



The History of Grow an Extra Row: Established in 2004

The Grow an Extra Row Giving and Learning project is part of the OSU Extension Service Master Gardener program and is supported and funded by the Clackamas County Master Gardener Assoc. plus some private donations.

All of the vegetables are grown from seed or transplants. Many of the transplants are grown by volunteers. Each year five varieties of tomatoes are grown + six tomatillo plants. Each tomato variety is planted in its own 25' bed – each of the 12 plants is staked and caged. Tomatillos are planted in ½ of a bed.

Row cover is used to protect the young plants and for pest control. The garden season is the first of April to mid-October - 6 ½ months. All the beds are 25' long and approximately 36" wide and are winterized - cleared of plant material, broad forked, and covered - before the end of the season. The soil is sampled and tested every two years and organic fertilizer is applied per the results.

All of the garden is on drip irrigation with timers to control the day and length of watering. The garden beds are on a three to four-year crop rotation. In January of each year a Seed Selection Meeting is held to evaluate the previous year's vegetables and varieties and to decide what will be planted the next year. Detailed record keeping is done to record all aspects of the garden.



*Priscilla and Barb with harvest
ready to load into delivery vehicle*

2025

As in previous years we donated to two food pantries in Oregon City: First Baptist H.O.P.E. Pantry and First Presbyterian H.O.P.E Pantry. ⁱ

This year we grew, harvested, and donated 4,059.57 pounds of organically grown produce from the garden. Donated produce of 1,590.12 pounds was also delivered to the two food pantries. In total, 5,649.69 pounds of produce was delivered, approximately 1,000 pounds more than in 2024.

There were over 40 volunteers in the garden, Master Gardeners (including interns) and public gardeners. Master Gardener volunteers continue to raise starts for the garden, in addition to being volunteers at the garden. Total volunteer hours in the garden: 1,703.50

We use 29 beds or 2,175 square feet of planting area. This includes our redesigned herb bed. Rhubarb is one of the many perennials in the bed; we have riffed off that and named our herb garden the LuBarb garden to honor the coordinators of the herb bed, Louise Adams and Barb Seekins.



Barb and Louise in the herb garden

This year we replaced the mesh-type row cover we have been using with stronger exclusion fabric. We have found the exclusion fabric to be more permeable, thereby allowing more rain and air flow into the beds. We also used more “succession” planting this year. Once a crop was finished, we replaced it with another crop. Succession plantings of zucchini, turnips, lettuce, radishes, and peas provided more produce later in the season.

On Tuesday, July 29th and Friday, August 1st we hosted a hands-on workshop for 2025 Master Gardener interns. A total of eleven interns attended the two sessions. Priscilla Robinson developed the curriculum and organized the workshops with Wendy Wilson. Instructors were Louise Adams, Sandi Hartley, Kirk Pearson, Barb Seekins, Amelia Wilbur, and Harry Wise. Each intern was accompanied by a Master Gardener mentor. These mentors were Eve Freeman, Carol Holdt, Will Hughes, Kathy Krentz, Michelle Morely, Liz Sinclair, and Bob Valdez. The interns’ enthusiasm was contagious and everyone felt the workshops were well worth the time and effort involved. We hope to see a few of the interns return as volunteers in the garden.

As part of the July 29th workshop, we had a special visit from Bob and Janet Raes, coordinators of the H.O.P.E. (Helping Other People Eat) food pantry location at the First Baptist Church in Oregon City. This is where we deliver the Friday harvest. They shared

how our harvests impact the community and discussed the number of families and individuals served at the pantry.

We also hosted the final hands-on workshop on Tuesday, September 23rd. Clackamas County Master Gardener Interns learned how to use the broad fork, and cultivate and cover the beds for winter. They also learned how to make compost and were introduced to fall herb gardening.

2024

We continue to donate to the same two food pantries in Oregon City - First Baptist H.O.P.E. Pantry and First Presbyterian H.O.P.E. Pantry. ⁱ This year we grew, harvested, and donated 3,956 pounds of organically grown produce from the garden. This was from our 29 beds or 2,175 square feet of planting area. Donated produce of 737 pounds was also delivered to the two food pantries. In total, 4,693 pounds of produce was delivered.

With the “retirement” of Nancy Muir and Eve Freeman as garden coordinators, Kirk Pearson stepped up and volunteered as GAER garden coordinator. We are in good hands with Kirk, as evidenced by the harvest number above. There were over 40 volunteers in the garden, Master Gardeners (including interns) and public gardeners. Master Gardener volunteers continue to raise starts for the garden, in addition to being volunteers at the garden.

On Tuesday July 30th and Friday August 2nd we hosted interns from the 2024 Master Gardener classes for participation in a hands-on workshop on vegetable growing and GAER activities. Priscilla Robinson developed the course program which was tailored around what we do at the garden, so the participants were learning through hands-on practices working with experienced garden volunteers. Instructors were Louise Adams, Will Hughes, Kathy Krentz, Vaughn Marable, Kirk Pearson, Priscilla Robinson, Liz Sinclair, Bob Valdez, Amelia Wilbur, Wendy Wilson, and Harry Wise.

Dr. Leslie Madsen, OSU Master Gardener Program Leader – Statewide, visited the garden August 6th. She spent more than an hour in the garden seeing how it all works and meeting our volunteers.



We continue to use only research-based practices and methods at the garden. Kirk holds an informal class before the activities begin every Tuesday and Friday discussing what is relevant to what is currently happening in the garden. Volunteers continue to remark how much they learn at the garden.

2023

Each year our produce is donated to two food pantries in Oregon City- First Baptist H.O.P.E. Pantry and First Presbyterian H.O.P.E Pantry. ⁱ This year we grew and donated 3747 pounds. Master Gardeners personally donated 1983 pounds of produce from their gardens to boost the fresh produce that was delivered to the food pantries to 5731 pounds.

There were 50 volunteers in the garden - 36 were Master Gardeners/interns and 14 were public gardeners. Of the total volunteers, 15 volunteered for the first time and three volunteers returned after a long absence. Volunteer hours were 1538.8. All volunteers can participate in any of the activities at the garden – spring bed preparation, fertilizing, planting seeds, growing and planting transplants, and making and planting seed tape, installing and securing row covers, irrigation, identifying pests and diseases, when and how to harvest, prepping produce for donating, clearing beds for winter bed preparation and composting. Some of our volunteers raise starts for the garden, or work on special projects.

With the monies from our 2023 budget and private donations made in 2020 and 2021 we purchased the following: A wheelbarrow, two metal tables for the utility area and a large 10' x 20' metal structured canopy for the utility area.



Sharon Andrews designed our new garden logo that will be used for our documents and promotional literature. Patches were made and given to each of the volunteers.



We use research-based practices and methods at the garden when teaching volunteers and in solving problems and answering questions.

In January 2023, Eve Freeman and Nancy Muir announced that it would be their last year of leading the GAER activities.



At the October Chapter meeting a celebration was held to thank them for their years of service and to recognize all the members who have worked at GAER during the past 19 years.

2022

Each year our produce is donated to two food pantries in Oregon City – First Baptist H.O.P.E Pantry and First Presbyterian H.O.P.E Pantry. ⁱ In 2022 we grew and donated 3265 pounds. Master Gardeners personally donated 1534 pounds of produce to boost the fresh produce that was delivered to the food pantries to 4799 pounds.

There were 36 volunteers at the garden - 30 were Master Gardeners/interns and six were public gardeners. Of the total volunteers 12 volunteered for the first time. The volunteers logged 1388.6 hours of time spent on GAER activities.

In addition to training during our volunteer workdays we held a hands-on workshop for 24 interns from the 2020/2022 Master Gardener classes. Priscilla Robinson was the coordinator of the “Growing Vegetables” workshop which was held on April 24th in the garden. The workshop activities included:

- Composting and Crop Overview
- Garden Row Preparation
- Planting Starts
- Seed Tape Preparation
- Planting Seed Tape
- Planting Seeds
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During the two-hour workshop each group rotated through the four activities. The trainers were Louise Adams, Nancy Muir, Kirk Pearson, Kathy Krentz, Eve Freeman, Priscilla Robinson, Leah Puhlman, Barb Seekins, and Will Hughes.

2021

In 2021 we were still dealing with COVID. We were considered an essential service and got approval from OSU to raise a garden with “COVID restrictions” in place. The garden was opened on April 13, and volunteers worked in the garden twice a week for three hours each workday until October 15th.

Despite the difficulties of the restrictions, we donated 2845 pounds of produce. We continued our offer to deliver produce from individual gardeners if they would have their donation at the garden before 11:00 am on our workdays. The response was amazing, and 2593 pounds was received. The nice thing is gardeners donate vegetables and fruits that we do not grow. 5438 pounds came from this project’s efforts, which meant some donation days we needed two vehicles to transport the donations! During the season 24 volunteers spent 907 hours with the project.

This was the first year for squash bugs in the garden. Unfortunately, by the time we detected the squash bugs they were well established and had done a lot of damage. Spraying with Neem controlled the juveniles and eggs but not the mature adults. We had to pull and destroy the plants and were able to salvage very few of the squash. In 2021 we rented an additional garden plot and are making it our herb garden.

Kirk Pearson and Will Hughes built a compost bin system on the new plot in spring of 2022. They did an amazing job, thank you to the two of them!



2020

The GAER team and volunteers started planning for the garden in January when we selected seed varieties to grow. In February we held a planning meeting, and volunteers signed up to start raising starts for the garden. By the beginning of March, the COVID virus was at the pandemic stage and OSU cancelled all Master Gardener activities until further notice. The GAER project was not able to grow a garden in 2020 but volunteers were encouraged to donate any extra produce from their personal gardens to food pantries in their community.

2019

In 2019 we donated 2919 pounds of produce to the First Presbyterian HOPE food pantry and First Baptist HOPE food pantry. ⁱ During our 56 days of three-hour work parties we had 44 volunteers who worked 1321.5 hours. Other gardeners donated 813 pounds from their gardens that we delivered along with our produce. There were three Professional Development sessions. These were done during the work parties. The topics were: • Planting Techniques for Transplants • Reaping the Bounty-When and How to Harvest • Sharpest Tools in the Shed. We had an Open Garden on August 3rd and 27 people visited the garden on a warm sunny day.

During the season 24 volunteers spent 907 hours with the project. Volunteers spent time at the garden, attended our spring Zoom planning meeting or raised starts for us - it takes almost 800 starts for the garden. Eve Freeman has led the project since 2015 and Nancy Muir since 2013.

2018

In 2018 we donated 3589 pounds of produce with an estimated value of \$13,175.51. Donations went to the First Presbyterian HOPE food pantry and First Baptist HOPE pantryⁱ and the Milwaukie Center. During the season 32 volunteers logged 1085.25 hours at the garden. In addition to our donations, we delivered 643 pounds from other gardeners who brought their surplus produce to the garden on either Tuesday or Friday morning. We had three mini-training sessions during the season. • Soil Temperature • Cucumber Beetles • Growing Onions. Our Open Garden was held on August 4th and we had 27 visitors on a perfect day. The GAER project is led by Eve Freeman and Nancy Muir.

2017

In 2017, we donated 3828 pounds of produce that was delivered to H.O.P.E. First Presbyterianⁱ and First Baptist food pantries and occasionally to the Milwaukie Center and Pioneer Center. The H.O.P.E. First Presbyterian food pantry serves about 80 families each Tuesday and First Baptist food pantry serves about 50 families each Friday. The produce had an estimated retail value of \$12,367. During the 56-day season 35 volunteers worked 1015 hours. They delivered 699 pounds of donations from other gardeners to the food pantries. We organized the “Welcome to the Garden” event again and arranged to have two presentations in the garden - Growing Tomatoes and Organic Gardening.

One of our volunteers convinced us to not use plastic bags for produce delivery, so she applied for a Gray Thompson Grant from the Clackamas County Master Gardeners and received \$150.00 for supplies to make about 120 cloth bags. She recruited some volunteers to help assemble the bags and wash the bags between uses. Cloth bags are better for the environment, sturdier than plastic, and make it easier to weigh the produce.

2016

In 2016, we donated 3554 pounds of produce that was delivered to H.O.P.E. First Presbyterianⁱ and First Baptist food pantries, the Milwaukie Center and Pioneer Center. During the season 29 volunteers worked 840 hours during the 56 days at the garden. They delivered 614 pounds of produce donated by other gardeners. The Welcome to the Garden event was co-sponsored by GAER and the coordinator of the CCC Community Garden. We had three presentations in the garden and invited other community garden gardeners, Master Gardeners, and the public to attend. An Open Garden event was held on a Saturday and friends, family and the public were invited.

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16 people attended. The drip tape irrigation project that began in 2014 for the 30 garden beds was completed. The project leaders were Bari Bilyeu, Eve Freeman, Nancy Muir.

2015

In 2015 Eve Freeman became one of the team leaders, joining Bari Bilyeu and Nancy Muir. Donations were 3023 pounds with 25 volunteers working 759 hours during the 59 days of the growing season. Retail value of the donations was \$7429.00. We offered to deliver other gardeners extra produce and 214 pounds of produce was delivered to the food pantries during the season.

In the spring, we co-hosted a “Welcome to the Garden” for the gardeners who rent plots at the Clackamas College Community Garden. During the growing season, we held two presentations on garden related topics. Other community garden gardeners, Master Gardeners, and the public were invited to attend. One of our volunteers made a shade cover for our utility area to protect volunteers from sun and rain while weighing produce and/or recording information.

We also became a Seed to Supper host and taught a six-week gardening class in the spring. Seed to Supper is a joint effort of the Oregon Food Bank and Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener Program. It is a comprehensive beginning gardening course that gives novice and adult gardeners the tools and confidence they need to successfully grow a portion of their own food. The project leaders were Barb Markwell, Bari Bilyeu, and Nancy Muir.

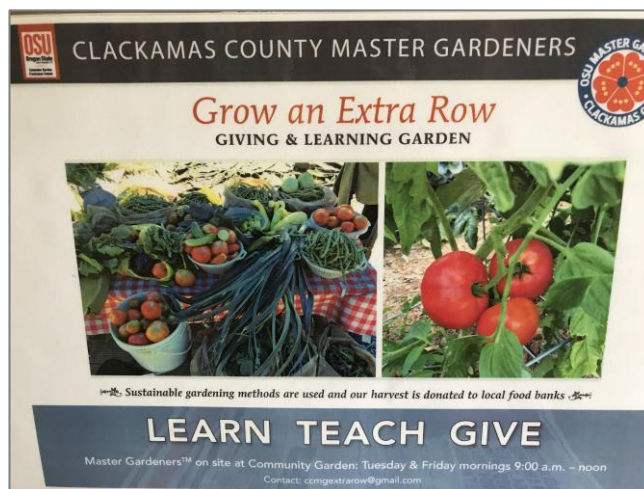
2014

In 2014 GAER donated 3314 pounds of produce and had 23 volunteers who spent 663.75 hours during the 56 days of growing season. The retail value of the produce was approximately \$6195. During 2014 some of our larger vegetable donations were 1512 pounds of tomatoes, 193 pounds of green beans, 156 pounds of cucumbers and 215 pounds of summer squash.

One more garden plot was added for a total of 8 plots, about 5000 sq. feet. The utility area was moved to the newest plot. We also started a three-year project to upgrade the irrigation system from soaker hoses to drip tape irrigation. The project leaders were Barb Markwell, Bari Bilyeu, and Nancy Muir.

The garden became a demo garden in 2014 and changed the name of the project to Grow an Extra Row Giving and Learning Garden (GAER G&LG). The project’s new mission statement: “Grow an Extra Row Giving and Learning Garden will grow and give quality food to help people on a limited budget meet their food needs and teach adults how to raise their own healthy food.”

A sign was made and installed at the garden to inform people about the project and the work schedule at the garden.



2013

In 2013, GAER donated a total of 2406 pounds to H.O.P.E. at First Presbyterian and First Baptist Church, Tualatin School House Pantry, Oregon City Community Basket and Milwaukie Center Meals on Wheels. During the growing season a total of 20 volunteers spent a total of 744.8 hours over the 62 days of garden work parties.

Two more plots were added so there were now five plots on the B side of the garden and two on the C side. The committee members were Mary Butler, Barbara Markwell, Bari Bilyeu and Nancy Muir.

2012

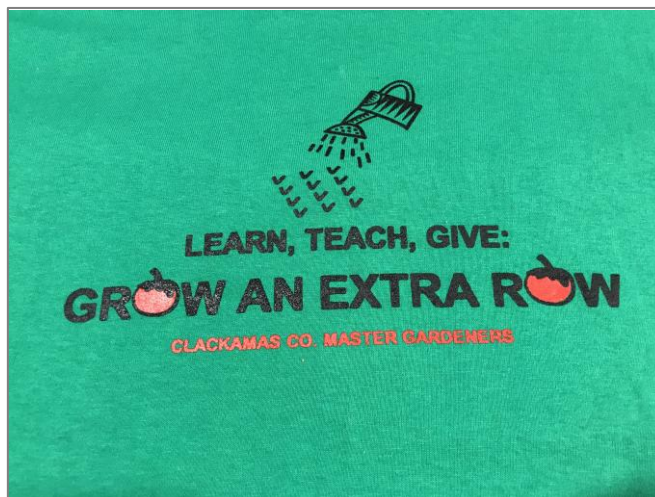
The work parties continued to be on Tuesday and Friday mornings with donations going to the H.O.P.E. First Presbyterian food pantry on Tuesday and the H.O.P.E. First Baptist food pantry on Friday with occasional donations to Milwaukie Center and Pioneer Center. 1908 pounds of produce was donated to local food pantries. During the growing season 21 volunteers worked 692 hours. Committee members were Mary Butler and Barbara Markwell.

2011

In 2011, another plot was added bringing the garden plots total to approximately 3700 square feet. Soil building was on going. Mary Butler co-chaired with Pam Garten. By this time there was a committee (Rob Folse, Bob Woods, and Barb Markwell) that oversaw the project.

The GAER committee established routine workdays every Tuesday and Friday from 9:00 am to 1 pm. They designed a brochure to share information about the project with other Master Gardeners, interns, and the public. The committee also started a record keeping system to record dates, poundage, activities, etc. A garden map was also developed to keep track of plantings and crop rotation. The Open Garden event was held on July 23rd.

The committee designed and printed t-shirts with the logo “Learn, Teach, Give, Grow an Extra Row, Clackamas Co. Master Gardeners”.



2010

In 2010, three more plots were added for a total of 3125 square feet. The committee decided to plan, plant and care for all five plots and donate to various agencies in the local area. Although they struggled with severely depleted soil in some areas, and not the greatest of gardening years, the GAER group grew, tended, harvested and donated over 800 lbs. of vegetables to area food banks and kitchens

2004-2009

The Grow an Extra Row (GAER) project began in 2004 as late OSU Master Gardener, Gray Thompson’s local version of an international project called Plant an Extra Row for the Hungry.

Gray just couldn’t stand the idea that so many of his neighbors in Clackamas County were going hungry. He found a garden spot in Oregon City at the Clackamas College Community Gardens and the GAER project was born! CCMGs don’t just plan an “extra” row, they plant an “extra” garden.

Gray Thompson and a few other Clackamas Chapter members planted and donated produce - mostly tomatoes, beans and squash. Over the ensuing years the group donated several hundred pounds of food to help improve hunger statistics in the County. In 2005, they expanded to 2 garden plots.

On April 9, 2007 Gray had sign-up sheets to recruit other gardeners to volunteer at Extra Row-Feed Hungry garden plots at CCC. Gray was very dedicated to the project and very optimistic.

December 8, 2008 Chapter Minutes: Gray Thompson reported that the “Extra Row” program to help the needy produced many tomatoes, bush beans, summer squash and corn. Produce was donated to Church Food Banks, Meals on Wheels and the Gleaners Warehouse. An approximate value of the 140 pounds of donated tomatoes was \$210. The community garden plots were rented from CCC at a cost of \$40.00.

In 2010 Gray’s health slowed him down and he handed off the chairperson baton to Pam Garten.

History prepared by Nancy Muir 2004 – 2023
Kathy Krentz 2024 -2025

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ⁱ H.O.P.E. Pantry (Helping Other People Eat)