Community Garden Tour
Saturday, September 22, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

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COMMUNITY GARDENS CAN GROW MORE THAN FOOD – THEY CAN GROW ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOODS

Community gardening in Spokane is alive and flourishing and poised to do more than just grow vegetables for Spokane gardeners. Community gardens help build the relationships that create a stronger community.

To encourage Spokane residents to take part, gardeners from seven local community gardens will be opening their gardens for a self guided tour, Saturday, September 22, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Entrance to all gardens is free. The tour is sponsored by the Spokane Community Gardens, the Spokane Regional Health District and WSU Spokane County Extension. The addresses for the gardens are listed below.

Who should attend

Anyone who is interested in community gardening, urban agriculture, community food security, and growing some of their own food won’t want to miss the tours. And those who belong to community groups and neighborhood councils that want to start gardens will get tips and ideas on how to get that going.

Participating gardeners will be present at each site to tell visitors about their particular garden and answer questions about how the garden operates. Gardens that are open to new gardeners will be taking applications for the 2008 season.

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Community gardens are a valuable addition to a community because:

- Gardens can bring people outdoors where they can get to know their neighbors.

- When neighbors know one another, they are better able to keep track of what is going on in the neighborhood.

- Gardens can inspire changes in the neighborhood, such as overall community pride and concern for how the neighborhood looks and operates. They can also improve property values.

- Gardens bring people of all ages together where they can learn from each other and come to respect each other.

- Gardens allow people to grow their own healthy food, get exercise and bring people in contact with nature and the outdoors.

The gardens that will be open for the tour are:

- Northeast Community Center Garden; the corner of Liberty and Lacey Sts., Hillyard.
- Hifumi En Community Garden; 926 E. 8th Ave. (back of building)
- Emmanuel Lutheran Church Garden; 314 S. Spruce St, Browne’s Addition
- Twin Owls Community Garden; 6912 E. Random Pt. Ln, Brown’s Mountain
- St Margaret’s Shelter Garden; 2702 S. Oak St., Vinegar Flats
- Fairview and Hemlock Community Garden; corner of Fairview and Hemlock in NE Spokane
- Riverview Farms; Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 1832 W. Dean, West Central neighborhood

Each garden is run independently by the gardeners and each has its own unique character.

The Northeast Community Center Garden that is located in the SE corner of Rypien Field at Liberty and Lacey features 48 individual garden plots. This is an international garden with gardeners from all over Eastern Europe, Ukraine, Russia. These gardeners are masters at growing vegetables in cold climates and had ripe tomatoes by the end of June this year. The garden serves as an important social gathering place for the members of the community.
The Hifumi En Community Garden is located at the Hifumi En apartment complex run by Northeast Washington Housing Solutions and is open to residents of the complex. This grassroots garden project was developed by the residents, many of whom have disabilities, to give themselves a fun way to enjoy the out of doors and grow some of their own food. It has done more than that by bringing the residents together in a common activity and built a stronger social community. It features several garden plots that are accessible to those with physical disabilities.

The Emmanuel Lutheran Church Garden in Browne’s Addition is an outreach project of the church to the Browne’s Addition neighborhood and is a great example of how a little underutilized lawn area can be converted to a vibrant source of food and community.

Twin Owls Community Garden located on the west slope of Browns Mountain is a communal garden where the gardeners share in the work and the produce. The garden features approximately an acre of terraced beds and a greenhouse. The garden got its name for some of the owls that live in the forest around it.

St Margaret’s Shelter Market Garden in Vinegar Flats is a project by the staff and residents of St. Margaret’s Women’s Shelter to grow produce that they then sell at local farmers markets. The garden provides a community building environment and teaches residents how they can grow their own food.

Fairview and Hemlock Community Garden at the corner of Fairview and Hemlock in Northeast Spokane is five year old neighborhood garden with lots of space to grow. The gardeners represent the young and old, families and single people that give the garden a definite intergenerational flare. There are lots of available garden plots here that need gardeners.

Riverview Farms is a brand new project in the West Central neighborhood that envisions as being a neighborhood-wide community gardening and perhaps public market program using under-utilized and vacant individually and institutionally owned land. It is being organized by al neighborhood using vacant land for urban agriculture. The project is being run by Project HOPE and the Faith and Environment Network. They have installed raised gardening beds at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church as their first project.

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