



2015 Annual Harvest Report



Dear friends,

We've had a great year at the Big Garden, with 20 new community gardens and over 400 kids each week learning how to grow, cook, and preserve their own food through our summer classes. We are proud of our accomplishments in 2015, but there is so much more we can do. Did you know that 1 in 5 children in Nebraska aren't sure where their next meal is coming from? And, according to the CDC's 2013 State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables roughly 38% of adolescents in Nebraska, Kansas, and Iowa report that they don't eat fruits or vegetables on a daily basis. Obviously there is a lot of work still to do. We are ready to get our hands dirty in 2016 growing food, doing justice, and fighting hunger. With your help, we are reducing hunger in our communities in a way that provides low-income families with the opportunities and skills they need to lead healthier lives.

Nathan Morgan, Executive Director
United Methodist Ministries/ The Big Garden

The Big Garden's mission is to cultivate food security by developing community gardens, creating opportunities to serve, and providing education on issues related to hunger.



How we made your dollars grow...

Growing Gardeners Workshop Series

(collaborative workshops with City Sprouts, Omaha's oldest community garden)

- Held an average of 2 workshops per month, reaching roughly 250 people since March
- Topics included backyard ecology, fermenting, composting, canning, making jams & jellies, making pollinator houses, seed saving, bread-baking, and winter garden medicines

Summer Program

- 6 summer garden interns logged 2,520 hours planning & teaching children & youth at 15 unique sites
- 4,139 total children & youth participation over 10 weeks
- Curriculum addressed soil health, planting techniques, pollinators, permaculture, food systems, local foods, harvesting, and cooking

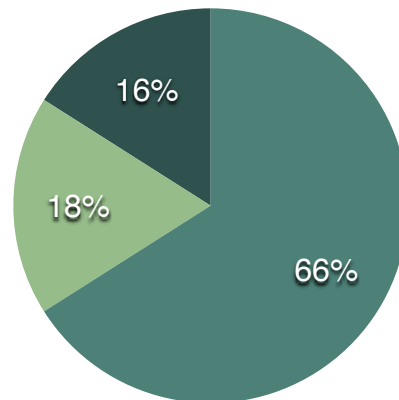
Seed to Market Program

- Our first year offering year-round classes
- After-school program for 5th-8th graders at McMillan and Marrs Middle Schools in Omaha
- Curriculum focuses on organic gardening and entrepreneurship
- Youth design their own product with ingredients grown from their garden, create it, learn how to market it, and share it with their peers and families
- 40 participants each week

Volunteers

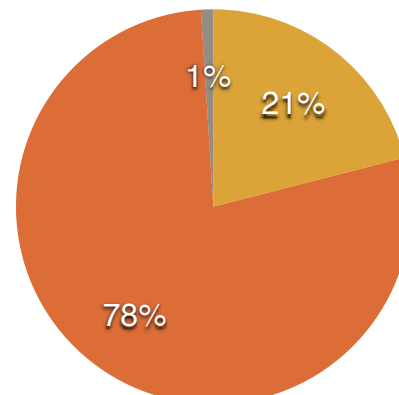
- Hosted 11 mission teams, including 3 from Church of the Resurrection UMC in Kansas
- 7 of the 11 groups were returning for their second or third mission experience with us

- Personnel \$194,489
- Operating \$51,804
- Program \$48,299



Expenses \$294,592
(through 9/30)

- Donations \$71,143
- Grants \$264,415
- Fees for Services \$4611



Income \$340,169
(through 9/30)

Visit our new website at BigGarden.org!

20 new Big Gardens in 2015!

(bringing our total to 146 gardens since 2010)

Omaha-metro

- Park Drive Apartments in Ralston
- Omaha Northwest High School
- Holy Cross Catholic School
- Heartland Hope Mission
- St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Lothrop Magnet Center
- Children Are First Child Care
- Educare of Omaha at Indian Hill Elementary
- Educare of Omaha at Kellom Elementary
- Candlewood Kindercare



Rural and small-town Iowa

- Avoca, IA (partnership with the city)
- Grant, IA (Grant UMC)
- Walnut, IA

Rural and small-town Nebraska

- Epworth Village, near York, NE
- Platte Valley Apartments (Valley, NE - Douglas County Housing Authority)
- Columbus, NE (Habitat for Humanity partnership)
- Blue Hill, NE (Blue Hill UMC)

Kansas

- Mount Hope UMC in Mount Hope, KS
- Trinity UMC in Great Bend, KS
- Chapel Hill UMC in Wichita, KS

The Big Garden network grew 88.4 tons of produce in 2015!

Staff:

- Nathan Morgan, Executive Director
- Jaimee Trobough, Director of Marketing & Communications
- Matt Freeman, Director of Operations & Development
- Cait Caughey, Education Coordinator
- Mary Hanten, Operations Assistant
- Kay Wilwerding, Administrative Support
- Erin Higgins & Colin Shenefield, Support Staff

Board of Directors:

- President: Craig Howell, The Hunger Collaborative
- Vice President: Michael McClellan, McClellan Law Office

- Secretary: Teresa Mardesen, Farm Credit Services of America
- Treasurer: William Gess
- Sharon Ostlund, President of Missouri River District United Methodist Women
- Diane Jensen, First United Methodist Church Omaha
- Esther Hay, President of Great Plains Conference United Methodist Women
- Mike Klinefelter, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Foundation
- Rev. Zach Anderson, Pastor of Hanscom Park United Methodist Church, Omaha
- Rev. Marshall Johnson, Associate Pastor of St. Luke United Methodist Church, Omaha
- Aida Amoura, Nebraska Criminal Defense Attorneys Association