

A Lot to Grow

A community garden to grow fresh and nutritious produce for our local food pantries

A Lot to Grow is a community garden designed to grow fresh vegetables and herbs for use in local soup kitchens. It is located across from Mountainside Hospital's Emergency Room in Montclair. The project includes 16 raised beds for planting, two of which are wheelchair accessible.

At 28,000 square feet, the property has ample space for cultivating produce, and providing a location for community educational events about growing food and making healthy food choices.

The idea for A Lot to Grow was proposed in the fall of 2009 by Patrice Kelly, MLitt. and Master Gardener who lives around the corner in Glen Ridge. She saw an opportunity to utilize the hospital's vacant lot as a productive space to bring local communities together. Community gardening is a growing trend as Americans become increasingly concerned about food prices, the environment and food safety. Not only do community gardens enhance nutrition and physical activity, they promote social interaction and community well-being. As Mrs. Kelly notes, "The effort creates not only an awareness of the many people within our communities who seek physical nourishment every single day from our local soup kitchens, but it is also about the spiritual nourishment that results from volunteerism."

What we are growing

After consulting our local soup kitchens about their needs, it was decided that popular and hardy produce that transports easily would be grown in the garden. More specifically, items being planted include cucumbers, tomatoes, green beans, green peppers, lettuce, squash and zucchini. Low-impact and sustainable gardening practices are being followed.

Participating soup kitchens

The Bethel Community Development Rehoboth Food Pantry and Meal Center in Bloomfield supplies emergency food provisions as well as hot nutritious meals to individuals, families and seniors regardless of race or religion.

The Soup Kitchen at the First Seventh-Day Adventist Church of Montclair opens its doors every Sunday from noon to 2:30.

Salvation Army Soup Kitchen in Montclair serves lunch on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from noon to 12:30 and breakfast on Wednesday morning from 9 to 9:30.

Toni's Kitchen based at St Luke's Episcopal Church in Montclair, serves a hot, nutritious luncheon every Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 11:30 to 1.

Volunteer Information

Volunteers are invited to help our garden grow on Monday evenings, from 6 until dusk, and Thursday mornings from 8 to 10.

Volunteers may park on George Street in Montclair; please follow all town parking signs. Volunteers may also use Mountainside Hospital's valet parking service, located at the entrance to the Richard F. Harries Ambulatory Care Pavilion. For complimentary valet parking, notify the attendant that you are volunteering in the community garden.

What to bring:

Volunteers must wear gardening gloves while working in the garden.

Bring your own gloves and trowel for use in maintaining the raised beds.

We recommend that you wear a hat and apply sunscreen before arriving at the garden.

Our Partners

A Lot to Grow extends special thanks to Mountainside Hospital for use of the space for the garden.

Special acknowledgements are also extended to our project partners:

- 👉 Tom DeStefano, Bloomfield Budget Print, who donated the community garden sign and stationery
- 👉 John F. Kelly, President & CEO of Frenkel & Company and Mountainside Health Foundation Trustee, who donated the raised beds
- 👉 Marty O'Boyle, O'Boyle Landscaping in Bloomfield, who donated the soil and planting materials
- 👉 Julie Smith, Julie Smith GardenScapes Landscape Design & Installation, who helped to design the community garden
- 👉 Janice Yamanaka, jyamanaka design llc, who designed the logo for A Lot to Grow
- 👉 Rob Heyrich, Heyrich Plumbing & Heating in Montclair, and John Kantor, Kantor Plumbing Supply in Orange, who donated the watering system
- 👉 Mike Spirko, Ploch's Garden Center in Clifton, who donated seeds, plants and organic fertilizer
- 👉 Dylan Pitcher, a Life Scout and Glen Ridge High School sophomore, who organized more than 40 volunteers on May 1 and 3 to assemble the beds and fill them with soil. Volunteers included members of Glen Ridge Boy Scout Troop 55 and their families.

Donations

Community members who want to support our efforts can donate gently used or new garden tools such as trowels, spades, shovels, water buckets, watering cans, garden hoses, and wheelbarrows. Call the Mountainside Health Foundation office at 973-746-6130, Ext. 18, to arrange delivery.

Tax deductible contributions to support **A Lot to Grow** are also appreciated, and may be given online at [click here](#). Donors can also mail a check to: Mountainside Health Foundation; 1 Bay Ave., Montclair, NJ 07042

For more information, see our website www.mshfoundation.org/garden/ or call the Mountainside Health Foundation, or send an email to garden@mshfoundation.org

