



BCMGA Annual Committee Report

Committee: Benton County Demo Garden

Year: 2023

*Number of Active Members: 41 *Number of Public Contacts: 416

*Number of volunteer hours (estimates are fine): 450

Purpose of Committee:

Provide educational information to local public audience regarding best practices for vegetable production in home gardens. This is done through direct contact and public events such as the county fair and actual garden planting and demonstration of techniques for edible plant production.

Goals for the year:

Several topics were demonstrated during this year.

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Best practices: This demonstration was for tool cleanliness. A tool cleaning station was set up each working day. Tools used that day were cleaned, disinfected, and oiled before returning to the storage shed.

Diversity Planting: Existing diversity beds were expanded to include onions, tomatoes, and peppers.

Latina Garden Vegetables: Growing vegetables used primarily by Latina cooks which thrive in the Willamette Valley.

Dry Farming: This ongoing demonstration was continued with tomatoes.

Cold sensitive Crops: This demonstration involved comparison of covered versus uncovered crops.

Warm watering: This used solar warmed water in barrels to irrigate with normal cold water drip control crop.

Events/Activities:

Weekly 2 hour garden work parties from May – October.

Pop up clinic table and MG information during the Run For The Hill event at the fairgrounds.

MG Information table during all County Fair days. This included pop up plant clinic, demo garden tours, and public interface to advertise the MG organization.

How have your goals and events met the educational mission of BCMGA?

Trainees and public contacts have been exposed to home vegetable production and various techniques that apply to our local Willamette valley climate. The garden contains a wide variety of fruit species in addition to the specific vegetable crops we choose to plant.

Has your committee had opportunities to meet the needs of underserved populations?

All harvest output of the demo garden has been given to local food banks. This year we delivered 800 lbs. of produce.

Support of Food Hero (OSU Extension educational support for the Federal SNAP program): We supplied photos and descriptions of tomatoes and herbs growing in the demo garden for Grow Along, their gardening growing activity. The information was put up on all of Food Hero's social media sites.

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How might your committee extend events/activities to underserved populations in the future?

Since we are a demonstration garden, focusing on food production, we will continue to grow food crops which are used by Latino, Asian and indigenous populations.



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