

I. COMMUNITY GARDENING PROGRAM

Program Manager: Dorothy Johnson
Minnesota State Horticultural Society
1970 Folwell Avenue. #161
St. Paul, MN 55108

NOTE: NEW ADDRESS AFTER FEBRUARY 1, 1993:
1755 Prior Avenue North
Falcon Heights, MN 55113

A. M.L. 91 Ch 254 Sec 14 Subd: 6 (f) Appropriation:\$110,000
Balance: \$ 0

This appropriation is to the University of Minnesota, Minnesota Extension Service, in cooperation with the Minnesota State Horticultural Society and the Self Reliance Center to provide gardening information and technical assistance in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas.

NOTE: In 1993, Self Reliance Center is doing business as
Sustainable Resources Center

B. N/A
C. N/A

II. NARRATIVE

- A. Statement - Public greening and food gardening strategies assist in needed revitalization of Minnesota neighborhoods and communities. Volunteer groups need the support of consumer education and technical assistance in appropriate land use, organization, horticultural information and policy development. Minnesota Green and the Self Reliance Center will meet these challenges through existing and newly-formed community groups. Minnesota Green assists efforts in greater Minnesota through LCMR funds; Self Reliance Center provides technical assistance to people and organizations within the 7 county metropolitan area, giving priority to low income neighborhoods.
- B. Importance - The program has 2 distinct focuses: small community land stewardship and urban food gardens. Both build community vitality through hands-on horticulture experiences. Minnesota Green links information, products and other need resources to community greening projects. Self Reliance Center impacts grass roots gardeners and policy-makers through community gardening development.
- C. Extent of Problem - Requests for assistance have increased dramatically as new groups see positive results in other communities. The interest in and awareness of gardening as a benefit for recreation, nutritious food and community improvement need expertise to help interested community members build successful long-term projects. No other Minnesota organizations serve to gather and disseminate horticultural and technical expertise, products and services needed to pursue public planting projects.

III. Objectives

- A. Minnesota Green: Site Development in Greater Minnesota
- A.1. Narrative - Develop 5 new permanent sites per year using community organizing techniques and existing site criteria.
- A.2. Procedures - Site visits, design recommendation; maintenance planning; coordination of plants and gardening supplies from resource pool; coalition building; local resource development; land access; use permits; water & soil needs; composting information; volunteer training.
- A.3. a. Amount Budgeted: \$25,000
b. Balance: \$ 0
- A.4. Timeline: July'91| Jan'92| June'92| Jan'93| June'93|
- New Sites -- -----
- A.5. Status:
10 sites developed (Annandale, Isanti, Princeton, Staples, St. James, Montgomery, Sauk Centre, St. Cloud, Wanamingo, Waubun). Continued assistance to 12 developed sites
- The program covered more sites than expected, due to high demand and efficient use of resources. Visible success of these sites is due to the opportunities to distribute thousands of dollars worth of donated plant materials.
- The sites above and 26 additional (developing) sites will receive no further free technical assistance, due to loss of LCMR funding.
- A.6. Benefits: Beautify Minnesota communities' public areas. Revitalize rural & urban communities through concentrated greening efforts and appropriate land use. Offer Minnesota residents access to recreational gardening and food gardening opportunities. In food gardens, nutritious produce and excess vegetables to distribute to needy families.
- B. Minnesota Green: Technical Assistance for Greater MN
- B.1. Narrative - Offer methods to attain project self-sufficiency for existing and new sites. Develop comprehensive, city-wide vision linking community participation with existing organizations. Assist with needs of non-affiliated community beautification sites, including those managed by local garden clubs and projects initiated through Celebrate Minnesota 1990, which will need added support to sustain them.
- B.2. Procedures - General assistance (program organization and development; long and short term planning; phone consultation; presentations on volunteer development; natural resource management); awards program; evaluation of potential sites; develop statewide resource networks.

B.3.	a. <u>Amount Budgeted:</u>	\$15,000
	b. <u>Balance:</u>	\$ 0
B.4.	<u>Timeline:</u>	<u>July'91</u> <u>Jan'92</u> <u>June'92</u> <u>Jan'93</u> <u>June'93</u>
General Asst.	-----	-----
Awards Program	--	--
Site Evaluation	--	--
Resource Study/Implement		-----

B.5. Status:
General Assistance to 30 communities
Site Evaluation & Community Gardening Awards presented to 15 communities (Detroit Lakes, Hutchinson, Princeton, Waterville, Windom, Annandale, Austin, Champlin, Circle Pines, Clarissa, LeSueur, Oronoco, Rochester, Lake Sylvia, Cass Lake).

Technical Assistance was offered in group settings, as well as individualized consultations, to assist the largest possible number of communities. Design for plantings was a valuable addition to the planning process.

B.6. Benefits: Maximize effective use of volunteer and horticultural resources. Regionalize technical resource opportunities for easy access by participants. Coalitions promote stewardship of community space. Individualized steps to self-sufficient projects.

C. Minnesota Green: Educational Strategies for Greater MN

C.1. Narrative - Present learning opportunities with these themes: community leadership & volunteerism; environmental awareness & wise resource use; horticulture information. Offer assistance in development of community greening programs, emphasizing broad-based volunteerism from within each community or neighborhood.

C.2. Procedures - Use methods of informal education: newsletter, statewide community gardening conference, site tours, seminars in greater MN, newspaper information, displays, MSHS Annual Conference segment.

C.3.	a. <u>Amount Budgeted:</u>	\$15,000
	b. <u>Balance:</u>	\$ 0

C.4.	<u>Timeline:</u>	<u>July'91</u> <u>Jan'92</u> <u>June'92</u> <u>Jan'93</u> <u>June'93</u>
Newsletter	--	--
Statewide Community Gardening Conference	--	--
Site Tours	--	--
Seminars in Greater MN	--	--
Newspaper Information	-----	-----
MSHS Annual f.	--	--

C.5. Status:
Results: 12 Newsletters produced; 4 site tours conducted. 2 Community Gardening Conferences - Themes: Building Regional Coalitions; Developing Community Based Environmental Learning Programs. 21 Seminars - all or part of each included community-based greening and/or horticulture-related environmental education. At least 28 articles/interviews covered by newspapers, public radio or television stations were part of MG outreach. MG has provided much beneficial information to the public about the value of community greening within the context of personal, public and environmental interests.

Recognition for leadership, as the only statewide community gardening program in the nation, includes consultation opportunities with organizations from across the U.S.; locally MG received the prestigious CUE award from the City of Minneapolis in 1992.

Partnerships with several organizations in developing innovative presentations maximized use of staff time. Costs to participants were kept low with presenter and facility expenses covered by co-sponsors.

Though organizational partnerships will continue, MG will act as a referral source in the future. The scope of MG is being reduced to include only 1 yearly outreach conference, plus the awards program. Future statewide technical assistance will be available under a fee structure, which will severely limit the possibility for new community plantings.

C.6. Benefits: Expand natural resource education & environmental quality awareness through proven adult learning techniques. Develop community leadership. Train volunteers to support community projects and enhance community pride.

D. Self Reliance Center: Remove Barriers to Community Gardening in Urban Settings

D.1. Narrative - Community groups face a variety of barriers to establishing a community garden including access to long-term leases of public land access to water; sufficient technical knowledge; and access to government and private resources. SRC will continue work in negotiating new city policies which will remove these barriers.

D.2. Procedures - SRC will collaborate with agencies and government to develop policies that will remove barriers to gardening on government land using collaborative and policy work in Minneapolis as a model. SRC will develop programs to provide technical assistance to gardeners with the assistance of the Minnesota Extension Service.

D.3.	a. <u>Amount Budgeted:</u>	\$ 15,000
	b. <u>Balance:</u>	\$ 0

D.4. Timeline: July'91| Jan'92| June'92| Jan'93| June'93|
Build & expand coalitions -----
with govt and Extension
Establish policies -----
Implement & monitor pol. -----
Expand into new cities -----
Develop/Implement pol. -----

D.5. Status:
Many barriers to community gardening in urban settings have been removed as a result of SRC's efforts. Of primary importance was SRC's ability to provide liability insurance to gardeners, decreasing landowners' concerns and creating wider access to public and privately-owned lands. In addition, the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul drafted and adopted reasonable procedures by which citizens may use city-owned property for gardening. Both cities, at SRC's request, pay for or heavily subsidize soil contamination testing at potential garden sites. Furthermore, the Minneapolis Community Development Agency now provides up to \$1,500 per lot for garden development on its vacant properties. In St. Paul, at SRC's request, The Board of Water Commissioners agreed to allow use of fire hydrants to water community garden projects.

With future funding, SRC will explore community garden stabilization options, including land trusts, long-term leases, and outright ownership of properties.

D.6. Benefits: Time and energy needed by community groups to set up gardens will be significantly reduced when new policies are in effect. More gardens will be established because the process will be clearly defined and neighborhood groups will receive assistance in accessing land and resources. The community gardens will promote neighborhood revitalization in the inner city.

E. Self Reliance Center - Assist with Special Population Gardening in Urban Settings

E.1. Narrative - Gardening is especially beneficial to people with limited physical capabilities as a form of recreation and to provide access to nutritious food. SRC will continue to expand work with senior citizens who are living in their homes and need assistance in gardening, and with those in low-income apartments to assist in establishing and maintaining gardens. SRC will also work with residents of group homes to provide them with technical assistance and access to needed resources.

E.2. Procedures - SRC will expand work with agencies who serve seniors and physically challenged people to establish garden projects. SRC will work with county extension agents to connect these new gardens to master gardener volunteers.

E.3. a. Amount Budgeted: \$20,000
b. Balance: \$ 0

E.4. Timeline: July'91| Jan'92| June'92| Jan'93| June'93|
Contact -----
organizations
Design garden projects -----
Provide technical asst. -----
Monitor & evaluate -----

E.5. Status:
SRC was successful in disseminating information about accessible gardening to senior centers, nursing homes, and independent living facilities through targeted mailings, an article in Access Press, by reprinting (with permission) portions of a workbook on designing and building wheelchair accessible gardens, and by site visits. Telephone or on-site consultations resulted in gardens planned at the Amherst Wilder adult day care center (for persons with Alzheimer's disease), the Whittier Co-op, the Bryn Mawr Care Center, and sites in Golden Valley, Maple Plain, and New Prague. SRC included a model of an accessible garden in its public demonstration gardens.

The work carried out toward this objective revealed a great demand for information about raised-bed, accessible gardens. SRC will continue to collect designs and specifications and to relay the information to appropriate groups.

E.6. Benefits: Gardens will provide physical and mental therapy, relaxation, recreation and fresh, affordable food to special populations.

F. Self Reliance Center - Expand Community Gardening in Urban Settings.

F.1. Narrative - SRC has been successful in establishing new policies within the City of Minneapolis to assist neighborhoods in establishing community gardens. SRC will build on this policy success to work with other cities in the metro area to establish similar policies, SRC will also expand efforts to work with neighborhood groups to identify vacant land that could be used for gardens.

F.2. Procedures - SRC will provide technical assistance and promote organizational capacity-building skills with interested neighborhood groups. SRC will also provide newsletters, workshops, access to resources, and work with extension to connect master gardeners with new garden sites.

F.3. a. Amount Budgeted: \$20,000
b. Balance: \$0

F.4. Timeline: July'91| Jan'92| June'92| Jan'93| June'93|
Identify -----
interested comm.
Provide technical -----
assistance
Conduct workshops ---- -----
Develop 16 more sites -----
Newsletter -- -- -- -- --

F.5. Status:

The hallmark of SRC's technical assistance to community gardeners including Southeast Asian refugees, suburban church members, a non-profit organization staffed by homeless people, an African-American men's association, numerous urban block clubs, a loose coalition of energetic twenty-somethings, members of a co-op house and their neighbors, and many others. SRC offered a non-dogmatic approach to creating community gardens, helping establish successful gardens with groups whose needs dictated flexibility and respect for differences. These groups have maintained their gardens, and their political, organizational, and interpersonal skills have grown along with their plants.

In addition to one-on-one technical assistance, SRC arranged workshops, forums and classes on intensive organic gardening, canning, integrated pest management, lead contaminated soils, and seed starting. The Urban Garden newsletter was mailed to 570 subscribers three to four times per year.

As a result, SRC directly assisted in the establishment of more than 20 new community gardens, and provided community gardeners and the public with important information to conduct productive and environmentally-safe gardening.

- F.6. Benefits: Community gardening provides the individual gardener with recreation, relaxation, socialization and fresh, affordable food. Community gardening enhances a community by beautifying an area, thereby increasing the value of the neighborhood. Community gardening also serves as a tool to organize neighborhoods, and because it is often a multi-ethnic and intergenerational meeting ground, provides a visual message that the community is working together to make their neighborhood a better place to live for all people.

IV. EVALUATION

It takes time and effort to create self-sufficient projects, so these organizations can work with only a few each year. Each of the greater Minnesota sites will be assessed with a visit, review and written summary as part of the Minnesota Green awards program. The program can be evaluated by the number of new gardens established and sustained with community groups and special populations; new policies established by local units of government; and documentation of the technical assistance provided in the form of workshops, coordination of resources and newsletters.

V. CONTEXT

- A. The Self Reliance Center and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society are primary sources of technical assistance for communities interested in establishing community gardens. Both agencies are continually inundated with requests for assistance. This project will expand our efforts to serve those communities. Minnesota Green's program is designed to build self-sufficiency in 3 to 5 years.
- B. Both organizations advise existing sites in varying levels of development. These funds will enable added assistance to current locations and new service to other applicants. Other community gardens across Minnesota currently have developed independently, with varied levels of sustainability. A 1988 survey by Minnesota State Horticultural Society identified nearly 500 garden locations on public land in Minnesota. The Self Reliance Center lists over 30 community food gardens in the

D. (Continued)

Metropolitan area. In the past local garden clubs, youth and civic groups have led ongoing community planting projects; the grantees assist these efforts by advising on ways to increase the volunteer base, while offering added resources and technical expertise for sustainability.

- C. Minnesota Green's program was new in 1988, expanding to greater MN in 1989, so all accomplishments have been achieved through LCMR funding. Over 25 communities have received assistance and resources since the program began. Self-Reliance Center had 12 active sites in 1990, and has assisted many garden projects since 1983. New initiatives have been generated in Ramsey County, though principal work continues in Hennepin County. Expenses for MN Green were \$24,700 in 1989. Self-Reliance Center's 1989 expenses were \$38,500. LCMR funding for FYs 1990 and 91 was \$45,000 to each agency.

A future proposal would focus on development of new sites on public space, to further expand the greening of Minnesota.

D. Not applicable

E. Biennial Budget System Program Title and Budget:

VI. Qualifications

1. Program Manager: Dorothy Johnson, Executive Director
MN State Horticultural Society
1755 Prior Ave. N.
Falcon Heights, MN 55113

BA Communications/Business Metropolitan State University. Added training & classwork in small business management/administration; volunteer & program development; home economics; horticulture through several colleges. Supervises Minnesota Green program and serves on steering committee. Oversees all program areas, fundraising and statewide outreach of MSHS. Serves on Governor's Highway Beautification Commission, Dakota County Extension Committee and other non-profit boards of directors.

2. Major Cooperators:

- A. Sue Gunderson, Executive Director
Self-Reliance Center, Minneapolis, MN
BA Arts and Urban Studies, University of Illinois. Supervises the Food Program for the Self Reliance Center and all other programs for the organization.
- B. Rick Bonlender, Minnesota Green Coordinator
MN State Horticultural Society, Falcon Heights, MN
BA Metro Studies, Augsburg College. Enrolled in Masters in Mgmt. Program at Metropolitan State Univ. Plans and implements all aspects of the Minnesota Green program, Formerly Food Program Manager at Self-Reliance Center. Strong volunteer experience in community development. Hennepin County Master Gardener and on a national committee for the American Community Gardening Association.
- C. Gail Skinner, Associate Director
U of M Extension Service, St. Paul, MN
Works with fiscal management for programs of the MN Extension Service.

VII. Reporting Requirements

Semiannual status reports will be submitted not later than January 1, 1992 and July 1, 1992; January 1, 1993 and a final status report by June 30, 1993.

1991 RESEARCH PROJECT ABSTRACT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDING JUNE 30, 1993

This project was support by MN Future Resources Fund (MS xxx.xx).

TITLE: COMMUNITY GARDENING PROGRAM
PROGRAM MANAGER: Dorothy Johnson
ORGANIZATION: Minnesota State Horticultural Society and
Sustainable Resources Center
LEGAL CITATION: M.L. 91, Ch. 254, Art. 1, Sec. 14, Subd. 6.(f)
APPROP. AMOUNT: \$110,000

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

This appropriation is to the University of Minnesota, Minnesota Extension Service, in cooperation with the Minnesota State Horticultural Society and the Self Reliance Center to provide gardening information and technical assistance in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas.

- A. Minnesota Green
Minnesota Green (MG) assisted community gardening efforts in Greater Minnesota, with methods to attain self-sufficient, long term projects (staffed by volunteers); and provided environmental and horticulture-related learning opportunities and resources to communities.
- B. Sustainable Resources Center
The Self-Reliance Center (SRC) (now doing business as the Sustainable Resources Center) worked to remove barriers to community gardening, to assist special populations in setting up gardens, and to increase the number of gardens available, all in an urban setting.

OVERALL PROJECT RESULTS

- A. Minnesota Green
1. MG provided assistance to over 50 communities outside the Twin Cities metro area, developing coalitions to link people and resources, resulting in strengthened communities through greening, including parks, schools, food-shelf sites, entryways, public housing developments and commercial districts with beautification plantings and food gardens
 2. Recognition to 15 outstanding civic improvement efforts.
 3. Co-sponsored 10 group learning opportunities with horticulture, environmental and community-based organizations.
 4. MG offered resources of Minnesota State Horticultural Society to assist with needs of communities. Important networking opportunities and connections with the many organizations affiliated with Minnesota State Horticulture Society offered extra benefits to MG participant communities.
 5. Over \$35,000 worth of donated plant material was distributed to garden sites in Greater Minnesota.

B. Sustainable Resources Center

1. Over the past two years, calls to SRC reading community gardens increased significantly. SRC expanded its technical assistance programs from primarily Minneapolis to St. Paul, Brooklyn Park, Farmington, Bloomington, and to callers throughout the seven county metro area. More than 20 new gardens have been established with SRC's direct assistance, including gardens for special populations. Municipal support for community gardening has increased tremendously in the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, where the majority of community garden sites are located.
2. SRC provides information, technical assistance, and referrals to gardeners at no cost.

PROJECT RESULTS USE AND DISSEMINATION

A. Minnesota Green

1. Yearly awards offered opportunities for information outreach and promotion of sites through yearly articles in Minnesota Horticulturist. Over 20 articles or interviews for statewide newspapers, television or public radio.
2. Slide programs and video tapes of community gardens are available to borrow through MSHS.
3. Newsletters were distributed to development and parks staff in many towns in addition to volunteer leaders, and were available at many public displays.

B. Sustainable Resources Center

1. Newspaper articles about SRC's community garden project, its philosophy, and about the communities it assists have appeared regularly in the *Star Tribune*, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, and in the *Southside Pride*, *North News*, *Southeast*, *Lakes Area Press*, the *Skyway News*, and others. Radio coverage was received from WCCO AM and Minnesota Public Radio. The Science Museum of Minnesota is featuring community gardens in its new urban environmental exhibit *Green Street*, with information and assistance from SRC.
2. SRC distributes copies or reprints of its newsletter articles, lead awareness flyers, accessible garden bed building plans, Twin Cities Community Garden Directory, and topical handouts on gardening (starting a community garden, community organizing, fundraising, etc.) upon request.
3. At the end of this project, all of SRC's community gardens can function autonomously. At least three community gardening groups, all started with SRC's assistance, have evolved into established, self-sustaining neighborhood gardening organizations with goals to expand urban gardening throughout their areas.