



COMMUNITY ACTION COALITION
FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN, INC.

1717 N STOUGHTON
RD MADISON, WI
53704-2605
(608) 246-4730
FAX (608) 246-4760
WWW.CACSCW.ORG

CAC has recently
joined the world of
social media and
is now on face-
book. Check out
our site and "like"
CAC!

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Growth in Gardens for Dane County | 2 |
| Plant Sales & Events | 2 |
| Composting on a large scale | 3 |
| CAC funding update | 4 |
| Opportunities for Involvement | 4 |

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

Spring E-Newsletter

May 2011

Gardens Are Springing Up All Over Dane County

Dane County is lucky to be welcoming seven new gardens this season and another community garden in the planning phase. CAC has been working with different community groups, schools, churches, and local businesses to bring these gardens to life. Below you will find a snapshot of each of our newest gardens in Dane County.

American Family Insurance Workplace and Food Pantry Garden

The American Family Insurance Employee Garden will bring American Family back to its company roots -over 80 years ago the company began by insuring farmers as Farmers Mutual Insurance Company. The garden, located on Madison's far east side at the company's National Headquarters, is slated to break ground in the spring of 2011 with 54 plots each 10'X10' in size. The garden will advance American Family's corporate strategy of "building on our people advantage" by deepening engagement, encouraging team-building, and increasing the health and wellness of its employees. The garden will be run by employee volunteers and is sponsored as part of the company's Workplace Sustainability Initiative.

Balsam-Leland Front Yard Garden Initiative

The Front Yard Garden Initiative is a joint effort between Public Health Madison and Dane County, Edgewood College, UW-Madison and the Madison Area Permaculture Guild. The project entails installing flower and vegetable gardens in the lawns of 17 apartment buildings on Madison's SW side. Its goal is to create an interwoven, street-long, neighborhood garden for residents to counteract social injustice, food insecurity, violence, isolation, and public health issues of nutrition and exercise. Any food produced in the gardens will first be available to residents, with excess being donated to the Good Shepherd Food Pantry. This is a continuation of the 2010 Russett Road Front Yard Gardens Project.

Black Hawk School and Community Garden

The Growing Together Black Hawk School and Community Garden will come to life in a single day! Through a Fiskars Project Orange Thumb Garden Makeover, a portion of a school field on Madison's north side will be transformed on Thursday, May 26 by nearly 100 volunteers into a 15,000 square foot school and community garden, with 20 20'x20' community garden plots. All are welcome to participate in the festivities, including a ribbon cutting ceremony and ice cream social beginning at 3pm. See <http://www.cacscw.org/events.php> for more information.



project orange thumb®

Central Park Community Garden

While the Central Park Community Garden won't become a reality for several years, it is much anticipated by residents on Madison's Isthmus. Following many years of planning, the Central Park Design and Implementation Task Force has approved a plan that includes a total of 60-70 10'x20' community garden plots in two separate areas of the park. Construction of the park may begin as early as fall, but the Central Park community garden will be constructed in a later development phase.

Continued on page 2

Cross Plains Community Garden

Bob's Community Garden in the Village of Cross Plains is a new integrated, mixed use community garden that has come together this year in a flurry of activity from dedicated volunteers within the Cross Plains community. Local resident Bob Saeman, the garden's namesake, has made land available for this budding community garden to take root. Plans include plots of 64 and 256 square feet for individual gardens with plots available for businesses and community organizations to sponsor. Opportunities and interest are pouring in from many generous people and resources throughout the Cross Plains community, all of which have helped nurture this project towards fruition.

Page 1 Cont.

Divine United Methodist Food Pantry Garden

The friends and members of Divine Savior UMC, located at 5702 South Hill Dr. in Madison, will be breaking ground for their new gardens on Saturday, May 14th. The gardens will feature raised beds made from recycled material, the lasagna gardening method, and harnessing nature to supply water through a rain barrel system. All produce from the gardens will be donated to Helping Hand Food Pantry located on Mineral Point Road. Gardeners are looking forward to this opportunity to re-purpose their former preschool playground area and turn it into food-producing gardens to help neighbors.

Majestic Oaks Community Garden

Majestic Oaks Community Garden is a new raised-bed garden located in Oak Park Terrace Mobile Home Community on Madison's north side. The garden's sole purpose is to grow fresh, nutritious produce to supplement the diets of members of their community. Any additional produce will be donated to the food pantry at St. Paul Lutheran Church on N. Sherman Avenue. A great group of people from the Oak Park Terrace Community, along with members of the Eagle Scouts and support from local businesses and organizations, have come together to make their vision a reality.

Thermo Fisher Workplace and Food Pantry Garden

As part of the mission of Thermo Fisher Scientific to help make the world healthier, cleaner and safer, it is offering the opportunity for Thermo employees at the Madison site to participate in a community garden. This garden will supply fresh produce to about 25-30 employees and their families. Along with supplying food for employees, gardeners will also donate, produce from the garden to local food pantries. The Thermo garden will contain individual plots that are either 10' x 10' or 10' x 20' along with some shared garden sections for corn, squash and pumpkins.

Plant Sales & Events**Fitchburg Fields Plant Sale**Saturday, May 7th, 10-2

Location: Fitchburg Fields Teaching and Sharing Garden is located at the SE corner of Lacy Rd. and Fahey Glen. Please park on Ballyduff, which intersects with Fahery Glen.

UW-Arboretum Native Plant SaleSaturday, May 7th, 9 - 2

Location: large tents next to the Arboretum Visitor Center. Visit http://uwarboretum.org/foa/native_plant_sale.php to order ahead or for more information.

Troy Gardens Plant SaleSaturday, May 14th, 10-2

Visit the annual Greenhouse Grand Opening and Plant Sale on Saturday, May 14 from 10 am to 2 pm. Tour the greenhouse and purchase organic vegetable plants for your garden.

Monona United Methodist Church 2nd Annual Plant SaleSaturday, May 14th, 8 -2

Location: 606 Nichols Road in Monona. Support a local community and food pantry garden!

Support CAC - Visit Schönheit Gardens Saturday, June 4th

Schönheit Gardens Nursery and Garden Center will be hosting a benefit day on behalf of CAC on Saturday June 4th from 9am-6 pm. 10% of all proceeds from the day will be donated to CAC's Gardens Program. They will also have a food drive on our behalf. Each person that brings a non-perishable item will receive a free annual. Please come out and support CAC by purchasing your garden necessities at Schönheit Gardens, 3577 Bailey Rd, Sun Prairie. It's located at the intersection of Bailey Road and County Road T, 44-19832.

Composting at Community Gardens

Composed by Michelle Shively with information contributed by Lexy Spry of Midvale Community Garden and Jill Schneider of Troy Community Garden.

As many of you have already discovered, composting on a scale as large as a community garden can be challenging. I have two different community gardens' experiences to share with you and give you all a couple ideas of how to approach the challenge of composting on a large scale with many different people involved.

Here are few of the main issues that Midvale Community Garden came across during their trials with large scale composting:

- Lack of space for garden waste: If the waste isn't cut up into manageable pieces, large pieces (brussels sprout stalks, broccoli stalks, vines, etc) clog up the bin and make it impossible to fit more waste. Large waste also takes too long to decompose.
- Lack of trust in the finished compost: Gardeners didn't reliably separate weed waste from garden waste; the garden had thought the hot compost systems would destroy weed seeds, but the waste pile never reached the necessary temperatures for seed destruction.
- Time: one volunteer managing a compost pile or system this large requires multiple visits a week dedicated to composting. Most gardeners would prefer to spend time in their garden rather than managing others' waste.
- Complicated systems: While the system may not seem complicated to its creators, it's getting all the gardeners on board that can be the tricky part. Despite signage and emails, it became apparent that the important information hadn't be transmitted to those working in the garden.

Rather than spend one more summer's time on this project, Midvale has decided to have a local arborist haul away their garden waste at the end of the year. They opened up their bin system and coined the mantra "cut it small and use any bin at all". While this saves a lot of time and energy, it does not provide any compost for the garden the following year.

On the other side of the city, Troy Community Gardens was struggling with issues similar to those listed above. Troy's growing weed pile led them to an entirely different solution –have gardeners compost their own materials in their plot. While this was first met with a bit of resistance, after holding a composting workshop and announcing a penalty (being moved to the bottom of the list for plot assignment) for leaving your plot's weeds elsewhere, the gardeners have grown accustomed to this practice. Troy hired Joan Laurion from BuckleUp Compost™ to lead a composting workshop. In addition, one of their Hmong gardeners also spoke at the workshop and explained her methods of incorporating weeds into her plot, which included chopping and burying weeds and plant stems at the end of the season as well as laying down large leaves and weeds to dry out in the sun and serve as mulch throughout the season.

Some of the important lesson Troy Gardens learned during this transition:

- Explain why you are changing your policy
- Continue to educate your gardeners about composting
- Set your policy and communicate it clearly
- Politely confront gardeners who do not follow the policy
- Be patient



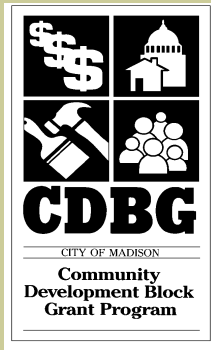
I hope that lessons learned at Midvale and Troy can be used by other community gardens experiencing similar issues as your gardens grow. Please contact Michelle Shively at mshively@cacscw.org or 246-4730 ext 234 with any questions on this article or suggestions for future topics.



COMMUNITY ACTION COALITION
FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN, INC.

**1717 N STOUGHTON
RD MADISON, WI**
53704-2605
(608) 246-4730
FAX (608) 246-4760
WWW.CACSCW.ORG

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



CAC Funding Update

Those of you who follow such things know that the House and the Senate finally reached an agreement on the 2011 federal budget. CAC, through Community Service Block Grant (CSBG), was facing an immediate end to core 2011 funding if the House version of the budget would have passed. Instead, we averted an immediate crisis when Congress agreed to only a 2.9% funding cut for 2011. Thank you all who stood up for us and helped tell our story. I have to believe that, in the end, your efforts made a difference.

While this agreement buys us some time to do some serious strategic planning, it does not mean that we are safe. Congress is now working on the 2012 federal budget. If you remember, President Obama has recommended a 50% cut to CSBG funding in 2012 and there are plenty of folks in Congress who would basically gut all federal discretionary spending including CSBG.

If you happen to run into your federal elected official(s) during the next few months, don't be shy about telling them what Community Action Programs mean to your efforts in helping families lead better lives.

Thank you!!

-Chris Brockel, Food & Gardens Program Manager

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, May 24th, 5-6:30

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

For more information about the Comm. Gardening Committee, visit <http://www.cityofmadison.com/residents/communitygardens/index.cfm> or contact Nicole Craig at 246-4730 ext. 208 or nicolec@cacscw.org.

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 at <http://www.cacscw.org/downloads/2010%20Garden%20Volunteer%20Brochure.pdf>.

For more information, email jasonc@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.