Gardens: Sowing Seeds of Sustainability

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Gardens

Build food communities in neighborhoods and schools, improving access to healthy produce while raising agricultural awareness.

- 20+ Community gardens in Sarasota and Manatee Counties
- 400+ Community garden members
- 70+ School gardens
Housing and Food

• In Sarasota County, 42% of households are paying more than 30% of monthly income on housing costs (which is called “cost-burdened”). Among low-income families, there are over 53,000 households (73%) that are cost burdened locally.
  http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/sarasotaco/2018/02/26/saving-energy-need/

• Growing space is shrinking, both deed-restricted golf course HOA members and apartment renters lack for space and resources needed to grow edibles at home. Community Gardens can provide resources to community members: fencing, water, compost, shared tools, etc.
Contributors to childhood obesity

- Genetics & metabolism
- Short sleep duration
- Community and neighborhood design and safety
- Eating and physical activity behaviors

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/obesity/facts.htm
Benefits of gardening

Gardeners report decreased
- depression
- anxiety symptoms
- mood disturbance
- stress
- BMI

Gardeners report increased
- quality of life
- cognitive function
- physical activity levels
- sense of community
School Gardens

• Provide support, education, and planning assistance

• Hands-on focus and experiential learning

• Promotes self-esteem, empowerment, and teamwork
School Gardens

• More than 21 million people are employed in nontraditional agriculture careers, many of which require advanced degrees. These careers encompass a wide range of jobs in food production, natural resources, plant systems, animal management and much more.

• The average age of Florida’s farmers now 57

• Agriculture is one of the strongest pillars of Florida’s economy, generating more than $120 billion in annual economic impact and supporting more than 2 million jobs.

https://www.freshfromflorida.com/Education/For-Parents-and-Students/Preparing-for-Careers-in-Agriculture
**ONE SEED**

**A shared seed experience:**

- Enjoy growing a selected edible with seeds provided by Extension.
- Recipes offered that highlight the plant selection
- Classes on growing edibles offered
Manatee Seed Bank

• Cooperative effort between public and Extension

• Regionally adapted varieties of vegetables, fruits, grains, and wildflowers

• Promotes community resilience and sustainability
Partnership:

Volunteers
Extension
County
City Municipalities
Parks and Rec
Family Nutrition Program
Department of Health
Colleges
Schools
Childcare sites
Growers
Businesses
Farm to School
Florida Department of Agriculture and
Consumer Services
DCF
USDA
Non-profits
Friends of Sarasota County Parks

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4929211/figure/f0010/