

Halton Community Garden Networking Event

May 3, 2014 | Burlington, ON



HALTON COMMUNITY GARDEN NETWORK

Hosted by
Halton Food Council

Takes Root on Saturday, May 3rd!



Rotary Youth Centre

560 Guelph Line, Burlington

8a.m. - 9a.m.

Registration & Networking
Continental Breakfast

9a.m. - 12:30p.m.

Presentations from two local leaders,
followed by a 'next steps' discussion.

Lorraine Johnson

Author of "City Farmer"

Clare Wagner

Hamilton Community Garden Network

With your valued input, together
we can support a network to facilitate
gardens throughout Halton.

Free to attend. Registration required at
HaltonCommunityGardenNetwork.eventbrite.com



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Event supported by



Group Questions & Answers

1. What are the current challenges that community gardens face?

- Public awareness/ lack of exposure
- Lack of volunteers/volunteer management
- Inadequate training
- Getting people involved/inclusion
- Sourcing organic materials (wood, soil)
- Funding
- Start-up resources
- Maintenance
- Networking

2. What are the opportunities that Halton Community Gardens could build on?

Consolidation

- Single point of contact for volunteers
- Sourcing leaders (i.e., seniors who are downsizing)
- Site for resources

Communications

- Communications strategy
- Group distribution list
- Public relations
- Resources

Donations/Funding

- List of donation sources
- Facilitate community donations
- Stable funding through development changes
- Get money from development funds back
- Start-up funds from Seed Exchanges

Partnerships/Collaborations

- Utilize HFC platform
- Work with Community Development Halton
- HDSB
- Government
- Feeding Halton

- How to get resources/build on resources

Policy

- Working on the policy level and the development of suburban areas
- How can we incorporate gardening/food into that planning process?
- Gardens incorporated into waste management



3. What could a network do to help contribute to the success of community gardens?

Share resources

- Design, construction, budgeting
- Workshops
- Training
- Drop-in physical location for information
- Demonstration gardens

Communications

- Events calendar

- Newsletter
- Promotions
- Branding

Donations/Funding

- Grant writing workshops
- Joint grants
- Create a fund via sponsor support
- Social enterprise

4. Who should be involved in making these things happen?

- Paid coordinators
- Community businesses
- Halton Food Council
- Local farming community (extra seeds)
- Regional & municipal governments



Knowledge Exchange Breakout Groups

Soil Management/Till or No-Till

Why not to rototill? Can get away without tiling to pressure the land.

Rototill needs to be small and manageable.

Loam is ideal soil-- if need to mend soil, you need the following:

- Veg. matter composts or manure
- Don't add sand
- If beginning, rototill only then and work matter into soil
- After this, can spread organic matter on top
- Keep till constant once garden established

Mulch- can have a lot of problems with straw especially if not clean.

- Beneficial for all gardeners--prevents shifting of soil

Woodchips are fine but not too coarse. Called forest mulch if shredded

Funding is an issue for maintaining soil and for getting requires resources for this.

Ideas:

- Compost from garden
- Ornamental grass can go in compost

Donations

Seeds

- Seed Exchange: Milton Horticulture Society (members only)
- Halton Seedy Saturday (public)
- Mississauga Seedy Saturday (public)
- Southern Rd. in Mississauga (Church?) has an on going exchange
- Can also simply call some of the large growers and ask, explain what you're up to
- Visit places like Springridge
- Don't be afraid to ask!

Rain barrels

- Rainbarrels.ca-- discounted price

Tools

- Garbage/the big junk days
- Family-owned businesses as well (not just big places like Lowes)
 - i.e. Hickery Dickery Deck
- Landscapers/deck builders--what do they do with their stuff?

Compost

- Mushroom farm, across from Stonehaven, year-round free manure to pick up yourself
- City regional compost weeks
- Research what's close to you

Sourcing Organic Garden Inputs

- Issues with chemicals in plywood
- Compost-regional municipality giveaway
 - Yard waste free giveaway mostly for individual residents. Not sure about organic.
- Mushroom Farm-- not considered organic, but is used in organic farming
- Takes 7-10 years for land to be considered organic

Bulk Buying Interest

- Stop--put order into farmer to supply straw to all interested
- Discounts: HFC can buy in bulk and sell for low costs to community gardens. If we all want particular materials, we can get cheaper through bulk buying

Organic gardens can nurse others

- Start organic gardening and help supply seeds to other gardens
- Learn to grow organic
- Lasagna gardening
- Materials:
 - soil
 - compost
 - seeds
 - materials--not chemically treated (i.e., logs, cider blocks)
 - non-treated mulch
 - logs used/collected from ice storm damage

Engage Education sector for design and construction

- Humber

- Sheridan
- McMaster
- Competition or Challenge to raise awareness and get school involved

Pest Management

- Central garden plot owner
 - List 9 ideas to handle pests-- to troubleshoot sent by email to gardens
 - Marigolds planted around garden
- Concoction to spray plants
- Netting over plants
- St. Elizabeth Church allotment garden
- Creepy Charlie-- Cider Vinegar/dish detergent
- Japanese beetles (metallic green)-- eats roses
- Nematode worms-- will stop grubs

Communicating in the Garden

- Oakville Horticulture Society (mostly flowers)--monthly newsletter
- Share if with groups of people
- Word of mouth
- Local residents (or tenants) association
- Message board
- Newsletter--simply, share stories; schedule it in; blogs on website to update
- Journal space to document

Theft & Conflict

- It will happen
- Clarify that stealing is not the attention
- Create a space that allows for sharing
- Kids writing and identify who it belongs to

Water Strategies

Halton Region

- Rain barrel-- Fundraise for barrel, ask businesses (Cdn Tire) to donate
- Drainage ditch into a cistern
- Fog fence on a chain link fence

Incentive for property owners is to get a tax receipt if the CG is associated with a charity

Parking lot and Arena snow removed is not suitable

Halton Regional will not waive the cost of water or the cost to connect to a water main

Build in the water cost into the plot fee

Oakville will supply water via their water trucks, but only once they need to water garden beds/plots



Q & A with Lorraine Johnson and Clare Wagner ...

Community Garden Design

- Creating a palatable design for community
- Student designer project
- Active community garden-- people look after it > aesthetic (see engagement and worth)

What *not* to do: Don't assume you know what's best for community

Do: create a contract of behaviour

- Guidelines and principles govern space
- Create a safe space

Accessibility and inclusiveness

- Wheelchair accessible garden beds (seniors)
- AODA training needed for all non-profits in Ontario since 2012, not just infrastructure, but customer service.

