



seedlings for community gardens



MATERIALS

- Scissors or sharp knife
- Pencil
- Commercial potting mixture
- Spray bottle
- Balanced, general-purpose liquid fertilizer
- Cardboard egg carton
- Seeds

Why Community Gardens Matter

Community gardens are known for providing space for neighbors to grow fresh, healthy food close to home. But beyond improving food access, community gardens provide the space for powerful neighborhood-level social change. When a group of neighbors and volunteers join together to organize, build, and manage a community garden, they bring other benefits as well.

They become places to make friends and to learn about new topics, such as composting benefits. They provide space to carry on our food cultures and they are a place for children (and adults!) to explore nature in the middle of urban areas.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Why do some people need to get vegetables from a community garden and not the grocery store?
- Why is it important to eat a variety of healthy foods?
- Where does most of our food come from? Is it local or does it come from another country?

START A RIPPLE OF GIVING

- If you plant your own garden, consider planting an extra row just to donate your fresh produce to a food pantry or a neighbor in need.



DIRECTIONS

1. Cut the lid from an egg carton with scissors or a sharp knife.
2. Poke a small drainage hole in the bottom of each egg cell, using the tip of a pencil or similar object.
3. Place the egg carton lid under the bottom to create a drainage tray.
4. Fill the egg cells one-half to three-quarters full with potting mixture. A standard commercial potting mixture works well. Avoid regular garden soil, which is too heavy and soon becomes compacted.
5. Plant two or three seeds on top of the potting mixture in each cell. Cover the seeds with a thin layer of potting mixture.
6. Water the potting mixture lightly with a spray bottle. Mist as needed to keep the potting mixture lightly moist.
7. Place the egg cartons in a warm area. Most seeds germinate in temperatures between 60 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit.
8. Thin the germinated plants to one seedling per cell. Pinch or cut the smallest seedlings and allow the strongest seedling to develop.
9. Move the seedlings to a window with a south or southwest exposure.
10. Feed the plants once every week if the seedlings are pale green or yellowish green. Use a weak solution of a balanced, general-purpose liquid fertilizer with a ratio such as 14-14-14.

NEXT STEPS

Donate seedlings to your local food bank or community garden. Some ideas in the greater Atlanta area:

- Food Well Alliance
- Truly Living Well
- Metro Atlanta Urban Farm
- Atlanta Community Food Bank
- Malachi's Storehouse
- Toco Hills Community Alliance
- Community Assistance Center
- Clarkston Food Pantry

REFLECTION

Have your family come together after you have planted the seeds. Challenge each family member to come up with 5 words that describe the day's experience in response to the questions below.

- Why was it important to do this project?
- How did you help?
- What was it like to work together as a family for this project?
- What was the funniest part of the experience?
- What volunteer activity would you like to do next?

