 91% reported feeling happier
- ▶ 86% feeling less stressed
- ▶ Allotment gardeners rated stress relief as the most important reason for allotment gardening, followed by staying active then staying healthy.

Van der berg et al.

- ▶ Allotment gardeners aged 62+ scored significantly or marginally better on measures of health and wellness than neighbors of the same age category (non-allotment gardeners)
- ▶ Composite well-being of older gardeners was significantly better than that of younger gardeners.
 - ▶ Older gardeners reporting more social contacts, less loneliness, less stress
 - ▶ Older pop spent more time on the allotment garden in active gardening than passive relaxation

Van den Berg, Agnes, van Winsum-Westra, Marijke, de Vries, Sierp, van Dillen, Sonja ME. Allotment gardening and health: a comparative survey among allotment gardeners and their neighbors without an allotment. *Environmental Health* 2010, 9:74. <http://www.ehjournal.net/content/9/1/74>

Armstrong, D (2000)

- ▶ Qualitative; Community and Diabetes education and Gardening Project
- ▶ ↑ availability of fresh produce,
- ▶ served as an educational site and
- ▶ created open space for sitting and walking

Armstrong , D. 2000a. *A community diabetes education and gardening project to improve diabetes care in a northwest American Indian tribe*. *Diabetes Educator*, 26: 113–120. [CrossRef] [PubMed] [Web of Science ®]

Youth Gardens , Draper and Freedman

- ▶ Enhanced nutrition
 - ▶ Increase n preference for greater # of types of vegetables
 - ▶ More likely to chose and consume vegetables in a lunchroom setting at posttest
- ▶ Interpersonal skills development
- ▶ Academic improvements

Youth Gardens , Draper and Freedman

- ▶ Promote youth development
 - ▶ Social relationships
 - ▶ Respect for other individuals and cultures
 - ▶ Increase science achievement and environmental attitudes
- ▶ Behavioral improvements
 - ▶ Respectfulness
 - ▶ Commitment
 - ▶ Positive teamwork

Social Capital, Draper

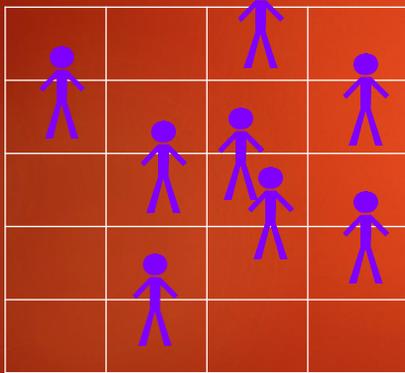
- ▶ Collective efficacy increased
- ▶ Participants accesses resources needed for their community garden from inside and outside their immediate garden network
- ▶ Participants viewed the CG as a way to successfully bring together people of different races and other people who would not normally socialize
- ▶ Relationships formed led to a stronger overall sense of community

VISIONING ACTIVITY

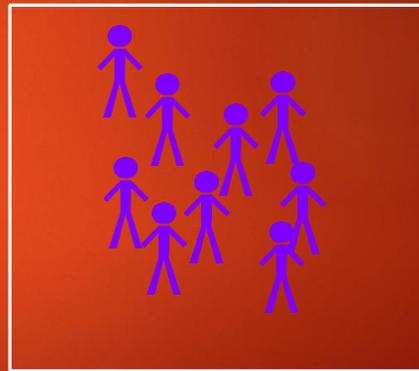
Our community garden is a place
where.....

2 Basic Models of CG

ALLOTMENT



COMMUNAL



COMPARISON

ALLOTMENT

- ▶ TAKES LESS COORDINATION
- ▶ RESPONSIBILITY IS SPREAD OUT AMONG MANY
- ▶ REQUIRES A BIG COMMITMENT BY VOLUNTEERS
- ▶ PEOPLE CAN WORK ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN SCHEDULE
- ▶ MORE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION
- ▶ SENSE OF PLACE/BELONGING
- ▶ OWNERSHIP/TERRITORIALISM

COMMUNAL

- ▶ TAKES MORE COORDINATION
- ▶ RESPONSIBILITY IS IN THE HANDS OF ONE OR A FEW
- ▶ LESS OF A COMMITMENT ON VOLUNTEERS
- ▶ USUALLY NEED SET WORK HOURS
- ▶ POTENTIALLY BETTER CONTROL OF PRODUCTION, HARVESTING
- ▶ PEOPLE MAY NOT TAKE AS MUCH OWNERSHIP

Key Elements for Sustaining Community in the Garden

Key Elements

- ▶ EXPECTATIONS
- ▶ Clear and consistent COMMUNICATION
- ▶ Fair and inclusive DECISION-MAKING process
- ▶ Foster a SENSE OF BELONGING

Expectations

- ▶ Not "rules"
- ▶ Keep to one page
- ▶ Post them in the garden and include with application
- ▶ Stick with items that reflect the garden's values (e.g. safety, conservation, beauty)
 - ▶ Organic
 - ▶ Parking/accessibility
 - ▶ Trash
 - ▶ Tools
 - ▶ Water
 - ▶ Fencing
 - ▶ Smoking

Expectations, example (Sylva)

- ▶ Weeds are plentiful. If you do not keep your plot reasonably weeded, it may be filled under at the discretion of the garden committee.
- ▶ Please be respectful of others' plots and use the designated paths for going in and out of the garden
- ▶ Pack it in, pack it out. Please do not leave plastic bags, nursery pots, bags of soil/amendments, or garbage in or around the garden.

Application

- ▶ Have an application process
 - ▶ At the minimum, to get their contact information
 - ▶ Include the expectations
 - ▶ Contract
 - ▶ Shows a commitment
 - ▶ Have a record

Communication

- ▶ Clear expectations
 - ▶ Especially if there are consequences
- ▶ Official business should be in writing
- ▶ Consistent, (ex. Monthly meetings)
- ▶ Share meeting minutes in a timely fashion
- ▶ Communicate outside the garden
 - ▶ Newsletter
 - ▶ Newspaper articles
 - ▶ Facebook
- ▶ Encourage communication among gardeners (avoid gatekeepers!)
 - ▶ Circulate phone numbers, emails, facebook pages

Decision-Making - Consensus

- ▶ Everyone in the group comes to an agreement
- ▶ Everyone's input and ideas are heard and understood
- ▶ Takes into account individual feelings.
- ▶ Useful for any item that brings up a lot of emotions or concerns people's ethics, politics, morals

<http://www.nonviolencetraining.org/Training/facilitation.htm>

Consensus vs. Voting

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <u>Advantages</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Everyone comfortable with decisions being made ▶ Everyone is in agreement ▶ No winners/losers ▶ All views are validated! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <u>Disadvantages</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Takes more time (getting people together, proposing alternatives) ▶ Takes more skill ▶ Tasks often tabled, nothing gets done ▶ Avoidance ▶ Does silence mean approval? |
|--|--|

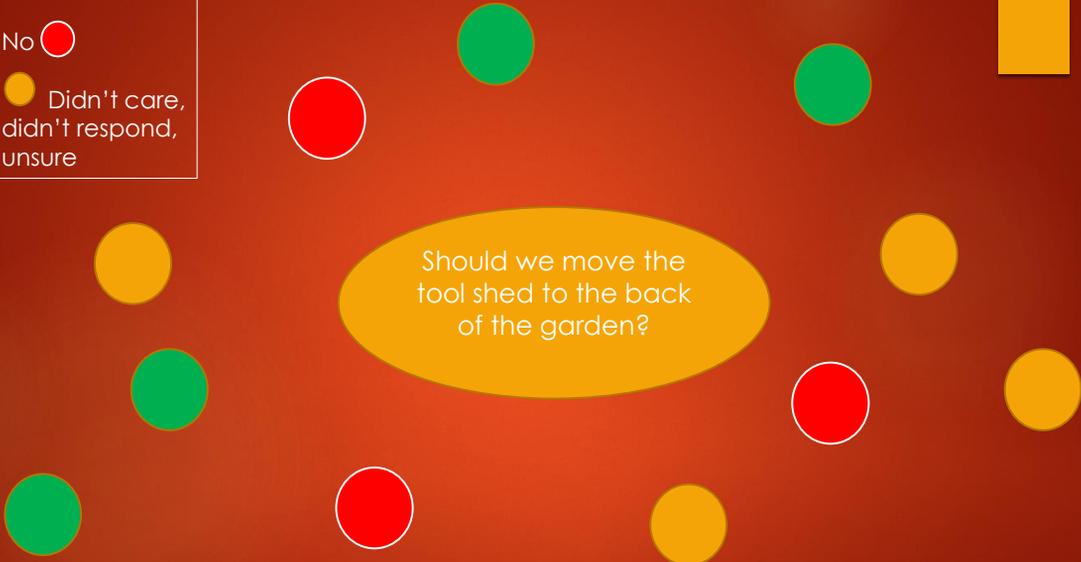
<http://www.nonviolencetraining.org/Training/facilitation.htm>



Example: Decision-making

- Yes 
- No 
-  Didn't care, didn't respond, unsure

Should we move the tool shed to the back of the garden?



Tips for the Decision-Making Process

- ▶ Decide upfront on how decisions will be made
 - ▶ Have it written down
 - ▶ Governing body should be gardeners!!
 - ▶ By voting or consensus?
 - ▶ If voting, who gets a vote? By all garden members or just by some (committee, council, coordinator)?
 - ▶ If consensus, define how the process will work
 - ▶ Include a timeline
 - ▶ Include how all voices will be heard
 - ▶ Prepare for dominating voices
 - ▶ All ideas, thoughts, perspectives, feelings are VALID!
- ▶ Organize a training

Sense of Belonging, Sense of Place



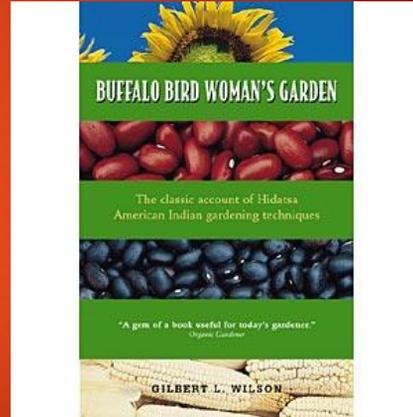
Sense of Belonging, Sense of place

- ▶ Cultural education
- ▶ Speakers who could talk about the history of that particular place
- ▶ Activities other than gardening in the garden
 - ▶ Pot lucks
 - ▶ Employee picnics
 - ▶ Meetings
 - ▶ Walk/run
 - ▶ Hang out
 - ▶ Garden tours



Sylva
Community
Garden

Buffalo Bird Woman's Garden





Small Group Activity

Small group activity

- ▶ How would you design a modern community garden using traditional values?