



**Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council**  
**Wednesday, March 21, 2012**  
**3:00-5:00 p.m.**  
**City Hall, Room 333**

**Agenda**

- 3:00-3:05**      **Welcome Homegrown Youth Leaders and introductions**
- 3:05-3:15**      **Homegrown updates**
- Ethics training reminder
  - Met Council 2040 Regional Development Framework
  - Food Council representation on Northside Fresh
  - Update on Homegrown staffing transition
  - Report on first MN Grocery Store Task Force meeting
  - Update on Economic Development Working Group
- 3:15-3:20**      **Adoption of Group Norms document (Attachment 3)**
- 3:20-3:30**      **Policy progress**
- Passage of composting ordinance
  - Status of Urban Ag Text Amendment and proposed Council amendments (Attachments 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e )  
 -Zoning and Planning Committee – Thursday, March 22 at 9:30 am
  - Response to proposed Council amendments (Attachment 5)
- 3:30-4:30**      **Strategic Planning (Attachment 6)**
- Discussion to focus on identifying priorities (Sarah Strickland)
- 4:30-4:55**      **Presentation on first year evaluation results of Local Food Resource Hubs Network (Sarah Stewart and Meredith Hicks, City Staff)**
- 4:55-5:00**      **Next meeting**  
 Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at 3:00 p.m.
- Extension of meeting time

**Upcoming Meetings and Events:**

- **Urban Ag Text Amendment in Zoning and Planning** – March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:30 a.m. in Council Chambers
- **League of Women Voters Forum: “Fresh Choices: Growing the Local Food Economy”** - March 22, 2012 - Plymouth Congregational Church -1900 Nicollet Avenue, Minneapolis – 5:30 food and film; 7:00-9:30 p.m. event
- **Alliance for Sustainability Annual Conference**  
 -March 24, 2012

**Urban Ag Text Amendment in City Council** – Tentatively March 30th at 9:30 in Council Chambers

- **Gardening Matters Spring Resource Fair**
  - Saturday, March 31, 2012 – Neighborhood House – 179 Robie Street – St. Paul - 9am to 4 pm (including a panel on Homegrown and St. Paul Food and Nutrition Commission)
- **Local Food Resource Hubs Network**
  - April 14, 2012 - Seeds and cold crop seedlings distribution event
  - May 19, 2012 - Hot crop seedlings distribution event

**Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council**  
**Wednesday, February 15, 2012**  
**City Hall, Room 333**  
**3:00-4:30 pm**

**Minutes**

**Present (86% attendance):** Patty Bowler, Beth Dooley, Cam Gordon, Russ Henry, Kristine Igo, Tim Jenkins, Bob Lind, June Mathiowetz, Sara Nelson-Pallmeyer, Neil Oxendale, Gayle Prest, Rebecca Reed, Aaron Reser, Julie Ristau, Alison Rotel, Kurt Schreck, Tracy Singleton, Mustafa Sundiata, Rhys Williams

**Not Present:** Eric Larsen, Erica Prosser, Deborah Ramos

**Guests:** Hiedi Coe, Robin Garwood, Brian Jesness, Candace McKelvy

**Opening Comments**

Chair Beth Dooley thanked everyone for their efforts around supporting the Urban Ag Text Amendment as it moved through the City's Planning Commission on January 23rd. She also noted that the sustainability local food indicator targets were adopted by the City Council in January 2012 as follows:

- Increase food producing gardens in the city by one acre by 2014, using 2011 as a baseline.
- All residents live within a ¼ mile of a healthy food choice.

[www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/ree/WCMS1P-083697](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/ree/WCMS1P-083697)

**Framework for Action**

A map describing a possible way of thinking about the structure of Homegrown was presented by June Mathiowetz as the group considered who they might want to place on the Executive Committee and how they might want to think about structuring the future work of Homegrown. She noted the existing high need for stewardship of Homegrown's resources and communications efforts as learned from phase II of Homegrown and suggested that having two standing committees or working groups – one on resources and one on communications – may be important in optimizing the Food Council's effectiveness.

The council proceeded with their leadership elections using a consensus-based nominations process. Beth Dooley shared the nominations for Co-chair and Executive Committee that had been received from the group via email and opened the floor for additional final nominations. Each nominee expressed their interests or declined the nomination and consensus was reached that the second Co-chair for 2012 will be Mustafa Sundiata. The same procedure was used for the Executive Committee nominations. At the end of the discussion, Russ Henry moved and Alison Rotel seconded the nominations of Kristine Igo, Julie Ristau and Patty Bowler for the Executive Committee for a one-year term. The motion carried.

Given the late time, Chair Dooley moved adoption of the Group Norms document to next month's agenda and directed everyone's attention to Handout #2. June Mathiowetz commented briefly on the priorities development form and requested that everyone send drafts of recommended strategies to her before March 9<sup>th</sup>. Strategies will be compiled for discussion at next month's meeting. June will also review what work remains from the Homegrown phase I recommendations and add those to the list. She noted that in the near future the Council will also want to discuss how to engage the community as part of next steps.

Chair Dooley suggested the group also continue the discussion of working groups at a future meeting, but noted the following people had indicated interests around potential working groups:

- Economic Development: Bob Lind, Alison Rotel, Rhys Williams, Russ Henry
- Kristine Igo – Social media and public relations campaigns around successes and new work to generate energy, excitement and civic pride; linking college students/University of Minnesota to Homegrown
- Kurt Schrek - Value Added Processing, Packaging, Marketing
- Tim Jenkins - Regulatory Services as it pertains to food safety and local foods, regulatory barriers, and communication/education strategy for food safety and clarification of regulations.
- Aaron Reeser – community engagement
- Deborah Ramos - Community engagement, climate change, art
- Eric Larsen - Land Access and Permanency
- Julie Ristau – investing to support food businesses
- Alison Rotel - multicultural community engagement plan, food literacy strategies, and expanding institutional food purchasing

She also noted the following topics emerging around which potential working groups may form:

- Hoop House state building code modifications
- Funding/fundraising/grant writing and neighborhood engagement/communications
- Public housing and food growing expansion: Mark Jacobson (community member), Rhys Williams
- Storm water and food growing (the University of Minnesota is inquiring about partnering)
- Arts grant and Farmers Market Promotion Program proposals

Bob Lind briefly noted that he was pulling together a working group around Economic Development and had organized a discussion with identified potential participants earlier in the week that had gone very well.

June Mathiowetz noted Handout #1 was a sample charter that the Food Council could consider using to formalize a process around which working groups could be proposed and emerge. She suggested that the Executive Committee consider such a process more carefully and review the document more closely to determine what is really essential information for the Food Council to obtain.

Alison Rotel voiced concern about potentially leaving the second meeting without having formalized more of the working groups and structure so that stakeholders could start plugging into the effort. June Mathiowetz noted that as soon as everyone is comfortable with the initially suggested working groups around the three areas of economic development, communications and resources as discussed earlier, she could send out a notice to the Homegrown stakeholder list letting people know how they can get connected to these efforts.

### **Homegrown Coordinator Updates**

June Mathiowetz provided a few brief updates and recruited volunteers. She noted that the Food Council agenda and minutes are being posted on the Homegrown Minneapolis website under “Meeting Minutes.” Mustafa Sundiata volunteered to speak as a representative for the Food Council at the Gardening Matters Resource Fair in the afternoon on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Russ Henry agreed to serve as the Food Council’s representative to the Stewardship Council of the Local Food Resource Hubs Network. June also noted that 7 people have completed the City’s required ethics training so far and urged others to complete it as soon as possible.

## Urban Agriculture Text Amendment Process

Cam Gordon indicated that the urban agriculture zoning code text amendments are moving forward to the City's Zoning and Planning committee **on March 1st at 9:30 a.m.** These amendments were recommended by the City's Planning staff and passed the Planning Commission on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. [www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/planning/WCMS1P-084912](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/planning/WCMS1P-084912) These amendments are part of the implementation phase of the Urban Agriculture Policy Plan that passed the Council unanimously in April of 2011.

Cam Gordon noted that as March 1<sup>st</sup> approaches he is hearing a few concerns raised about the text amendment as it relates to residential districts. Several of the concerns relate to market gardens and whether or not they should be allowed in low-density areas, whether or not sales to the public from market garden sites should be allowed, even with the requirement of a Temporary Use Permit, and whether or not market gardens should be allowed to be larger than 10,000 square feet, even with the requirement of a Conditional Use Permit. He also noted concern raised around having several market gardens next to each other and taking up too much land that would otherwise be used for housing. On another topic, he noted there are concerns being voiced about allowing hoop houses in low-density residential areas and about their design and size. Some people seem to be more in favor of reducing the allowable maximum size to no more than 676 square feet, the same as a garage instead of the Planning Commission approved 1,000 square feet. Other concerns have focused specifically around the maximum height of 12 feet.

Given that time was 4:30 p.m., the Chair sought the group's permission to extend the meeting 15 more minutes to cover the composting ordinance and it was granted.

## Composting Ordinance

Robin Garwood presented the draft composting ordinance to the group. It is moving to the Regulatory Energy and Environment Committee for a public hearing **on February 27<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.** The proposed amendments increase the amount of composting residents can do, but also provide new tools for City staff to address people who are not handling compost appropriately. He noted that these changes are based on recommendations from community gardeners and backyard composters, have the support of City Inspections and Environmental Management staff, and been vetted by the Pollution Control Agency and Hennepin County's solid waste staff. These changes also support the City's sustainability goals and Homegrown's efforts to improve sustainable local food production.

Following discussion about how the Food Council might support this effort, Gayle Prest moved that "The Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council support the draft composting rules as presented." Mustafa Sundiata seconded. The motion carried. Chair Dooley agreed to draft a letter for the hearing reflecting this support of the changes and circulate it to the Food Council for edits and approval.

Chair Dooley noted upcoming meetings' agendas will include approval of the bylaws and norms and review of the group's submitted priorities.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Dear Minneapolis City Council Members:

The Minneapolis Food Council recently reviewed the proposed backyard composting ordinance changes for the City of Minneapolis. After careful consideration of this plan and a review of the benefits that it would bring to Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Food Council officially endorses the amendments and urges the Council to adopt them in their current form.

If adopted, these proposed changes to the City's backyard composting rules will guide the emerging local food production efforts of Minneapolis-based home gardeners toward neighborhood appropriate composting practices. We support this ordinance as a key component of the sustainable local food system we are all working to create.

The City of Minneapolis relies on its Sustainability Indicators as a guide to preserving and improving our quality of life. The proposed Backyard Composting rule changes will positively impact the following City of Minneapolis Sustainability Indicators:

- **Local Food** . Urban agriculture requires constant soil creation via composting in order to maximize production in relatively small urban growing spaces, thereby creating a new market demand for organic waste. For example, *Growing Power* in Milwaukee composts over 6 million pounds of organic waste each year.
- **Waste Reduction**. Backyard composting efforts can reduce the burden of demand for municipal curbside yard and food waste pick up and hauling.
- **Climate Change**. By lowering the overall tonnage of the municipally hauled waste stream we reduce the climate impact of our curbside programs. Waste tonnage that is composted rather than incinerated or landfilled has the potential to lower community emissions because composted waste does not produce more harmful methane (as it does in a landfill) or require additional fuel to burn (as it does in incineration).

Backyard composting allows Minneapolis residents to sequester the valuable nutrients embedded in food scraps including carbon – in local soils rather than adding these nutrients to the atmosphere via waste incineration. Composted nutrients are a far better choice than chemical fertilizers for our home gardeners. Backyard composting helps bring neighbors together, encourages homeowners to spend more time in their yards, and gives citizens a greater sense of ownership of their city.

Additionally, the proposed amendments offer more tools for City staff to address compost activities that are not up to the appropriate standard. For the first time, composters will be required to cover their compost with a layer of odor-reducing material such as leaves, straw or wood chips. Staff will also have the capacity to require people who seem to be having trouble composting properly to attend a Master Composter or equivalent course. Though this ordinance is definitely a much-needed expansion in the amount of material Minneapolis residents can compost, it also addresses the potential concerns of neighbors.

We believe these composting updates are timely, necessary and an important step for the City to take in order to usher in a new era of sustainable local food production and support the City's sustainability goals.

Sincerely yours,

Beth Dooley and Mustafa Sundiata  
Co-chairs, Minneapolis Food Council

## Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Norms

What is the purpose of group norms? To optimize trust, safety, effectiveness.

### Process

- Have fun.
- Make guests feel welcome and treat with respect.
- Sit next to someone new whenever possible.
- Maintain consciousness about who is missing from the room when making decisions (sector, population).
- In speaking with others, be conscious of being ambassadors for Homegrown Minneapolis and the Food Council.
- Clear perceived conflicts of interest with the group.
- Make space for relationship building as needed.
- Ensure decision-making processes are clear, defined and transparent.

### Communication

- Practice reserving judgment; maintain a state of curiosity.
- Treat each other with dignity and respect.
- Speak for yourself and not for the group.
- Avoid monopolizing conversations.
- Communicate with “I” statements, not “You” statements.
- No sidebar conversations.
- Stay open and listen with an ear to being influenced.
- Be cognizant of and avoid communication triangulation.
- Recognize that conflict situations hold the potential creative opportunities.
- Speak to issues, not to people.

### Effective and efficient meetings

- Attend meetings and arrive on time.
- Notify staff and/or chair of unavoidable absences.
- Read agenda packet and materials before meeting; be prepared and informed.
- Be present and fully participate, using phones/email/tweeting only as needed to advance the work at hand.
- Stick to the agenda and self-monitor around not going off track.
- Co-chairs facilitate meetings starting on time, ending on time.
- All members must be recognized by chair and chair will recognize all members wanting to speak to ensure only one person talking at a time and optimize listening.
- Executive Committee sets monthly agenda.
- Agenda emailed by Wednesday prior to the meeting.
- Agenda changes after the initial agenda approval will be the chair prerogative.
- Hold each other accountable.
- Take minutes at all meetings.

## Attachment #4a

Council Member Tuthill has shared three possible amendments to the Urban Agriculture Text Amendments that will be up for a vote on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Council Member Gordon has prepared substitute motions for each of these amendments.

**Tuthill amendment 1:** Limit Hoop Houses to six feet, everywhere in the city.

Problems with this approach:

- Growers have been very clear that six foot tall hoop houses will not meet their needs, making this effectively a ban on hoop houses in the city.
- Given our cold climate, this would dramatically limit the availability of local foods.
- All other accessory structures can be 12' tall.

**Gordon Substitute 1:** Allow hoop houses up to 6½' tall in backyards, 10' tall in market and community gardens, and 12' tall in urban farms.

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**Tuthill amendment 2:** Reduce sale days at market gardens from 25 (the staff recommendation) to two 72-hour periods every year.

Problems with this approach:

- This effectively bans market gardeners from selling produce to their neighbors.
- This rule is based on the current standards for yard sales, but yard sales and farm stands are not the same and should not be treated as if they are.
- This would make it impossible to address food access issues in underserved communities through market gardens.

**Gordon Substitute 2:** Reduce sale days from 25 to 15.

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**Tuthill amendment 3:** Establish material standards for raised beds in front yards.

This makes sense, but there are some specific concerns:

- The proposed standards would not allow some good materials, such as metal and ceramic tile.
- The proposed standards would allow some problematic materials, such as tires and plumbing fixtures (a particular concern to CM Tuthill).
- The language regarding wood indicates that green treated lumber should be used.

**Gordon substitute 3:** allow metal and ceramic tile, disallow tires and plumbing fixtures, and rather than requiring wood to be “rot resistant,” require it to be structurally sound and free of rot.

Zoning & Planning Committee, Item #\_\_\_  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment  
Motion by Tuthill

Tuthill moves to amend the ordinance by adding language to Section 537.110 for hoop houses after (5) The use shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Minnesota State Fire Code and Minneapolis Fire Department and obtain any required permits, to read as follows: **(6) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 537.50, the maximum height of a hoop house or other structure used solely to extend the growing season for food or ornamental crops shall not exceed six (6) feet.**

Zoning & Planning Committee Item #\_\_\_  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment  
Motion to Substitute  
By Gordon

Gordon moves to amend the ordinance by adding language to Section 537.110 for hoop houses after (5) The use shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Minnesota State Fire Code and Minneapolis Fire Department and obtain any required permits, to read as follows: **(6) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 537.50, the maximum height of a hoop house or other structure used solely to extend the growing season for food or ornamental crops shall not exceed six and one half (6½) feet accessory to a residential use, ten (10) feet accessory to a market garden or community garden, and twelve (12) feet accessory to an urban farm.**

Zoning & Planning Committee, Item #\_\_\_  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment  
Motion by Tuthill

Tuthill moves to amend the ordinance by striking the language in Section 535.360 (8): ~~Farmstands may be allowed as a temporary use provided that such temporary farmstand shall only sell products grown onsite and shall not exceed a duration of twenty-five (25) days in one (1) calendar year. Such sales shall not occur more than one (1) day per week and shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.~~

and inserting in lieu thereof: **Farmstands may be allowed as a temporary use provided that such temporary farmstand shall only sell products grown onsite. Only two (2) such sales shall be allowed in one (1) calendar year. Such sales may be conducted for a period of time not to exceed seventy-two (72) consecutive hours and shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.**

Zoning & Planning Committee, Item #\_\_\_  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment  
Motion to Substitute  
by Gordon

Gordon moves to amend the ordinance by striking the language in Section 535.360 (8): ~~Farmstands may be allowed as a temporary use provided that such temporary farmstand shall only sell products grown onsite and shall not exceed a duration of twenty five (25) days in one (1) calendar year. Such sales shall not occur more than one (1) day per week and shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.~~

and inserting in lieu thereof: **Farmstands may be allowed as a temporary use provided that such temporary farmstand shall only sell products grown onsite and shall not exceed a duration of fifteen (15) days in one (1) calendar year. Such sales shall not occur more than one (1) day per week and shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.**

**Zoning & Planning Committee, Item #\_\_**  
**Urban Agriculture Text Amendment**  
**Motion by Tuthill**

Tuthill moves to amend the ordinance by striking the following language in Table 535-1:

**Table 535-1 Permitted Obstructions in Required Yards**

<i>Type of Obstruction</i>	<i>Front or Corner Side Yard</i>	<i>Interior Side Yard</i>	<i>Rear Yard</i>
<del>Raised planting beds, not exceeding three (3) feet in height. In a front or corner side yard raised planting beds shall not be closer than five (5) feet to a front or corner side property line. Raised planting beds shall be constructed of durable materials and shall be compatible with the principal structure and adjacent residential properties.</del>	<del>P</del>		<del>P</del>

and inserting in lieu thereof:

<i>Type of Obstruction</i>	<i>Front or Corner Side Yard</i>	<i>Interior Side Yard</i>	<i>Rear Yard</i>
<u>Raised planting beds, not exceeding three (3) feet in height. In a front or corner side yard raised planting beds shall not be closer than five (5) feet to a front or corner side property line. Raised planting beds shall be constructed of wood, brick, masonry, landscape timbers or synthetic lumber and shall be compatible with the principal structure and adjacent residential properties. Raised planting beds constructed of wood shall be resistant to decay. In addition, prefabricated raised planting beds shall be permitted. Raised planting beds shall not be constructed of wire, chicken wire, rope, cable, railroad ties, utility poles or any other similar materials.</u>	<u>P</u>		<u>P</u>

**Zoning & Planning Committee, Item # \_\_\_**  
**Urban Agriculture Text Amendment**  
**Motion to Substitute**  
**by Gordon**

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## Ward 2 Blog Analysis on Urban Agriculture Text Amendments in Zoning and Planning

Tuesday, March 06, 2012

At the end of a record-breaking Zoning and Planning committee meeting (five and a half hours long!) the committee continued the Urban Agriculture zoning code text amendments until its next meeting on March 22nd. Before tabling it, the committee received some possible amendments that will be voted on on the 22nd. You can find them [here](#) under item 6.

I'm going to briefly describe the four amendments and one motion below, and then offer some reaction and analysis of each. The first three are from Council Member Tuthill:

**1) Limit Hoop Houses to six feet, everywhere in the city.** (Hoop houses are temporary season extension structures that are often constructed in half-cylinder shapes from metal braces and covered in transparent plastic sheeting.)

**Analysis:** this is a bad idea, for many reasons. Growers have been very clear that six foot tall hoop houses will not meet their needs, making this effectively a ban on hoop houses in the city. As such, this amendment would significantly damage our chances of having any meaningful season extension - and given our cold climate, that's a real blow to the whole idea of local foods.

It's interesting to note that **all other** accessory structures (sheds, pergolas, etc) in Minneapolis can be up to 12 feet tall. In fact, someone could construct a 12' tall hoop house in their backyard today. These are available, as well: there are hoop house kits for sale in local stores that are over 6 feet tall.

One of CM Tuthill's key arguments is that we don't allow fences to be over 6' tall, and that we should protect people from seeing hoop houses over their neighbors fences. It's true that we don't allow tall privacy fences in Minneapolis, but because we allow accessory structures to be 12' tall, many residents can see their neighbors' accessory structures today. I have a childrens' play structure in my yard that's over 6' tall. Should we really be protecting my neighbor from its unsightliness?

Lastly, this amendment ignores that there are different uses and different zoning districts in the city. I would be open to a limited height for hoop houses in backyards, perhaps even as low as six and a half feet (the height of the commercially available versions). But market and community gardens - whose whole purpose is to grow food - should be allowed more height, something like 10 feet. And urban farms, which must be in industrial or commercial zones and which would be allowed to have much more intense uses, should be allowed the full 12 feet.

**2) Reduce sale days at market gardens to two 72-hour periods every year.**

**Analysis:** This is also a bad idea. The staff recommendation is 25 days, or about once a week during the growing season.

Many market gardeners will bring most of their produce to sell it elsewhere - farmers markets, restaurants, grocery stores, etc. But some market gardeners will also want to have some limited opportunities to sell directly to their neighbors. This amendment would effectively ban that.

One argument CM Tuthill has made is that this is the current zoning restriction on yard sales (twice per year, 72 hours at a time). This argument doesn't work, though, for a very simple reason: farmstands are not yard sales. Two 72-hour garage sales per year are enough for most residents. We're hearing loud and clear from growers that a similar time wouldn't be sufficient for them. Yard sales have an arguably greater impact on their neighbors, with racks of clothing and tables of other items out on the lawn. Farm stands would be prohibited from taking place in the required front yard, meaning that any customer would have to walk up onto the lot, rather than being able to buy something right on the sidewalk. Additionally, the farm stand is only allowed to sell products grown on site. Holding yard sales and farmstands to the same standard just doesn't make sense.

Lastly, it's important to recognize one of the key motivations of some market gardeners and their supporters. In addition to increasing **production** of local produce, they want to increase **access** to it. Even with the mini markets and the City's work on produce in corner stores, there are still parts of our city with too little access to produce. One way that other cities (like Seattle) have addressed this problem is by allowing market gardeners in those communities to sell directly to their neighbors.

I might be willing to compromise down from 25 to a slightly smaller number of days, but two is just unreasonable.

**3) Establish material standards for raised beds in front yards.** Raised beds would be required to be made of "wood, brick, masonry, landscape timbers or synthetic lumber," and would not be allowed to be made of "wire, chicken wire, rope, cable, railroad ties, utility poles, or any other similar materials." Any wood used would be required to be "resistant to decay."

Analysis: this idea is fine in concept, but I do have some concerns about the specifics. Having standards makes sense, especially if there have been concerns about some residents' choices of materials for their raised beds.

However, some of the specific language might be overly restrictive. I don't see a problem with the list of prohibited materials - ruling out both highly permeable materials and wood treated by toxic chemicals seems smart - but the list of required materials might not be inclusive enough. (Also, if we have a list of prohibitions, why do we need a list of requirements as well?)

I'll give a concrete example. Actually, it's a **metal** example. Russ Henry, a local landscape company owner and member of both the Minneapolis Food Council and Environmental Advisory Committee, has installed some beautiful planters on the Seward Coop's property and boulevard. They're made of what seems to be iron, and have a very interesting rusty red finish. It seems to me that CM Tuthill's list of materials would rule out these lovely planters, and possibly even require them to be removed. I represent Seward, and have received no complaints about those planters. In fact, I've heard from people that they really like them. If we're going to adopt a list of allowable materials, it has to be comprehensive enough to include these sorts of creative solutions that don't cause problems and complaints.

Lastly, I have concerns about using the phrase "resistant to decay" when talking about wood. The only way to make most wood that is in direct contact with soil resistant to decay is to treat it with toxic chemicals. The same impulse that seems to have driven the ban on utility poles and railroad ties should pull us back from enacting this requirement.

Luckily, this is something that the Council has just addressed on a different subject - composting. One of the recommendations from the composters was that the City stop requiring (or even seeming to require) green-treated lumber in the construction of compost bins, due to the concern that it will contaminate the compost. There is an extremely simple solution: rather than requiring that the wood be **resistant to rot**, just require that it **not be rotten**. This gives our staff the same capacity to make someone fix a rotted raised bed, but doesn't indicate that folks should build their beds out of lumber that might cause problems.

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I also put out an **amendment** and a **staff direction**.

The staff direction was for Planning staff to ensure that the Temporary Use Permit application require prospective farmstand operators (selling food from their market garden) to notify their near neighbors, the neighborhood organization, and their Council Member's office. I believe staff would've required much of this anyway, but I wanted to make sure it's clear that folks will hear about these activities before they happen, and that they'll have a chance to have a conversation with market gardeners. My hope is that conversation between neighbors can disarm any friction a farmstand might cause.

The amendment would **establish a maximum size for market gardens**. The staff proposal is for market gardens up to 10,000 square feet of growing area to be permitted uses. This means that they won't have to ask anyone's permission or apply for anything, just go ahead and grow. Above 10,000 square feet, staff are recommending that market gardens require a Conditional Use Permit (or CUP). This is a process that costs over \$500 and requires a public hearing, and gives the City the chance to place conditions on an activity.

I'd heard that some of my concerns about the maximum size of market gardens. One suggestions was to limit them to 10,000 square feet in low-density residential areas. I heard from growers that that would be a major problem for them; some market gardeners are already pursuing leases at lots with more growing space than 10,000 square feet. I also heard from growers that the largest conceivable market garden in the foreseeable future is one acre.

So I have drafted an amendment that would continue to **permit** market gardens from 0-10,000 square feet, require a CUP for gardens between 10,000 and 43,000 square feet, and cap the maximum size at 43,000 square feet.

Again, all of these will be discussed in greater detail at the Zoning and Planning committee meeting on March 22nd. It is also possible that more amendments could be brought forward then. Assuming that the item is moved forward by the committee, it could also be amended at the subsequent Council meeting on March 30th.

*posted by Cam Gordon @ 3:12 PM* 

**HOMEGROWN MINNEAPOLIS  
Food Council**

March 19, 2012

To the City Council,

This letter is written on behalf of the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council in support of the Urban Agriculture Zoning Text Amendments as originally proposed by the City staff and passed unanimously by the Planning Commission. We respectfully oppose Council Member Tuthill's amendments limiting the height of hoop houses to six feet and prohibiting more than two days per year of direct sales from market gardens. These amendments go against the spirit of the Urban Agriculture Policy Plan adopted by the City Council last year and would dramatically limit small entrepreneurial growers' ability to grow more food for themselves and impair their ability to earn income from selling the food they grow, as well.

Hoop houses are necessary in our northern climate to extend the season for growing food through the cooler months. Because of their circular structure, a six-foot height requirement would greatly limit the width and overall size of a hoop-house, making such a structure impossible to work in. Urban farmers, community gardeners, and backyard growers alike need the recommended height in order to grow a reasonable amount of produce to help meet the increasing demand for fresh, local produce in the winter and early spring months. Cities nationwide are embracing hoop houses as an important and increasingly popular component of urban food production.

Market gardeners will sell primarily at farmers markets or to restaurants. Some, however, may also need to have a limited number of days -- once a week through the growing season -- to sell directly to their neighbors. This is a wonderful way to address food access issues in underserved areas, a top priority for Homegrown Minneapolis. The City of Minneapolis couldn't ask for a more direct way to build the local food system and provide healthy produce, especially to insecure neighborhoods while strengthening residents' involvement and engagement with their community. Experience has shown that in Milwaukee, Kansas City, and New York City, allowing for market gardening, especially in underserved areas, increases neighborhood involvement, connects communities in shared activities, improves public health, provides income, and decreases the number of violent crimes.

We ask that the text amendments, as originally proposed by the staff and passed by the Planning Commission, be approved without further ado.

Sincerely,

Beth Dooley and Mustafa Sundiata  
Co-Chairs, Minneapolis Food Council



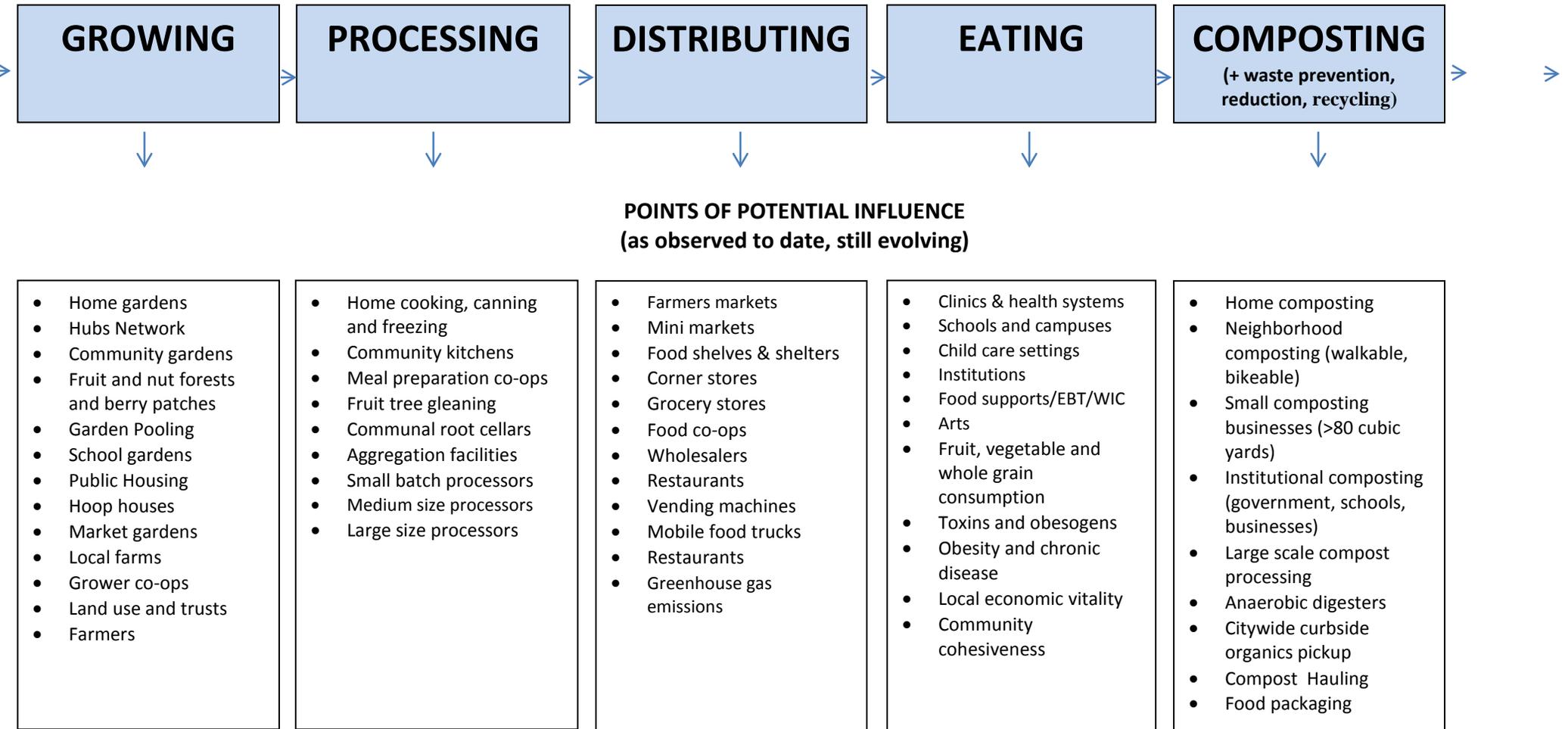
**MISSION** Homegrown Minneapolis is a citywide initiative expanding our ability to grow, process, distribute, eat and compost more **healthy, sustainable, local** food.

- VALUES**
- Health-Promoting**
- Recognize the role of the food system in contributing to collective health and well-being
  - Work on public health improvements to systematically increase nutrition and reduce levels of obesity and other chronic diseases
- Sustainable**
- Work to meet current food needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs
  - Conserve, protect, and regenerate natural resources, landscapes and biodiversity
- Local**
- Recognize that food and agriculture are central to our local and regional economy
  - Work to support small farms and expand the local food sector business and job creation opportunities
  - Promote the restoration, growth, and equitable distribution of capital
- Resilient**
- Thrive in the face of challenges by developing new and better food system solutions
- Inclusive And Equitable**
- Recognize the food system belongs to the entire community
  - Work to ensure all Minneapolis residents are able to meet their nutritional needs
- Fair**
- Support fair wages and healthy working conditions across the food system (If it doesn't work for farmers, it doesn't work.)
  - Provide economic opportunities across the city and at levels that serve a diverse range of food system stakeholders
- Transparent**
- Provide opportunities for farmers, workers and consumers to gain the knowledge necessary to understand how food is produced, transformed, distributed, marketed, consumed and disposed
  - Empower farmers, workers and residents to actively participate in decision-making in all sectors of the system

**TARGETS**

- Increase food producing gardens in the city by one acre by 2014, using 2011 as a baseline.
- All residents live within a ¼ mile of a healthy food choice (defined as a full service grocery store, enhanced corner store (exceeding city ordinance requirements for fruits and vegetables), farmers market or community garden).

## Minneapolis Community Based Food System



## **Emerging Themes**

*(gleaned from strategies on following pages)*

- A. Assure ALL residents have access to affordable, healthy, sustainable, local food.**
- B. Grow the growers and growing spaces, especially in lower resourced areas. Grow the composters and the composting spaces. OR maybe...Grow the growers, processors, distributors, eaters, and composters and the spaces they need to have a community based food system.**
- C. Incubate new healthy, sustainable, local food concepts and projects and support emerging entrepreneurs and businesses.**
- D. Measure and expand healthy, sustainable, local food sales in the city.**
- E. Identify and remove barriers to a strong healthy, sustainable, local food system.**

## DRAFT GROWING Strategies

1. *Expand the Local Food Resource Hubs Network citywide to increase neighborhood level support, capacity and promotion of home and community gardening, and local foods. \*(45)*
2. *\*\*Increase community gardens in the city by one acre by 2014. \*(3)*
3. All residents located within a half mile of a community garden.
4. *Continue working with new gardens to assure water access. \*(11)*
5. *Pilot a garden pooling project(s) and measure impacts.*
6. Expand fruit trees, nut trees and berry patches; consider development of a fruit forest(s); develop related harvest festivals.
7. *Support schools to expand their ability to grow their own food on-site where possible.*
8. Support development and use of gardens in school curriculum and after-school programs and identify how school and community partnerships could enhance success of projects. \*(52)
9. Expand healthy, sustainable, local food growing at public housing sites.
10. Incorporate edible landscaping, where appropriate, as a strategy when redeveloping our streetscapes per the “Complete Streets” model revealed in the Downtown 2025 Plan.
11. Develop high quality green space requirements for all redevelopment and new construction projects, including the incorporation of edible perennials in the public realm.
12. Develop under-utilized land along the Greenway (and other connected paths in the city) to serve as local food green ribbons and food forests.
13. Promote local food by working to incorporate food related projects (urban fruit forest) into the new stadium’s development plans.
14. Monitor impacts of the new hoop house, market garden and Urban Agriculture Policy Plan changes and adjust as necessary to optimize support of food growing and enterprise and community support. Document lessons, successes and challenges following 2012 season. \*(26)
15. Explore development of a certification process and related training program for urban food growers and processors.
16. Consider new models that can help all growers connect to markets (wholesale, direct etc.).

17. Consider new training models around farm skills, scaling up and business planning specific to Hmong growers, who provide a high percentage of farm product at farmers markets, but often fall through the cracks of current programs offered.
18. Consider new models for supporting other non-white and non-traditional farmers to better connect these growers to markets.
19. Support Northside Fresh in establishing a growers' co-op table at a market(s).
20. Support Northside Fresh efforts to have 4 new North Minneapolis growers selling as vendors at Northside markets.
21. Offer local tax breaks for land in agricultural use in the city.\*(41)
22. Review, monitor and revise, when necessary, City ordinances, regulations, sustainability targets and policies in order to provide a hospitable environment for healthy, sustainable and local foods operations. Continue to document improvements made and develop improved targets and strategies as more is learned.\*(3) (13)
23. Work with the City's Neighborhood and Community Relations Department to encourage more food growing in the city and connections with Homegrown.
24. Advocate for State, Federal and Met Council policies that support Homegrown's interests; consider a combined Food Council-Citizens Environmental Advisory Commission working group to address influencing the Met Council 2040 Framework. \*(44) (13)
25. Continue to fund a point person to work on all aspects of local foods. \*(30)

\*Related to a phase I recommendation.

\*\*Adopted City sustainability target.

## DRAFT PROCESSING Strategies

26. *Continue food preservation training and activities through the Local Food Resource Hubs Network.*
27. Increase awareness of and the community's connections with community kitchens.\*(8)
28. Explore new community kitchen models by piloting a neighborhood based meal preparation co-op to support pregnant women, families and/or residents in increasing nutrition, saving time, decreasing stress and expanding social connectedness. Explore required training, family food budget savings and food waste reduction possibilities.
29. Research the need, purpose and value of communal root cellars in the city.
30. Develop a team of gleaners to gather unharvested produce from farmers markets community gardens, urban farms, and to be processed. (Duplicative of GM/MN Project efforts – can we better define a City/Food Council role)
31. Consider new models that can help all processors connect to markets.
32. Complete a thorough investigation into processing for produce 2nds (volume available, infrastructure needed, farmer interest, small business/entrepreneur interest in operating processing facilities, market research, etc.).
33. Identify ways the City can influence or reduce food processing contributions to toxin use and greenhouse gas emissions.
34. Develop an urban farmer food aggregation facility in North Minneapolis (infrastructure and support).
35. Engage in the Minnesota Food Code Revision process. [The committee chair is seeking community input; we could recommend a local food subcommittee.]
36. Commission a study on the local foods value chain. Use the results of the study to attract new businesses to fill in the necessary market niches.\*(37)
37. Continue to work with the Departments of Agriculture and Health to review rules and statutes that impact local foods.
38. Develop a business support working group as a convening space for developing new ideas to challenges of emerging and existing businesses.

\*Related to a phase I recommendation.

## DRAFT DISTRIBUTION Strategies

39. Continue to consider a new farmers market coordinating entity for Minneapolis.\*(32)
40. Promote and increase the number of winter farmers markets so processors can sell more goods.
41. Offer healthier, sustainable, local food options at food shelves and shelters.
42. *Expand corner store efforts making fresher, local fruits and vegetables to residents, especially in areas lacking access.*
43. Support Northside Fresh in connecting its produce to at least one Northside corner store, including delivery.
44. Identify and address healthy, sustainable, local food system gaps and work with affected communities to develop economic development strategies to address the need while also prioritizing placement of new sites near public transit; this could include the creation of a food enterprise zone, healthy food financing or other strategies.
45. *Participate in the Food Trust's MN Grocery Access Task Force; analyze data from their January 2012 report to better understand food distribution and gaps in the city.*
46. Complete an analysis that reviews and evaluates benefits and risks of fresh, healthy foods vs. processed foods or foods sourced through large scale distribution.
47. Develop a one page fact sheet on local food distribution systems and large scale distribution system with reference to food safety.
48. Research coordinated distribution systems and the benefits to farmer and buyer.
49. Consider new models that can help all distributors connect to markets.
50. Identify ways the City can influence or reduce food distribution contributions to toxin use and greenhouse gas emissions.
51. Begin the development of a bike delivery co-op, such as exists in other cities, that contracts with distributors and businesses to deliver products locally.
52. Hold a brainstorming session with bike system advocates to explore new models of food (and compost) transfer around the city on bikes.
53. Improve promotion of farmers markets in the city and region.

\*Related to a phase I recommendation.

## DRAFT EATING Strategies

54. *\*\*Have all residents living within ¼ mile of a healthy food source by 2015.*
55. Make healthy, sustainable, local foods more available in communities that historically have not had good access. \*(47)
56. *Pass a City food purchasing policy to increase the healthy, sustainable, local food served at City-controlled facilities. \*(28)*
57. Increase institutional purchasing of healthy, sustainable, local food , especially those serving large numbers of people (public housing, parks, worksites, hospitals, campuses, childcare settings, congregate dining, etc.) \*(54) (38)
58. Collaborate to expand healthy food policies at restaurants including menu labeling, reduced portion sizes, low sodium and fat content, etc.
59. Support schools in expanding their purchase and serving of healthy, sustainable, local food, including expansion of Farm to School efforts.
60. Make Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) available and sustainable at all markets and increase use of EBT at markets by clients.
61. Increase the number of farmers markets accepting EBT for CSA payments.
62. Identify gaps in the farmer-to-consumer supply chain and develop the connections and relationships to address them
63. Conduct an analysis of food expenditures and waste in Minneapolis as a first step toward assessing the efficiency of how we feed ourselves and how we export food dollars.
64. Research how other cities are tracking local food sales. Collaborate with others to develop a system to measure, track and drive local food sales in the city.
65. Encourage public art that promotes Homegrown and builds community, social responsibility, healthy living, and safety, particularly in under-served areas.
66. Pursue arts funding for food system related projects promoting health, sustainability and economic vitality.
67. Conduct a scoping process to generate and articulate the full range of methods that can be used to efficiently employ broad public awareness and support of local foods.
68. Collaborate with Minnesota Grown around synergies to expand consumption of healthy, sustainable, local foods.
69. Organize an annual Minneapolis festival or event to celebrate community and food (with art, music, cultural elements).

70. Identify a strategy to increase food literacy among Minneapolis residents and secure funding for it. This could include some kind of social marketing campaign.
71. Promote the advantages of organic and precautionary principled food growing.
72. All residents are informed through different communication means of their closest healthy, sustainable, local food sources.
73. Collaborate around marketing of fruit, vegetable and whole grains to widen and diversify the consumer base for healthy, sustainable, local foods.
74. Develop strategies to spotlight food businesses decreasing or eliminating greenhouse gas emissions and food waste.
75. Develop or collaborate to develop a communication campaign to increase knowledge of, interest in, and demand for local food. \*(16)
76. Build relationships with rural and regional partners to grow and support the local food system. \*(46)
77. Develop strategies to expand Homegrown's visibility and communications.
78. Consider a Homegrown event, activity or role in the 2012 Year of the Cooperative.
79. Develop and successfully implement a multicultural community engagement plan with clear indicators of success, with targets on increased representation of communities of color on the next Council.
80. Develop ways to engage youths and seniors in Homegrown Minneapolis.

\*Related to a phase I recommendation.

\*\*Adopted City sustainability target.

## DRAFT COMPOSTING Strategies

81. *\*\*Support the City's waste reduction and recycling sustainability target to increase organics collection citywide by 2013.*
82. Complete an analysis of current food system waste in Minneapolis and identify strategies to minimize it.
83. Develop bulk buying programs for purchasing compostable supplies.
84. Continue exploring small and medium scale composting infrastructure possibilities in the City that train residents and keep the nutrients in neighborhoods.  
\*(53)
85. Identify a strategy to increase composting among Minneapolis residents and secure funding for it. This could include some kind of social marketing campaign.
86. Identify city- or privately-owned industrial parcels that could house small to medium scale composting operations.
87. Complete an analysis of anaerobic digester feasibility, implications, challenges and options for the city.
88. Amend the City's Zoning Code to allow composting businesses and anaerobic digesters in low-density industrial zones.
89. Identify top volume food packaging waste producers and work with the source point(s) of at least one product to eliminate the waste or provide incentives for waste reduction changes.
90. Develop strategies to prevent, reduce, reuse, recycle food packaging and support producer responsibility efforts.
91. Analyze the impacts waste-to-energy burning is having on the availability and price of wood chips in the city.
92. Create a business license for small composting businesses smaller than 80 cubic yards.
93. Evaluate impacts of changes to the City's composting ordinance following 2012 season (lessons, successes, challenges).
94. Identify policies and incentives to encourage and/or require integration of spaces for composting in new developments.
95. Work to loosen the permitting needed to haul 'source separated organics' that will be turned into compost.

\*Related to a phase I recommendation.

\*\*Adopted City sustainability target.

**Zoning & Planning Committee, Item #7  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment – Hoop House  
Motion by Tuthill**

Tuthill moves to amend the ordinance by adding language to Section 537.110 for hoop houses after (5) The use shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Minnesota State Fire Code and Minneapolis Fire Department and obtain any required permits, to read as follows: **(6) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 537.50, the maximum height of a hoop house or other structure used solely to extend the growing season for food or ornamental crops shall not exceed six (6) feet.**

**Zoning & Planning Committee Item #7  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment – Hoop House  
Motion to Substitute  
By Gordon**

Gordon moves to amend the ordinance by adding language to Section 537.110 for hoop houses after (5) The use shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Minnesota State Fire Code and Minneapolis Fire Department and obtain any required permits, to read as follows: **(6) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 537.50, the maximum height of a hoop house or other structure used solely to extend the growing season for food or ornamental crops shall not exceed six and one half (6½) feet accessory to single and two-family dwellings and multiple-family dwellings having three (3) or four (4) dwelling units and twelve (12) feet accessory to all other uses. The use shall not exceed the maximum height for any accessory structure as specified in section 537.50.**

**Zoning & Planning Committee, Item #7  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment – Farmstands  
Motion by Tuthill**

Tuthill moves to amend the ordinance by striking the language in Section 535.360 (8):  
~~Farmstands may be allowed as a temporary use provided that such temporary farmstand shall only sell products grown onsite and shall not exceed a duration of twenty five (25) days in one (1) calendar year. Such sales shall not occur more than one (1) day per week and shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.~~

and inserting in lieu thereof: **Farmstands may be allowed as a temporary use provided that such temporary farmstand shall only sell products grown onsite. Only two (2) such sales shall be allowed in one (1) calendar year. Such sales may be conducted for a period of time not to exceed seventy-two (72) consecutive hours and shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.**

**Zoning & Planning Committee, Item #7  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment – Farmstands  
Motion to Substitute  
by Gordon**

Gordon moves to amend the ordinance by striking the language in Section 535.360 (8):  
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and inserting in lieu thereof: **Farmstands may be allowed as a temporary use provided that such temporary farmstand shall only sell products grown onsite and shall not exceed a duration of fifteen (15) days in one (1) calendar year. Such sales shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.**

**Zoning & Planning Committee, Item #7  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment – Raised Bed Materials  
Motion by Tuthill**

Tuthill moves to amend the ordinance by striking the following language in Table 535-1:

**Table 535-1 Permitted Obstructions in Required Yards**

<i>Type of Obstruction</i>	<i>Front or Corner Side Yard</i>	<i>Interior Side Yard</i>	<i>Rear Yard</i>
<del>Raised planting beds, not exceeding three (3) feet in height. In a front or corner side yard raised planting beds shall not be closer than five (5) feet to a front or corner side property line. Raised planting beds shall be constructed of durable materials and shall be compatible with the principal structure and adjacent residential properties.</del>	<del>P</del>		<del>P</del>

and inserting in lieu thereof:

<i>Type of Obstruction</i>	<i>Front or Corner Side Yard</i>	<i>Interior Side Yard</i>	<i>Rear Yard</i>
<u>Raised planting beds, not exceeding three (3) feet in height. In a front or corner side yard raised planting beds shall not be closer than five (5) feet to a front or corner side property line. Raised planting beds shall be constructed of wood, brick, masonry, landscape timbers or synthetic lumber and shall be compatible with the principal structure and adjacent residential properties. Raised planting beds constructed of wood shall be resistant to decay. In addition, prefabricated raised planting beds shall be permitted. Raised planting beds shall not be constructed of wire, chicken wire, rope, cable, railroad ties, utility poles or any other similar materials.</u>	<u>P</u>		<u>P</u>

**Zoning & Planning Committee, Item #7  
Urban Agriculture Text Amendment – Raised Bed Materials  
Motion to Substitute  
by Gordon**

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DRAFT

March 21, 2012

Dear Members of the Minneapolis City Council,

This letter is written on behalf of the Home Grown Minneapolis Food Council in support of the compromise amendments to the Urban Agriculture Zoning Text Amendments being brought forward by Council Member Gordon.

While the Food Council fully supported the Text Amendments as recommended by Planning staff and passed unanimously by the Planning Commission, we understand that there are concerns regarding the integration of certain urban agriculture practices, like hoop houses and farm stands, into the urban environment. We share all Council Members' desire for urban agriculture to fit in with their neighbors and the surrounding community.

Council Member Gordon's motions are a reasonable, workable middle ground between the staff recommendation and Council Member Tuthill's proposed amendments. The motion on hoop houses would dramatically limit their height in the back yards of 1-4 unit buildings, closest to other residences, while allowing functional hoop houses in institutional, market garden, community garden and urban farm settings. Similarly, the motion on farmstands splits the difference between staff's recommended twenty-five days per year and Council Member Tuthill's proposed two days per year. And the motion on raised bed materials would allow more proper materials while disallowing more improper materials.

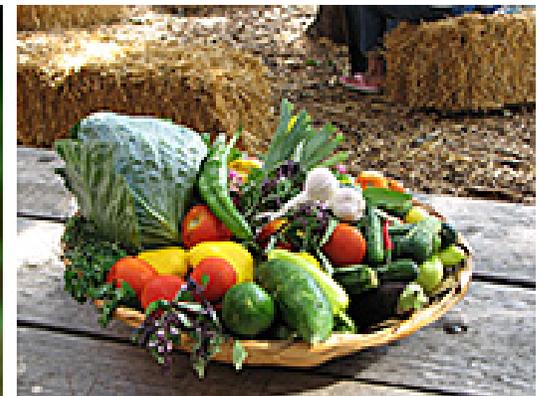
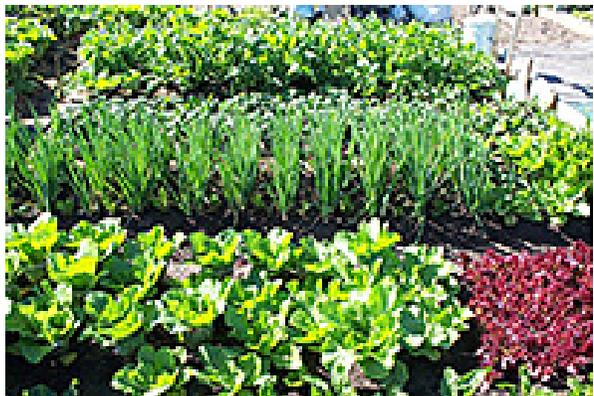
We respectfully encourage Members of the Zoning and Planning committee to support these reasonable compromises on March 22, and other Council Members to adopt the Urban Agriculture Text Amendments in full on March 30.

Sincerely,

Beth Dooley and Mustafa Sundiata  
Co-Chairs, Minneapolis Food Council

# Local Food Resource Hubs Network: 2011 Evaluation Results

Gardening Matters and  
the Minneapolis Department of Health  
and Family Support



# About the Hubs Network

- Goal—support Minneapolis residents to grow and prepare their own fresh produce
  - 2011 Hubs included Northside, Phillips, and Southside
- Partnership between the City of Minneapolis, Gardening Matters, and community partners
- Originated from Homegrown Minneapolis, a comprehensive city and community initiative to create a local, healthy, and sustainable food supply

# About the Evaluation

Goal—Better understand the practices, skills, needs and experiences of Hubs Network members during the 2011 season

How we collected data:

1. Spring and Fall Member Surveys
  - Household Garden members
  - Community Garden members
2. Member Discussions at Fall Gathering
3. Bi-monthly Hub Leader Check-in Phone Calls
4. End of Season Stakeholder Interviews
5. Garden Harvest Estimates

# Who Participated in the Household Garden Surveys?

- Northside, Phillips, and Southside Hub members participated
- 280 members (64%) completed a Spring survey
- 117 members (31%) completed a Fall survey
- About 77% were women
- Average age was 45, age range was 23-81
- About 78% of respondents were White (Figure 1)
- Over half had 5 or more years of gardening experience (Figure 2)

Figure 1. Race/Ethnicity of Spring Survey Respondents

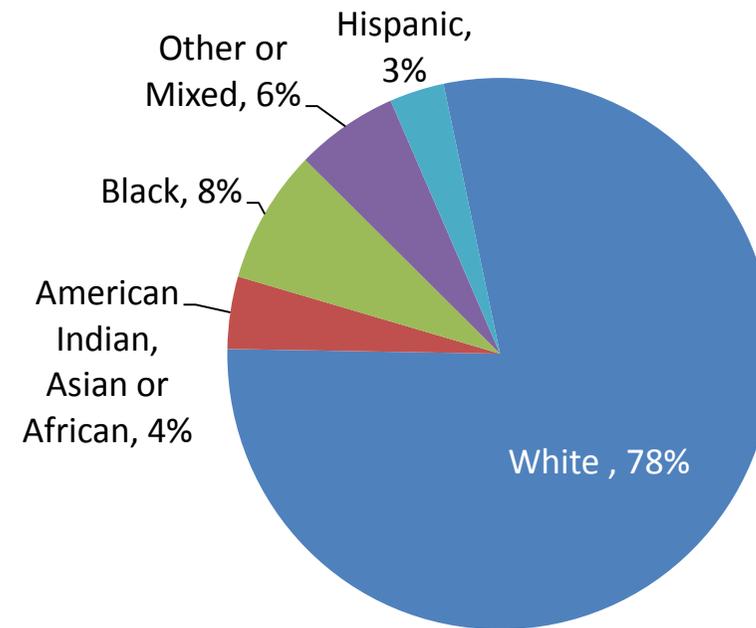
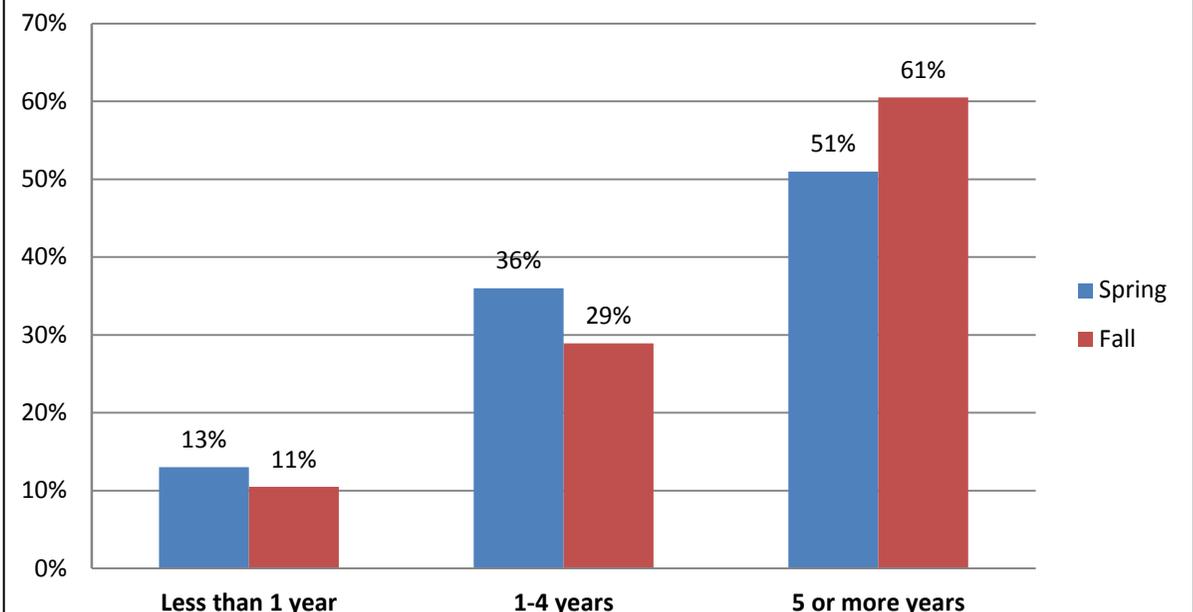
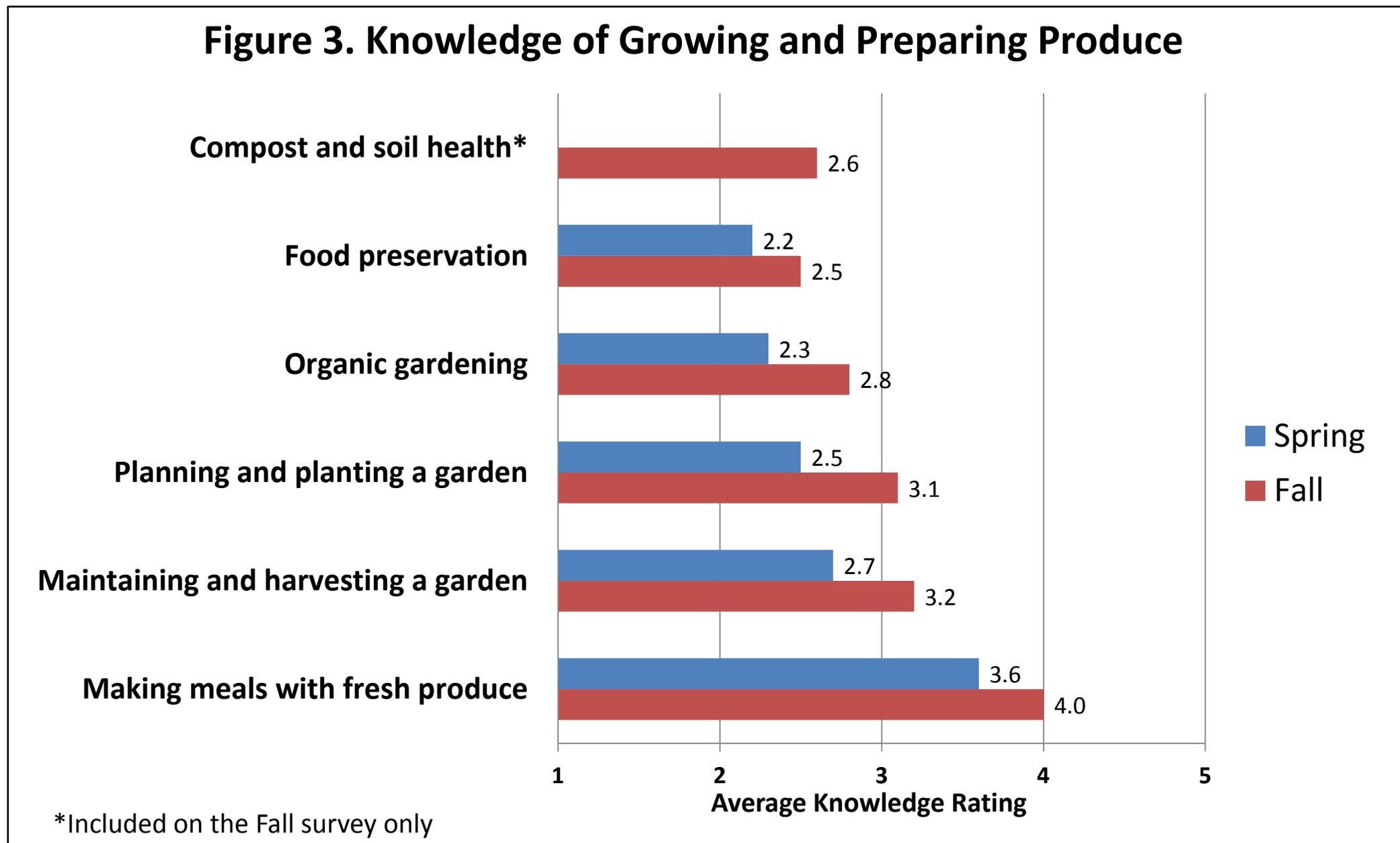


Figure 2. Years of Gardening Experience



# Gardening Knowledge

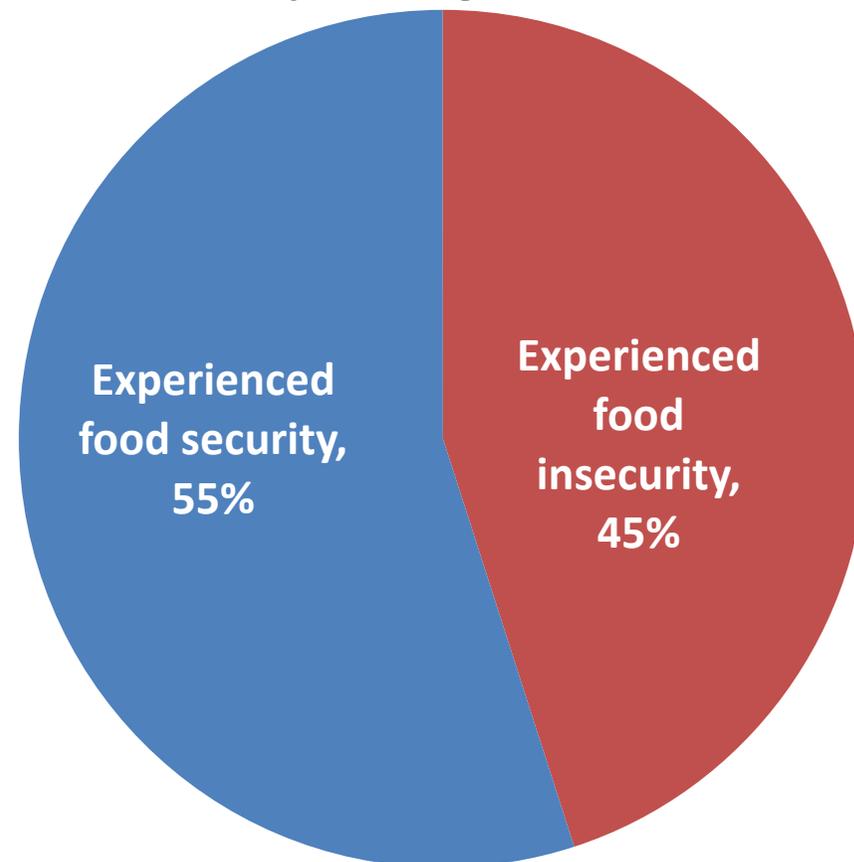
Among Household Garden members, community-level knowledge increased in all five areas listed in Figure 3 below. Participants have the most knowledge about making meals with fresh produce.



# Food Security

In the past year, 45% of household garden members had to cut the size of meals or skip meals because there was not enough money for food. This means they experienced *food insecurity*.

**Figure 4. Food Security Among Household Garden Members**



# Community Connectedness

A Hubs Network goal is to build community connections among members. Survey results demonstrate an overall feeling of member connection to their communities.

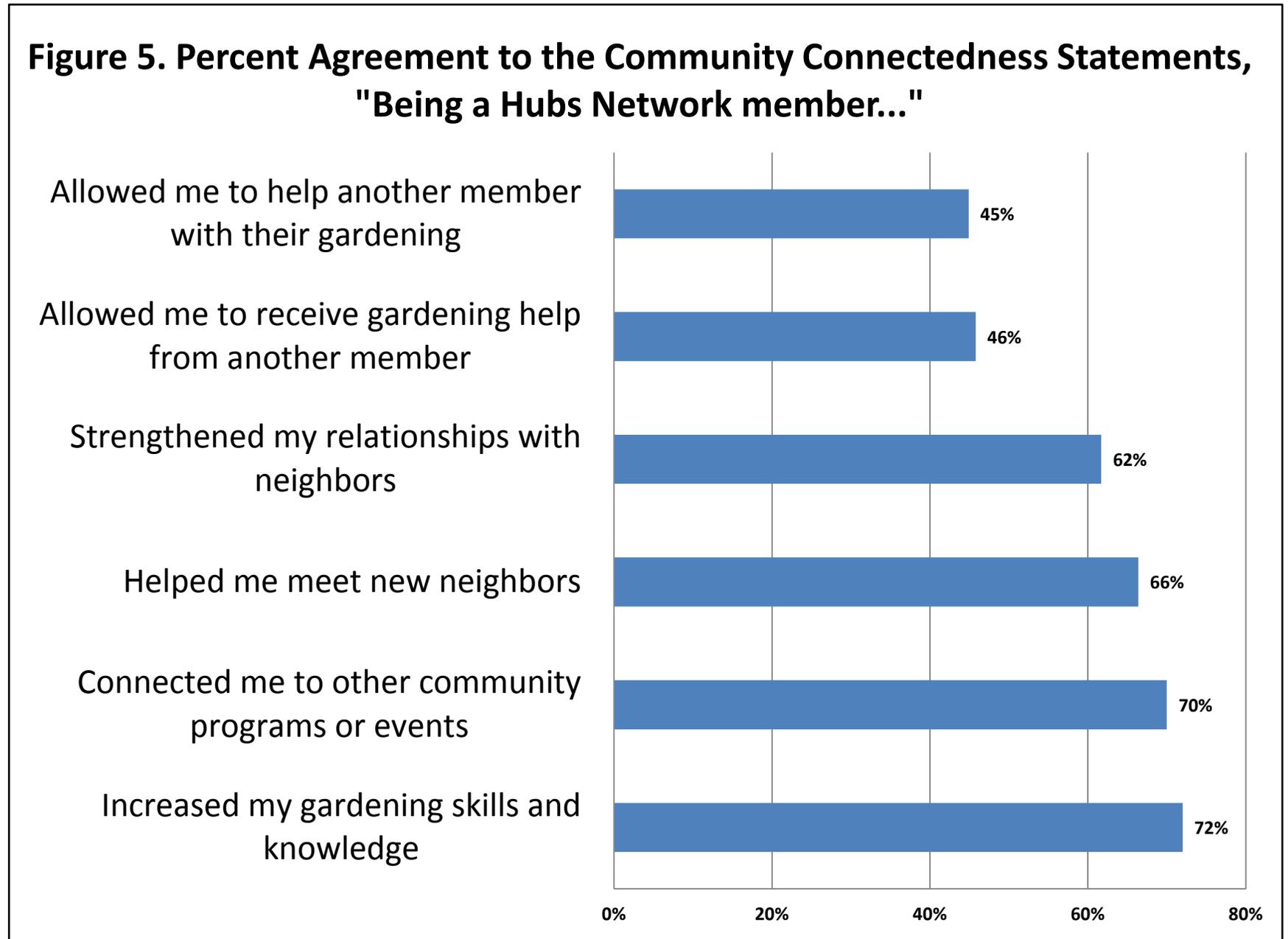


Figure 5. displays the ways that the Hubs Network helped members build their community connections.

# Hubs by the Numbers

- Hub members and leaders volunteered an estimated total of **4,236 hours** in the first year!
- Nine volunteers measured their 2011 garden harvest and grew an estimated **542 pounds** of food
- **7** languages were heard in Community Gardens (English, Spanish, Hmong, Dakota, Russian, Somali, and another African language)



# Member Feedback

- 90% of members plan to join again in 2012
- Based on member feedback and evaluation findings, some key Hubs Network changes for 2012 include:
  - Offering 3 membership package options, sliding scale membership fees, and scholarships
  - Hosting earlier distribution events and improving labeling of seeds and seedlings
  - Offering a mentor program to promote skill sharing
  - Coordinating more social opportunities and Hub events
  - Conducting targeted outreach to increase membership from under-served groups

# Thank you!

- Thank you to all members who participated in the survey and other evaluation activities!
- Your input is greatly appreciated and valued, and improved the program.
- Find detailed evaluation information and results at [www.gardeningmatters.org](http://www.gardeningmatters.org)



## Local Food Resource Hubs Network Helps Residents Grow Fresh Produce

### Local Food Resource Hubs Network (Hubs Network)

The goal of the Hubs Network is to provide its members with the resources and education they need to grow, preserve, cook, and compost their own fresh produce, thus increasing access to healthy foods. In the first year of the project, there were three Hubs located in Northside, Phillips, and Southside areas of the city. The Hubs Network is a partnership between the City of Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support and Homegrown Minneapolis, Gardening Matters and other community partners. It was a recommendation from Homegrown Minneapolis, a comprehensive city and community initiative to create a local, healthy, and sustainable food system.

#### *Did You Know?*

*90% of the Hub members surveyed plan to join the Hubs Network again!*

### Program Activities

The three Hubs (North Minneapolis, Phillips/Ventura Village, and Southside) included 377 individual members and 45 community garden members. The Hubs Network distributed more than 13,000 seed packets and 15,000 seedlings at two resource distribution days. Members attended a variety of classes on how to plant and maintain gardens, how to compost, and how to preserve produce, among other things. They also hosted social events, completed projects such as starting new community gardens and tool lending libraries and founded a Stewardship Council with representatives from each Hub to guide the project.

### Evaluation

We conducted evaluation to better understand the practices, skills, needs and experiences of Hubs Network members during the 2011 season. We collected data from multiple sources:

- Member Surveys of Household and Community Garden members
- Member Discussions at a Fall Event
- Bi-monthly Hub Leader Check-in Phone Calls
- End of Season Stakeholder Interviews
- Garden Harvest Estimates

Members were surveyed in the spring (280 responses, 64% response rate) and fall (117 responses, 31% response rate). Respondents represented all three Hubs, about 77% were women, their average age was 45, about 78% of respondents were White, and over half had 5 or more years of gardening experience

**Hub  
Members  
Share...**

“It made a difference in my health and how I feel about my neighborhood.”

“It was a great way to get started gardening for the first time.”



Minneapolis  
City of Lakes  
Department of Health  
& Family Support



Homegrown Minneapolis



Communities Putting  
Prevention to Work  
Making healthy living easier.

## Key Evaluation Findings

- Overall, members feel connected to their communities. Additionally, Hub members desire more opportunities to engage with each other.
- Among Household Garden members, community-level knowledge increased in five areas: food preservation, making meals with fresh produce, organic gardening, planning and planting a garden and maintaining and harvesting a garden. Members have the most knowledge about making meals with fresh produce.
- Many members experienced food insecurity: in the past year, 45% of household garden members had to cut the size of meals or skip meals because there was not enough money for food.
- Hub members and leaders volunteered an estimated total of 4,236 hours in the first year!
- Nine volunteers piloted a Garden Harvest Estimation Tool, which they used to measure their garden harvest. Together, they grew an estimated 542 pounds of food.
- 7 languages were heard in Community Gardens: English, Spanish, Hmong, Dakota, Russian, Somali, and another African language.

## Program Changes for 2012

Based on member feedback and evaluation findings, some key changes include:

- Offering 3 membership package options, sliding scale membership fees, and scholarships
- Hosting earlier distribution events and improving labeling of seeds and seedlings
- Offering a mentor program to promote skill sharing
- Coordinating more social opportunities and Hub events
- Conducting targeted outreach to increase membership from under-served groups
- Welcoming the Northeast/Southeast Minneapolis Hub and the St. Paul Midway Hub to the Network

## Thank you!

Thank you to all members who participated in the evaluation activities! Your input is greatly valued. For detailed evaluation information and results, please visit:  
[www.gardeningmatters.org](http://www.gardeningmatters.org)

For more information, contact the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support:  
[www.minneapolismn.gov/dhfs](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/dhfs) or 612-673-2301.

Made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.  
Sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Health.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at (612) 673-2162 or email [Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)  
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**Somali** - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac (612) 673-3500



## Implementation Sites and Partners

Gardening Matters

Northside Hub

Phillips/Ventura Village Hub

Southside Hub

Homegrown Minneapolis

City of Minneapolis  
Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS)  
[www.minneapolismn.gov/dhfs](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/dhfs)

*Made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Health.*



Department of Health & Family Support



Homegrown Minneapolis



Communities Putting Prevention to Work  
Making healthy living easier.

# Local Food Resource Hubs Network Boosts Residents' Ability to Grow Fruits and Vegetables

As part of its efforts to support healthy eating, the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS) partnered with Gardening Matters (a local non-profit that supports community gardening) and other community members to facilitate the creation of the Local Food Resource Hubs Network (Hubs Network). This project was part of Communities Putting Prevention to Work, a federally-funded initiative to prevent obesity and chronic diseases.

The Hubs Network was a recommendation originating from Homegrown Minneapolis, a citywide initiative expanding residents' ability to grow, process, distribute, eat, and compost healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods. Modeled after Detroit's cluster system, the goal of the Hubs Network is to provide members with the resources and education needed to grow, preserve, cook, and compost their own fresh produce, thus increasing access to healthy foods and consumption of fruit and vegetables.

The Hubs Network is comprised of geographically-based 'Hubs', which are partnerships of individuals, businesses,



and community organizations, rather than physical locations.

In the 2011 growing season, three Hubs served residents and community gardens in North Minneapolis, Phillips/Ventura Village, and the Southside. Two types of low-cost memberships were available: Household Garden—for a single gardener, or Community Garden—for multiple gardeners. Both types of membership offered benefits such as seeds and seedlings, gardening and canning classes, social events and more.

## Activities

Gardening Matters worked with a group of about 20 stakeholders (including community members and City staff) to develop the concept of a hubs network. They held regular planning meetings and a community conference to engage additional community members in planning and participating in the project.

To formally launch the concept collectively developed, Gardening Matters released an application for community organizations to partner together to become pilot hubs. Three

groups from different parts of the city were selected to become hubs, based on their existing connections to neighborhood organizations and community members, their capacity to coordinate the hub's activities, and their commitment to reach diverse populations within their communities.

Gardening Matters served as the Hubs Network administrator, and staff coordinated meetings, communications, resource distribution events, and the project finances. Volunteer organizers in each hub met regularly to plan hub-specific activities, conduct outreach,

## Activities (continued)

recruit new members, and facilitate events and projects. A taskforce made up of Gardening Matters staff, City staff, community members, and hub members oversaw the ongoing development and implementation of the Hubs Network. From early spring through the fall of 2011, the Hubs Network completed the following activities:

- Enrolled 377 household and 45 community garden members, involving more than 600 people
- Distributed 13,000 seed packets and 15,000 seedlings at two resource distribution events
- Hosted social events for members in each hub
- Held 43 classes to grow and retool residents' knowledge and skills in building healthy soil, planting and maintaining gardens, composting, and preserving food
- Completed hub-specific projects, such as starting new community gardens and tool lending libraries
- Held a network-wide planning meeting
- Founded a Stewardship Council with

representatives from each hub to guide the project

Evaluation of the Hubs Network occurred in several ways:

- *Pre- and post-season surveys* of household and community garden members to assess member demographics, skills, knowledge and behaviors
- *Bi-monthly check-in calls* with hub representatives to document hub activities, successes, challenges, and time spent on the project
- *Facilitated small group discussions at a network-wide meeting* to capture hub members' experiences with the network, member successes, and ideas for improvement
- *Stakeholder interviews* conducted with community leaders, Gardening Matters staff, and City staff to document the process for administering the Hubs Network, successes, and strategies for improvement and sustainability
- *A Garden Harvest Estimation Tool* to estimate pounds of produce grown in member gardens without using a scale (the tool was piloted in the 2011 season)

## Results

Overall, results showed that the Hubs Network had a successful first year, and that there are opportunities to improve and grow the network in the future. Results are summarized below by evaluation tool.

### Member surveys

Household garden members completed pre-season surveys at the first resource distribution day (280 completed surveys, 64% response rate). They completed post-season surveys in person at a fall network-wide meeting, online, or through the mail (117 completed surveys, 31% response rate). Leaders representing community garden members also completed surveys in the spring (32 surveys completed, 77% response rate) and fall (20 surveys completed, 44% response rate). *(Note that comparisons between pre- and post-season survey data should be interpreted cautiously because the survey samples were not random, and the findings may represent differences in the samples, not differences in the membership overall.)*

Spring survey data (similar to fall survey data) showed that members had the following demographics:

- 77% identified as women
- Ages ranged from 23-81, and mean age was 45
- 78% identified as White, 8% as Black or African American, 3% as Hispanic, and 10% as other or mixed-race
- 51% had 5 or more years of gardening experience, 36% had 1-4 years of experience, and 13% had less than a year of experience

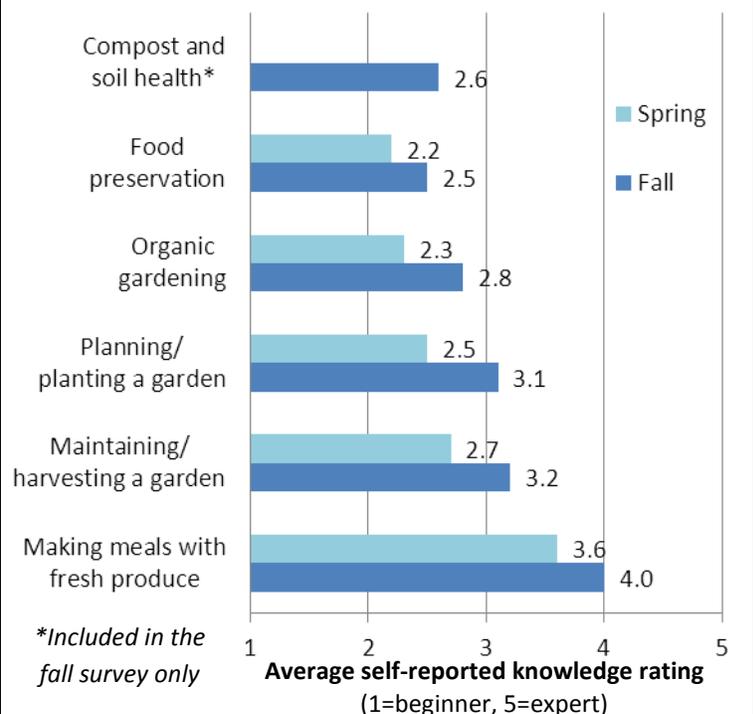
Other findings of interest included:

- 45% of household garden members had to cut or skip meals in the past year because there was not

enough money for food

- Household members reported increases in gardening & food preparation knowledge (Figure 1)
- Household members overall felt connected to their communities and that membership helped strengthen their community connections (Figure 2, next page)

Figure 1: Knowledge of Growing and Preparing Produce



## Results (continued)

- 90% of household respondents plan to join the Hubs Network again in 2012
- Members were asked how many fruits and vegetables they consumed yesterday. In the spring survey, 47% of household garden members reported eating at least three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit a day, compared to 37% in the fall survey. Note that the difference from spring to fall may be due to the fact that the spring and fall surveys were administered on different days of the week, or that the non-random survey samples differed from each other in some way.
- Community garden leaders reported an average of 20 members in their gardens
- Community garden leaders reported hearing 7 different languages spoken at their gardens (English, Spanish, Hmong, Dakota, Russian, Somali, and another African language), indicating that community garden members might represent more diversity than household garden members

### Bi-monthly check-in calls with Hub leaders

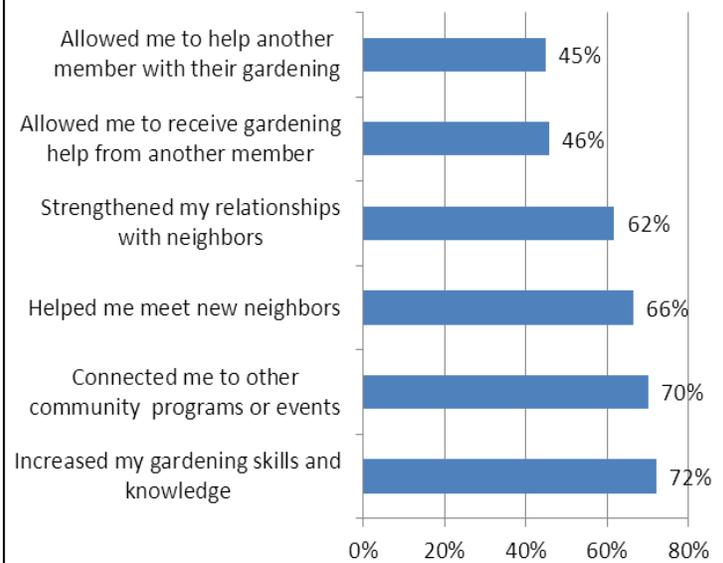
Hub representatives reported many accomplishments in the first season. Much of the initial work focused on recruiting new members and preparing for distribution days. Hub leaders and members volunteered an estimated total of 4,236 hours to Hubs Network activities. Member and leadership participation varied greatly by hub and participation from leadership and members decreased after the resource distribution days. Hub leaders were proud of their accomplishments, but also encountered many challenges along the way, especially in finding ways to engage members after they had received their seeds and seedlings.

### Facilitated small group discussions

At the network-wide event in October 2011, Hubs Network members shared the following opinions and ideas:

- Members were grateful for the wide variety of seeds and seedlings available to them through the program for such a low cost
- Members wanted to see more diversity in the program and suggested that churches and neighborhood organizations would be great partners in this effort
- Members expressed a strong desire for more opportunities to gather with other hub members and to

**Figure 2: Percent Agreement to the Community Connectedness Statements, "Being a Hubs Network member..."**



share expertise and resources with each other

- Members wanted to be more involved in leadership and volunteer opportunities

### Stakeholder interviews

Key findings from the stakeholder interviews included:

- Successes, such as starting a program from scratch, getting resources to people, and having strong community involvement and self-organizing
- Challenges, such as managing a large workload, facilitating difficult partnerships, increasing member engagement, increasing the diversity of the membership, and achieving long term sustainability
- Ideas for growing and improving the network, such as creating better defined volunteer opportunities, partnering with community organizations to increase member diversity

### Garden Harvest Estimation Tool

Nine volunteer gardeners piloted a tool to track their harvests from July through October. Based on their reports, they grew an estimated 542 pounds of produce.

## Key lessons learned

Key lessons from the 2011 Hubs Network season are summarized below:

- The demand for the Hubs Network was high; all 600 membership slots were filled
- Member satisfaction with the Hubs Network was high; 90% of members planned to join again in 2012
- The Hubs Network appears to be reaching people with limited access to healthy food, the intended audience through the CPPW grant. Almost half of the household

members had experienced at least some food insecurity in the previous year.

- It is unclear how membership in the Hubs Network impacted actual fruit and vegetable consumption; the evaluation will continue to explore this in the second year of implementation.
- Organizing the Hubs Network required considerable time from volunteers, City staff, and Gardening Matters staff. Volunteer leaders were essential to the functioning of the program, and they helped maintain a grassroots approach.
- Many members were not tapped as resources in the first year. However, members were interested

## Key lessons learned

in finding ways to volunteer and contribute their knowledge and expertise in the future. The Hubs Network can increase and better define opportunities for volunteering, and it can facilitate opportunities for members to connect with each other and share skills and resources.

- The racial/ethnic, language, and gender diversity of the program did not match the diversity of the city, at least among the household garden members. The Hubs Network plans to increase this diversity through targeted outreach and partnerships with community organizations and leaders.
- Most gardeners had five or more years of gardening experience. Experienced gardeners are important resources with high levels of knowledge and skills, and they are vital to the program. However, the network would like to see an increase in the number of new and inexperienced gardeners, who can benefit greatly from participation.

## Sustainability and future plans

CPPW funded the start-up costs required to develop a sustainable program. Future costs will be covered through revenue raised from member fees, donations, fundraisers, and other grants. In addition to financial sustainability, the Hubs Network has also developed sustainable leadership for the project through a newly elected Stewardship Council. The council consists of hub leaders, Gardening Matters staff and City of Minneapolis staff. The Stewardship Council will guide the design and implementation of the program in the second year.

Many of the recommendations from the first year are already being implemented, such as changes to membership package options, sliding scale member

fees, and the development of a mentoring program. The Hubs Network is also expanding by adding a hub in Northeast/Southeast Minneapolis and a hub in St. Paul Midway for the 2012 season.

Going forward, the Hubs Network will focus on increasing the diversity of its membership. A grant from MDHFS (provided by the Minnesota Department of Health's Statewide Health Improvement Program) will allow Gardening Matters to train individuals and/or organizations to conduct outreach to members of diverse cultural communities, provide support for gardening and urban agriculture projects, and hold culturally tailored classes and events. The Stewardship Council will continue to use the evaluation results to refine the Hubs Network and to further evaluate the program by adapting the evaluation strategies used in the 2011 season.

## Resources

### City of Minneapolis

To learn more about MDHFS *Communities Putting Prevention to Work* interventions, visit:

[www.minneapolismn.gov/health/cppw/index.htm](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/cppw/index.htm)

To learn more about *Homegrown Minneapolis* and the *Urban Agriculture Policy Plan* visit:

[www.minneapolismn.gov/health/homegrown/index.htm](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/homegrown/index.htm)

### Gardening Matters

Visit the *Gardening Matters website* for detailed information about the Hubs Network, the individual hubs, and to find resources for gardeners:

[www.gardeningmatters.org](http://www.gardeningmatters.org)

### Greening of Detroit

*Detroit's Garden Resource Program* served as a model for the Hubs Network in Minneapolis. More information is available on the Greening of Detroit website:

[www.detroitagriculture.net](http://www.detroitagriculture.net)

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