



Community Gardens of Dane County Community Action Coalition for South Central WI Inc.

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CAC has recently joined the world of social media and is now on facebook. Click [here](#) to check out our site and “like” CAC!

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Early Spring E-Newsletter

April 2011

Help Us Keep Community & Food Pantry Gardens Strong in Dane County

Like most organizations these days, we are finding ourselves “doing more with less.” Cuts to federal and state agencies that support anti-poverty programs are hitting us as demand is rising for our services. Please help CAC meet these challenges. Your support will help us to continue supporting the growing community garden movement throughout Dane County, making this an inclusive, healthy resource that benefits everyone. As a community and food pantry gardener, you make a difference every time you go out to work alongside your neighbors in a shared garden. We’re now asking friends like you to **please consider a financial donation to CAC.**



Think about all of the ways that CAC makes community gardening happen in the Madison area. Our Gardens team works to develop new gardens; provide support and training for garden leaders; distribute and manage resources such as water access, compost and mulch delivery, free plants and seeds, and New Garden Fund grants; and prepare garden land. CAC also holds the leases and provides insurance for most community gardens on City of Madison property.

We’re proud of the innovative ways our Gardens Program is linked to our efforts to fight poverty and hunger. Our Food and Gardens Programs support one another in ways that promote the health of the environment and our community as a whole. For example:

- CAC has developed and cultivated the understandings, relationships, and policies that have enabled the wide cooperation among government officials and city departments that are instrumental to increasing neighborhood stability and cross-cultural exchanges; and supporting efforts to develop new community and food pantry gardens.
- Through our support of food pantry gardens and our “Plant a Row for the Hungry” initiative, over 127,000 pounds of produce was collected and donated to Dane County food pantries and meal sites in 2010.



Our Gardens program has lead the way as the “go to” agency for making inclusive and community-driven community gardens a reality in neighborhoods all across Madison and Dane County.

Please make a donation to CAC today! You can donate online, or find information for mailing a donation at www.cacscw.org/donate.php. All donations to CAC are 100% tax-deductible.

Welcoming Nepali Culture Refugees from Bhutan into Our Gardens

As part of a worldwide humanitarian effort to resolve a longstanding refugee stalemate that resulted from cultural identity and border politics, Madison is part of resettling people of Nepali culture who were confined to refugee camps for a generation (19 years). In 2011 there will be about 12 additional families joining a similar number who came over last year. As is often the case, new refugees are interested in community gardening as a means of continuing their cultural heritage and accessing familiar foods. At present, the Nepali newcomers are mainly located on Madison's south side and are getting plots at the nearby Badger garden. We do, however, expect that the next few groups will settle more widely across the city and may well be seeking garden space at other area gardens, too.

One of the best things about community gardens in Madison is their historic welcoming of cultural newcomers. Those of us who have worked with this group already or those who were at the recent "Grow Together Conference" are already enjoying the experience and fully expect this to be case elsewhere. There will of course be a learning curve in establishing good communication and understanding, and we encourage keeping an open mind and heart as the first steps. Luckily, there is some level of English speaking amongst the under 40- year-old members of these multi-generational families which is another bridge to build on. There is also a support network of ESL teachers and job coaches who are very engaged in making this transition successful for all involved. These families have many, many adjustments to make in finding work, going to school, and making the transition from a very different culture and living space to the upper Midwest.

As more information becomes available about the when and where of the new groups, we will update you on them. We may host a Nepali informational workshop(s) later this year to prepare for next year once we know more of the facts.
 -- Joe Mathers, joem@cacscw.org, 246-4730 ext 212

Gardening Events, Classes and Plant Sales

Fitchburg Fields Workshop: Repotting Seedlings

Saturday, April 9th 9-12

Location: Sector 67, 2100 Winnebago Street

Cost: \$10 (scholarships available)

How big of a pot does each plant need? Which plants love to be repotted, and which ones hate it? Special handling, minimizing stress, and the art of hardening off.

All these topics and more will be addressed during the workshop, in addition to hands on experience repotting some of Fitchburg Fields' seedlings. For more information or to register, visit Fitchburg Fields' [website](#).

Nelson Institute Earth Day Conference -Pursuing a More Sustainable Wisconsin: Innovation in Buildings, Energy and Food Systems
Wednesday, April 20th 8:30-5

Location: WI Institute for Discovery/ Union South

The conference will feature ideas, projects and progress in building construction and operation, alternative energy, community development, institutional food systems, clean technology, and art and design. Stop by and visit CAC's booth!

Habitat ReStore Earth Day Celebration

Saturday, April 23rd 12-4

Location: 208 Cottage Grove Rd

In addition to live music, the event features 20 earth-friendly exhibition booths providing information on green building, sustainable living and other recycling/reuse options and kids activities. Mother Earth will also be there. The free event is open to public and includes free refreshments. Come visit CAC's exhibit!

Fitchburg Fields Cold Hardy Plant Sale

Saturday April 23rd, 9-2

Location: Agora Pavilion, 5511 East Cheryl Parkway, Fitchburg (next to Fitchburg Community Center)

Monona United Methodist Church's Community Garden 2nd Annual Plant Sale

Saturday, May 14th 8-2

Location: 606 Nichol's Road in Monona

Fitchburg Fields Plant Sale

Saturday, May 7th 10-2

Location: [Fitchburg Fields Teaching and Sharing Garden](#)

UW-Arboretum Native Plant Sale

Saturday, May 7, 9-2

Location: large tents next to the Arboretum Visitor Center. Visit their [website](#) to order ahead or for more information.

Join Students and Community Members on Madison's Northside to Build a School & Community Garden

Madison is the newest recipient of a Project Orange Thumb garden makeover! Fiskars Brands, Inc. has partnered with the Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, Inc. (CAC), the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD), and The Home Depot Foundation to install a school and community garden at Black Hawk Middle School on Madison's northside. Over the course of a single day, we'll roll up our sleeves and transform a barren patch of soil into a beautiful, productive community gathering space for students, teachers, and neighbors to enjoy. Don't miss your chance to get involved and make a difference in your community!

What: Fiskars' Project Orange Thumb: Volunteers are needed to help build the "Growing Together School and Community Garden," a 14,400 square-foot school-community garden.

Where: Black Hawk Middle School, 1402 Wyoming Way (northeast corner of campus on Wheeler Road), Madison, WI

When: Thursday, May 26, 2011

- 7am – volunteers arrive
- 7:45am – "first dig"
- 8am-2pm – garden installation
- 3pm – ribbon-cutting ceremony
- 3:30pm – ice cream social

To volunteer: Contact Nicole Craig at Community Action Coalition (nicolec@cacscw.org or 246-4730 x208). Volunteers are needed for the entire day or for a morning (about 7am-11am) or afternoon (11am-3pm) shift. Don't wait to sign up – spots are limited!



Additional volunteer information:

- Breakfast, lunch, beverages, and snacks will be provided.
- This is a physically challenging event – participants must be able to lift up to 50 pounds (if needed) and stand, bend, twist, and move over the course of their shift. There will be work stations that require less physical effort, but please come prepared for manual labor.

If you aren't able to participate as a volunteer, you are still invited to come and check on the progress of the project, and enjoy the music, prize drawings, classroom activities, and other festivities throughout the day!

If you have specific questions regarding the day's events, please contact Nicole Craig.

Thanks in advance for your interest in this great event!





COMMUNITY ACTION COALITION
FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN, INC.

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Community Gardens
online: [http://
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gardens.php](http://www.cacscw.org/gardens.php)



2011 New Garden Fund Recipients Announced

The New Garden Fund panel would like to congratulate the recipients of 2011 New Garden Fund grants: Badger Road/Fountain of Life Community Garden (awarded \$900), Balsam/Leland Participatory Landscape Project (\$600), and Majestic Oaks Neighborhood Garden (\$900).

Since 2005, the New Garden Fund has provided funds for 20 new and expanding community gardens in Madison to support the growth of community gardening. The New Garden Fund panel, composed of community gardeners and community members from around Madison, meets 2-3 times each winter to review applications, perform site visits to meet applicants and learn more about proposed projects, and make the final funding decisions as a committee. The Gardens Program of Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, Inc., supports the New Garden Fund panel by coordinating panel meetings

and the application process.

CAC would like to extend a warm thank you to this year's New Garden Fund panel for their time and their dedication to community gardening in our area: Alice Anderson, John Bell, Betty Chewning, Sonci Clair-Thomas, Trish Haza, Annette Nekola, and Yee Thao.

Since 2008, community gardens which receive support from CAC or the City of Madison have been asked to support the creation and expansion of community gardening in Madison through a yearly donation to the New Garden Fund. The suggested donation asked of each city-supported garden is 10% of their garden plot fees. If you or your garden would like to support the New Garden Fund through a donation or if you'd like to participate on the New Garden Fund panel, please contact Nicole Craig at nicolec@cacscw.org or 246-4730 x208 for more information.

Get Involved With Madison Area Community Gardens

Join the City of Madison Community Gardens Committee

The City of Madison Community Gardens Committee is currently seeking new citizen members to represent community gardeners in Madison. Representatives of certain city committees (Plan, Parks and CDBG), citizen gardeners, and staff (from the Mayor's office and CAC) comprise the committee. Membership is open to any Madison resident who has an interest or role in Madison's community gardens.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 26th, 5-6:30

Where: Madison Municipal Building, 215 MLK Jr. Blvd, Room LL-120

For more information about the Comm. Gardening Committee, visit their [website](#).

If you are interested in being a member of the committee, please contact Nicole Craig

at nicolec@cacscw.org or call her at 246-4730 ext. 208.

How Can You Help CAC Gardens?

There are many volunteer opportunities available assisting the community gardens in the Madison area. Read more about the [current opportunities](#). For more information, email jason@cacscw.org or call (608) 246-4730 ext. 209.

Join the New Garden Fund Panel

Two positions on the New Garden Fund panel are currently vacant. Panel members are responsible for reviewing and choosing New Garden Fund grant recipients. For more information, or if interested in being a part of the New Garden Fund panel, please contact Nicole Craig at 246-4730 Ext 208 or nicolec@cacscw.org.