



At Work

Building Community with a Garden



The Parkland neighborhood, like others in Louisville's West End in Kentucky, has been identified as an underserved area. The median household income is \$13,032 (compared to \$46,701 for all of Louisville) and 52% of Parkland's residents live below the poverty line (compared to 17% for all of Louisville). Access to fresh food is a struggle with a lack of grocery stores and markets nearby. In an effort to increase access to fresh food, the Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Office, along with partners Louisville Metro Council District 1, the University of Louisville, Department of Economic Growth and Innovation and the Health Department hosted community forums to determine the problems and possible solutions. A community garden was quickly identified as being a viable and desired addition to the neighborhood. The partners, along with hundreds of volunteers, transformed the corner of 28th and Dumesnil Streets, once a vacant parking lot, into a community garden in one day.

Since that day, the Jefferson County Extension Office has hosted three additional build days and has completed all phases of the project. 48 raised garden beds are now in place. In addition, four children's beds, five herb beds, fruit trees, a kiosk and a shelter have been added to the garden. The garden has been popular with local residents, many of whom live within walking distance of the garden.

The plots have produced crops for 34 gardeners and their families. It is estimated that the potential production value of the garden is \$2,400 per year. Many of these residents were first-time gardeners who used the expertise of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent and the Horticulture Extension Agent to help them have a successful first season of gardening. Residents now have ready access to fresh food and the expertise and skills to continue their gardens next season. The Parkland Community Garden has brought the community together, as well. Over 400 volunteers have donated over 5,500 hours valued at more than \$120,000.00. It is anticipated that this increase in involvement will increase cohesiveness of the community and decrease crime. The Parkland Community Garden is now flourishing and well into

planning for its third year of operation.

For more information about this project, please contact:

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