



Cooperative Extension  
Waukesha County



**Garden Project Statistics:**

Year Established:  
2001

Garden Size:  
40'X70'

Pounds of Produce Harvested:  
1,037 pounds in 2009

# of Program Participants:  
224 (unduplicated) in 2009

Individual participation varied due to length of sentence, eligibility and a maximum class size of 15 students.

Program Structure:  
Participants could attend once or twice a week, Tuesdays 1:45 to 3:00 pm or Thursdays 4:45 to 6:00 pm

UW Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Contribution: 24 hours

Comments from participants include:

*"I have learned now how a garden works."*

*"I would love to rent a plot next year."*

*"This is the best thing that could happen to us to learn about gardening."*

**Project Name: Waukesha County UW Extension 2009  
Huber Facility –  
Garden and Nutrition Program**

**Project Leader:** Ann Wied, Waukesha County UW Extension Consumer Horticulture Educator

**UW-Extension Team Members:** Steven Chmielewski, Waukesha County UW Extension Community Educator; Debbie O'Brien and Paula Cartwright, Waukesha County UW Extension Nutrition Educators, and Jan Skell, Waukesha County UW Extension Nutrition Education Coordinator

**Other Partners:** Waukesha County Sheriff's Department, Waukesha County Huber Facility

**Project Description:**  
Waukesha County UW-Extension Horticulture and Nutrition Education staff provide hands-on gardening and nutrition education for individuals in Waukesha County's work release prison program. Each class period participants plant and maintain the garden and harvest vegetables. In addition, they receive a garden or nutrition lesson and taste a healthy food sample. All produce harvested is donated to a local food pantry.



**Outcomes:**  
108 participants completed an evaluation of the program. As a result of participating,

- **98%** said that they valued the opportunity to **give back to their community** by growing vegetables for the food pantry.
- **89 %** said that as result of being part of the garden team, they know they **can be successful in other groups/teams**.
- **87%** said they learned **gardening skills that they will use or share with others**.
- **73%** said they **intended to eat or drink more than one kind of vegetable or vegetable juice each day**.
- **72%** said this program **increased their self confidence..**



More comments from participants:

*“This experience has made me want to start gardening again. I need to eat healthier.”*

*“I want to not be drunk so I can have a garden myself.”*

*“This program taught me how to grow tomatoes.”*

*“I will start gardening next year when I get out. I learned a lot about growing vegetables.”*

*“I think this program really helps people in learning to work as a group.”*

*“Growing your own vegetables is not only a healthy choice but can also save money.”*

*“This is the best thing about Huber.”*

*“This program was very beneficial to inmates. It provides gardening insight to some people who may not otherwise have the opportunity.”*



**Other Outcomes:**

Cognitive benefits involved learning new skills and terminology. Through gardening, prisoners improved their decision-making and problem-solving skills. They were able to work in a supervised setting while at the same time increasing their awareness of the world around them. Inmates increased their knowledge of gardening and related life skills through a hands-on gardening and nutrition education experience.

Social benefits gained from working within a group-learning setting to share, relate, compromise and work towards a common goal. The social interaction by working in a group helped prisoners feel better about themselves and help them see the benefits of teamwork.

Psychological benefits included an improvement of self-esteem and self-confidence. Working with living plants allowed the participant to feel a sense of responsibility. Knowing that they must nourish and care for these living plants helped prisoners feel more productive and motivated. Produce harvested is donated to a local food pantry which gives inmates a chance to give back to their community in a positive way.

Physical improvements result from prisoners working in the fresh air and getting exercising in a non-threatening environment.

**Community Garden & Urban Agriculture -- UWEX Horticulture Team**

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