



Matters to Consider

There are many matters to take into consideration when planning a church garden. Thoughtful and complete planning could make the difference between a success and failure. Below is a list of some that you should think about and possibly incorporate into your project:

1. Gather a team of people committed to a garden project in the church who are willing to participate in work days and coordinating the project.
2. Gather congregational support and buy in for project and obtain approval from church leadership.
3. Secure adequate financial resources for project.
4. Be aware of city ordinances pertaining to gardens.
5. Determine type of garden the church wants to start (refugees, low income, community, foodshelf, etc).
6. Develop rules and regulations and agreement for gardeners; for examples go to Gardening Matters and First Free Evangelical Church in Maplewood <http://www.harvestgardens.org/harvest-garden-guidelines> (also consider having a no alcohol consumption policy in or around the garden).
7. Know how you will locate refugees for the gardening project
8. Test soil, if needed (UMN Soil Testing Lab : <http://soiltest.cfans.umn.edu/>)
9. Check for underground utilities before digging by calling Gopher State One Call 1-800-252-1166.

10. Improve soil by adding compost or fertilizer.
11. Till garden early in season.
12. Fence in garden if rabbits and deer are in area.
13. Make tools, garden hoses, water barrels, water source, compost bins, etc., available.
14. Provide seeds and seedlings if possible. These are appreciated but be aware that refugees like different vegetables than the common vegetables found in Minnesota gardens.
15. Have an orientation meeting with the gardeners at the beginning of the season to start to get to know each other, agree on a contact person, sign agreement, and go over any other garden arrangements.
16. Provide bathroom facilities.
17. Plan ways to keep congregation informed and engaged. For example: work days, helping with coordinating, teaching food preservation, visiting with refugees, etc.
18. Encourage relationship building between congregation and refugees. For example: harvest dinners, picnics, blessing of gardens and gardeners, other social events with refugees.
19. Assign contact person between church and gardeners
20. Have garden signs to inform community of garden project.
21. Let refugees know of the clean up expectation at end of the growing season.