

Pantry Garden

Licking County Master Gardener Volunteers Learning Center for Gardening



The 36' x 72' Pantry Garden not only demonstrates how to grow weed free vegetables, it also provides fresh food for people in need in our community. The design, construction and maintenance of the pantry garden showcase techniques that discourage weeds and plant diseases, conserve water, improve soil health and reduce erosion. The methods we use include raised row gardening, crop rotation and no-till. The pantry garden and the methods we employ have proven very successful, with more than 2500 pounds of fresh vegetables grown and donated in the first year, and over 3500 pounds of fresh vegetables grown and donated last year.

WHAT GROWS HERE

We grow a wide variety of vegetables and fruits for a healthy diet in the pantry garden. All of the food we grow here, as well as black raspberries in the bramble garden, and greens and tomatoes in other locations in the Learning Garden, are donated to the Licking County Food Pantry Network and distributed to food pantries and soup kitchens all over Licking County.

Our plant list includes green beans, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic, kale, kohlrabi, Swiss chard, onions sweet potatoes, winter squash, round zucchini, yellow crookneck squash, and several types of peppers. Our varieties of peppers include banana peppers, green peppers, red peppers and hot peppers.

HOW WE GROW IT

The growing rows of our garden are not dug up by tilling, which disrupts soil microbes and hastens erosion, but instead they are built up with layers of organic material and topsoil as described in the book "Raised Row Gardening" by local authors, Jim and Mary Competti. The thick layer of wood chips on the walkways between the growing rows keeps weeds at bay. The garden is divided into four plots or "zones", and the vegetables are rotated from plot to plot on a yearly basis, to stave off diseases and keep our food healthier. The cattle fencing lining some of the rows offers a sturdy support for climbing vegetables. Deer fence outside the garden gives us an advantage in the competition between gardeners, rabbits, deer, and groundhogs.

Resources

Raised row gardening - <https://oldworldgardenfarms.com/raised-row-gardening/>