

# Community Gardens

## *How do we get started?*

There is no one-size-fits-all approach for starting a community garden at your church, but there are many resources out there to help, from local garden clubs to national organizations. Here are some best practices that other churches have shared from their experiences of starting a community garden:

### *Involve* **STAKEHOLDERS**

You want to do work **with** the community, not **to** it! Hold meetings to gauge interest and discover assets. The best time to get the community involved is at the start. This fosters shared responsibility and ownership.

### *Clarify* **YOUR MISSION**

Whether your goal is food security, environmental stewardship or relationship building (or all of the above!) could affect how you structure your garden. Make sure you know what you're trying to accomplish!

### *Recruit* **EXPERTS**

Some churches may have many knowledgeable gardeners in the congregation. If yours doesn't, consider approaching local garden clubs or educational institutions to get the information you need to garden successfully.

### *Plan for* **LEADERSHIP**

You may have a garden that is guided by a community-led committee or by a church team. (Hint: Community-led is best!) Make sure you have a sustainable plan, rather than relying on the passion and presence of one or two people.

## *Then, check out these links:*

- **A Rocha Canada** - Community Gardening Resources
- **Faith & the Common Good** - Community Gardens
- **FoodShare (Toronto)** - Community Gardening 101

Or contact us at **Diaconal Ministries Canada:**  
dmc@crcna.org or 1-800-730-3490

