





Henderson County Community/Charity/School Garden Workshop Series

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Objective:

The objective of the **Henderson County Community/Charity/School Garden Workshop Series** is to identify local community, charity, and school gardens then teach the garden leaders management skills and increase their horticultural skills. Eventually we would like to form a committee of garden leaders that will meet regularly to learn from each other.



Situation:

Surveys of young people across the country have shown that children lack basic knowledge about how their food is produced. Many areas of our state have been labeled a 'food desert' by the USDA, meaning access to fresh foods is low. Community, charity, and school gardens teach agricultural awareness and increase access to fresh foods.

Henderson County in western North Carolina has a population of over 120,000. Nearly 10% of these residents live in poverty. Many charities exist to provide those in need with necessities. Local community, charity, and school gardens donate vegetables to these local charities. The managers of these gardens work independently to educate children and adults about the benefits of vegetable gardening and to produce vegetables for the underprivileged.







Free Clinics Community Garden serves low income clientele.



Many churches host community gardens locally.

Response:

County Agents and Extension Master Gardener Volunteers with NC State Cooperative Extension work to increase agricultural awareness and fresh food opportunities among members of their communities. Henderson County Extension Agents and Extension Master Gardener Volunteers have worked to identify, coordinate, and educate the many leaders of local community gardens. Efforts to provide leadership and to organize these garden leaders and to educate them in horticultural and public service have been ongoing. Workshops were implemented.



Speakers included Becky Griffin, UGA Community and School Garden Coordinator, Steve Pettis, Horticulture Agent Henderson County, and John Murphy, Director of Bullington Gardens.

Results:

Henderson County Extension Agents have identified 14 community gardens, 8 charity gardens, and 17 school gardens exist in Henderson County. The managers of these gardens were invited to attend two free workshops:

Community/Charity/School Garden Workshop Summer 2019 and Community Gardens- Making it Happen A-Z Spring 2020.

NC State Extension collaborated with Henderson County Public Schools, Henderson County Partnership for Health, Healthy People Healthy Carolinas, HC Community Foundation, and the University of Georgia to provide education. A \$2000.00 grant was obtained from the HC Community Foundation to pay for meeting space, food, and printing.

Conclusion:

Community/Charity/School Gardens are an important way to teach agricultural literacy and to increase fresh food opportunities. Efforts by Extension Agents and Extension Master Gardeners to provide leadership and to organize the local community, charity, and school garden leaders and to educate them in horticultural and public service has created a new organization in Henderson County. The Community/Charity/School Garden Committee will start meeting in 2020.