



Grow Food Grow Hope Garden Initiative Newsletter | Summer Wrap-up 2010



6,000 lbs of Produce Donated!

As summer winds to a close and we begin to prepare for fall it is time to look back on a bountiful summer. We harvested 5913.86 lbs of cucumbers and tomatoes as well as 107.58 dozen corn, squash and peppers.

We have distributed this plentiful harvest throughout Clinton County to various churches and organizations that have been able to distribute the produce to the hungry throughout our community. Sugartree Ministries, which affects approximately 500 people a week through grocery distribution, has received over 1000 lbs to distribute during their Thursday grocery give-away. The Homeless Shelter received 279 lbs to feed its residents and assist the many homeless families and individuals who they are not able to house. Community Action has received over 2200 lbs of produce which is distributed in the United Way food pantry as well as giving to their senior living apartments.

The Grow Food Grow Hope VISTAs also had the opportunity to distribute produce throughout the Wilmington Community. Taking a Friday off-campus with 655 pounds of tomatoes they went door-to-door in several Wilmington neighborhoods handing fresh tomatoes to whomever they met. "We

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GFGH Welcomes two new Full-time VISTAS

In the midst of our summer gardening Grow Food, Grow Hope was also able to welcome two new team members. Ms. Kaitlyn Best and Ms. Angie Lauver started with our project June 19th and will be with us for the next year fighting poverty through gardening and food access programming.

Wilmington College graduate Angie Lauver comes to us with a Bachelor's degree Social Work, Psychology and Spanish. She will be focusing on the Friends of Hope Community Gardens located on campus as well as working more with the Wilmington College Eco-house students.

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Produce

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tomatoes to residents of the Quaker Apartments. The residents were even more enthusiastic after receiving their produce at the perfect price: free.

Another neighborhood where tomatoes were shared was in the Southridge community behind Wilmington College. “We didn’t have any specific route we would just drive through and stop when we saw someone on their porch” said VISTAs Sonja Koehler and Jennifer Kerschner. “Everyone continued to tell us what a bless-

ing it was and I was pleasantly surprised at the huge amount of selflessness there was,” Koehler stated. Many residents suggested where to go, which doors to knock on or would even take some extra for their neighbor who was out.

“We even had a little girl who wanted to come with us” says Kerschner. “It was great to see the appreciation first hand from people. Not all of us see that everyday.” With an afternoon of door-to-door distribution behind them the VISTAs gave approximately 430 pounds of tomatoes to Southridge area residents and a renewed



Full-time VISTAs and Summer Associate Volunteers dive head first into tomato picking at the Wilmington College Farm on Fife Avenue.

sense of the power of giving.

Special thanks to the Wilmington College Farm and the Agricultural Department for everything they have done to make this

possible. They are truly indispensable in our efforts throughout the county and we are truly grateful for all they do.



VISTAS

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As a former resident of the Eco-houses Lauver is not only familiar with the students who live there but also with the lifestyle expectations of the house. The Eco-houses are designed to make students more aware of their ecological footprint through their electricity and water. Lauver is hopeful that the gardens will increase the benefit and learning experience of the students living in the Eco-houses.

Not only is she excited to work with some

of her former classmates she is also more than prepared to spend another year in Wilmington, OH. Lauver states, “I was here for four years and I had the opportunity to do a lot of service as a student. I want to continue to do that because I’ve benefitted a lot from this community, I love Wilmington and I can continue to learn new skills while also serving this community that has become home to me.”

VISTA Kaitlyn Best, a graduate of Eastern University in Pennsylvania with a degree in Political Science is our new Back-

yard Garden liaison. “I’m looking forward to expanding the Backyard Garden Project with more families as well as expanding our growing season with Hoop Houses,” said Best. She also plan to make the Denver Park Demo garden more accessible to the public to continue to increase food access and awareness throughout the community.

“When I was looking for positions I was really excited to see how community focused Grow Food, Grow Hope was,” Best said. “Not every program has that. I liked seeing that the VISTAs also



Our newest team members: Kaitlyn Best and Angie Lauver inside the Center for Service & Civic Engagement.

directly partook in some of the gardening and meeting the people that we’re helping.” We look forward to working with Kaitlyn and Angie for the next year as they serve here in Wilmington.



Reduce, Reuse, Recycled Greenhouse

While visiting Blue Rock Station for a raised bed gardening class, VISTA Aileen Ash became inspired by the pop bottle greenhouse there built by owners Jay and Annie Warmke. Blue Rock Station in Philo, Ohio is a green living farm that takes pride in their ability to translate green living principles into ways to live happy and fulfilling lives. Which is why they

were inspired to create a pop bottle greenhouse based upon the first, built in Scotland by the Sustainable Communities Initiative. Ash believed that it would be an appropriate project for Grow Food, Grow Hope to take on and implement in their community gardens and dived head first into the project.

The completed greenhouse has a 14x14 "footprint" with 60 tires as

the foundation, 1600 plastic bottles as sides and two 60-gallon rain barrels collect water as a part of the north wall.

Special Thanks to Scott Kirchner who not only is donating the property needed for the Mulberry Street Garden but who also provided the corrugated plastic roof needed to complete the greenhouse.

The completed greenhouse at the Mulberry Street gardens.



Children's Camps Steal the Summer



July and August brought a much younger crop of students than Wilmington College is used to seeing. Nearly 40 students participated in "Junior Master Gardener" and "Seed, Seed, Sprout" Camp learning about gardening, nutrition, cooking, and the impor-

ance of healthy eating.

Whether the campers were 2 1/2 or 12 years old they all enjoyed cooking and trying new things. Each camp had a week full of fun and learning for both age groups including making JMG Jam and learning how to follow a recipe as well as joining the "Two-Bite Club" where you must try two bites of everything put in front of you.

"It was really the camp counselors that stole the show" says VISTA Jen-

nifer Ker-

schnner who coordinated the Junior Master Gardener Camp. "The Summer Associates really put all of their enthusiasm and energy into their part of the camp and it made it for the kids. You can have a really cool activity but without volunteers you have nothing."

Not only were the camps a success for the campers while they were there but it has also continued to nurture their interest in food. "I consider a program a success when students keep coming to things after they're finished," said Kerschner.

"The campers had so much fun while they were here that they begged their parents to come to 'Kid's Day' at the Farmer's Market."

Check out the photos below to get a taste of our camps.



Want more information? Visit us online at www.growfoodgrowshope.com



Grow Food, Grow Hope Garden Initiative

1145 Pyle Center
1870 Quaker Way
Wilmington, OH
45177

Phone: 937-382-6661 ext. 488 | **E-mail:** growfoodgrowhope@wilmington.edu | **Web:** www.growfoodgrowhope.com

The **Grow Food, Grow Hope Garden Initiative** is a community food project dedicated to increasing access to fresh and nutritious food for the neediest members of our community. By increasing food security, we aim to eliminate the effects of poverty.

To that end, we facilitate a community garden for low-income families, we grow bulk vegetables for area food banks, we organize and fund backyard garden installations around our community, we teach children how to garden and we promote local farmers' markets and local businesses.

By growing a little food, we can sow a lot of hope.

Come grow with us.

