

Why the Hunger Free North Dakota Garden Project needs you

**“Visits to (North Dakota) food shelves
grew by 19 percent last year.**

**Food Distribution increased by 20
percent from 5.5 million pounds
in 2008
to 6.6 million pounds last year.”**

**Steve Sellent
Lutheran Social Services Great Plains Food Bank Director**

Hunger Free North Dakota Garden Project

Tips and tools for success

Inside this folder you will find some useful information for becoming a part of the Hunger Free North Dakota Garden Project or an individual Hunger Free North Dakota Gardener.

1. **Brochures** (10) explaining the program with contact information for questions.
2. **Pledge cards** (10) that must be filled out and mailed to the address on the bottom. This will be the only way we can measure how many pounds of vegetables we can expect. This will be used to generate publicity all season long.
3. **Eight steps** to creating a community garden and resources for garden contracts, etc.
4. **Tips, hints and suggestions** for gathering and delivery of produce. We are always looking for new ideas, so please feel free to share.
5. An electronic version of the **logo**. Please use this to create your own “stuff” like signs, tee shirts, posters, table toppers, labels for boxes, etc.
6. **Suggestions** for fundraising to provide food banks with extra help, gifts to volunteers groups, community potlucks, etc.
7. Templates for **press release** about kicking off the program.
8. **PSAs** for church bulletins, etc.

The information has also been included in electronic form on the enclosed disc.

Suggestions for collecting and delivering fresh produce through your local food pantry

CHARITABLE CSA

What is a CSA?

A Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program is a weekly (or every other week) distribution of produce as it becomes available during the growing season to members who signs up for produce. Delivery can be made directly to the households or boxes can be picked up at a central location like the food pantry or church.

1. Spread the word that the produce from local gardens or the community garden will be made available through the food pantries, local churches, service groups and schools. Be sure to share the mission of the Hunger Free North Dakota Garden Project.
2. Engage the pastors of the church, the social service office or the food pantry volunteers to encourage the families to sign up for delivery of CSA boxes during the growing season.
3. Pick a date for delivery.
4. Decide on the drop-off point and the time that the CSA will accept donations from farmers, growers and gardeners. Remember produce picked early in the day is cooler and fresher than in late afternoon.
5. A list of people interested in donating can be made from the pledge cards collected in each community. The North Dakota Department of Agriculture will keep a master data base, to find members in your community, contact suebalcom@nd.gov.
6. Be sure and “Weigh-In” the produce, sign the appropriate form in this folder and mail to the North Dakota Department of Agriculture, 600 E Blvd, #602, Bismarck, ND 58505-0020. Feel free to make copies of any or all of these forms.
7. Be sure there are volunteers to sort the produce into boxes or bags. Some suggestions are cardboard grocery boxes with handles, reusable grocery bags or sturdy beverage boxes.
8. Girl Scout, Boy Scout, Kiwanis, Lions, RSVP+ or other groups could take turns doing deliveries after the produce is sorted.

USE YOUR CHURCH OR FOOD PANTRY FOR A PICKUP

1. Select a church or two or all for a drop-off location.
2. Let the farmers and gardeners know the Sundays or other day (every week, or every other week) that volunteers will be accepting produce.
3. Using food pantries, social services, church resources, spread the word that supplement bags or boxes of fresh produce will be available in the afternoon after church services and other functions have ended.
4. After the produce has arrived, volunteers sort the produce into an appropriate number of boxes or bags for members to pick up.
5. Designate a certain hour for pickup.
6. Remember that a consistent day and time would be easier for people to remember.
7. Extra produce can always be donated to a soup kitchen if there is one in the community.

OR YOU CAN BE CREATIVE AND ...

People can bring in surplus produce and church members can purchase it with a donation to a social ministry program such as the local food pantry, soup kitchen or the Lutheran Social Services Great Plains Food Bank.

This is an alternative way for churches/communities without a local food pantry to support the program across the state by using their produce to raise funds for the project when it isn't feasible to get it directly to a feeding program. The money would be used to assist with distribution, purchases of freezers or refrigerators, etc. for food pantries nearby.

All donations count, even monetary ones, towards our goals to help the hungry.

Lastly.... you could

PLACE VEGETABLE-SHAPED BANKS at all the businesses to collect coins for the project. Get everyone in the community involved. Think about 4-H, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Lions, Kiwanis, etc.

MEET AT THE GARDEN

If you have a community garden you could do one or more of the following:

1. Invite everyone to be a part of the garden.
2. Plan a workday every week, twice a week or more, to plant, water, weed, etc.
3. Plan a potluck once a week for the entire community. This would be a great way to engage people who may not normally feel they could help. Once they arrive, put them to work.
4. Hold gardening classes or special guest speakers to the garden.
5. Don't have a community garden. See instructions in this folder to get yours started.

**THIS SPACE IS RESERVED
FOR YOUR GREAT IDEAS**

SEND THEM TO

SUE B. BALCOM

suebalcom@nd.gov

701-328-4763

I am looking forward to receiving them.

Help spread the word

PSAs, articles and stories

Never pass up the opportunity to talk about the Hunger Free North Dakota Garden Project.

Here are some basic announcements that can be used in bulletins, newspapers, magazines and company newsletters.

Please personalize with your community name and committee members. You may edit these releases to fit your project. These are suggestions only.

Also, if you have any great stories growing from your gardens, be sure and write those stories and submit them to your local newspapers for consideration. Don't forget photos tell the story in a way that relates to everyone. DON'T FORGET TO EMAIL INFORMATION TO: suebalcom@nd.gov to be included in the Local News newsletter.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

[Community name – date of release] – Imagine driving through a community and seeing “This is a Hunger Free North Dakota Garden” sign in every front yard, the school yard and the community garden. It would certainly make a statement about that city's residents.

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture, NDSU Extension Service, Dakota College at Bottineau Entrepreneurial Center for Horticulture, Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society, The North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association, Pride of Dakota and Healthy North Dakota have teamed up to Create A Hunger Free North Dakota by doing what they do best – grow.

On March 3, the department of agriculture held a press conference to officially kick off the Hunger Free North Dakota Garden Project in conjunction with a Creating a Hunger Free North Dakota Coalition meeting.

In an effort to address the need for fresh food in food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters across the state, these organizations have joined together to ask gardeners to plant some extra rows this season and donate the produce to a local food pantry or church organization.

Hunger has been a priority of the NDDA's local foods initiative and this project will hopefully fulfill the following goals:

- To grow and distribute a minimum of 500,000 pounds of fresh food to North Dakota's 244 food pantries.
- To build a distribution system to continue supplying food pantry clients with fresh and healthy produce.
- To recognize the growers and quantities of fruits and vegetables grown in the state.

- Improve diets through cooking, canning, and education.

The produce will be weighed and distributed in each community and the department of agriculture will keep a running total, with the final goal of 500,000 pounds or more of produce by the end of the growing season.

Communities or individuals are invited to be a part of the project. Information is available from the NDDA. There are brochures, pledge cards, information on how to distribute produce, sample press releases, community garden information, logos and more available for the asking.

If you are interested in a sign for your garden, you must register by May 25.

If you would like to be a part of this project in our community, please contact **[local contact]**. The first meeting has been scheduled for **[date, time and place]**. Everyone is invited to attend.

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION CONTACT:

North Dakota Department of Agriculture
600 East Blvd Ave, #602
Bismarck, ND 58505-0020
Phone: 701-328-4763
suebalcom@nd.gov

PSA FOR HUNGER FREE NORTH DAKOTA GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

SUGGESTION 1

If you would like to be a part of the statewide Hunger Free North Dakota Garden project, please call **[local contact]** at **[phone number, email, etc.]** for more information.

Everyone is invited to work together to raise 500,000 pounds of fresh produce for the local food pantry, soup kitchen, shelter, etc. Individuals and groups are pledging to do their part through community gardens, fundraisers and volunteering at local food pantries.

SUGGESTION 2

You can be a Hunger Free Gardener. All you have to do is designate a portion of your garden's produce to the local food pantry, soup kitchen, church or shelter. The produce will be weighed and count towards your communities total efforts to raise 500,000 pounds of fresh food by the end of the 2010 season. Please contact **[local contact]** for more information or to sign up for the project.

Local contact information:

Here is the contact information for NDSU County Extension horticulturists, agents, 4-H, Family Nutrition Program, expanded Food and Nutrition Program agents and Family and Consumer Science agents that have committed to working on this project as leads. If you know of more people who would like to serve as a lead volunteer in their community, please contact the North Dakota Department of Agriculture.

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