

Neighborhood Partnerships for Community Research

...a program of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)

Community Garden Social Impact Assessment Toolkit

Prepared in partnership with
Gardening Matters

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2012

NPCR Report # 1349

*This report is available on the CURA website:
<http://www.cura.umn.edu/publications/search>*

Center for Urban and
Regional Affairs (CURA)

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NPCR is coordinated by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota. NPCR is supported by the McKnight Foundation.

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This toolkit would not be possible without the support, input, and interest from community gardeners around Minnesota.

The following individuals shared their time, ideas, and energy with Gardening Matters as we developed the toolkit. Gardening Matters would like to recognize and thank them.

- Stephanie Hankerson, Midway Green Spirit
- Kali Collins, Midway Green Spirit
- Meaza Wuhib, Community Peace Garden
- Connie Stauffer, Waite Park Community Garden
- The coordinators at Partnership Garden
- Virginia Bach, Southside Star
- Jesse Mraz, Soo Line Community Garden
- Kathleen Sullivan, Paradise Community Garden
- Jim Howitt, Soo Line Community Garden
- Larry Storey, Sabathani Community Garden
- Patricia Ohmans, Frogtown Farms
- Emily Lund, Frogtown Farms
- Andrea Eger, Frogtown Farms
- Lydia Nobello, Westside Citizen's Organization
- Deborah Ramos, Zenteotl Project
- Kayla Brinkman Theimer, Skidmore Park Community Garden
- Karen Peterson, Nashuwak Community Garden
- Ann De La Vergne

A special thanks goes out to Jeff Corn and Neeraj Mehta at the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Without their support this toolkit never would have been created.

--Keith Miller

Introduction:

This toolkit is designed to help community gardens assess their social impact. Social impact is defined as the benefits and resources that are created or shared because of relationships with in and around a community garden. Community gardens help build different kinds of relationships:

- Relationships with other gardeners,
- Relationships in a neighborhood or local community, and
- Relationships with local organizations such as faith-based communities, neighborhood associations, food shelves, & local businesses.

Through these relationships community gardens offer different kinds of benefits that contribute to a garden's social impact. Community gardens:

- Beautify neighborhoods,
- Provide opportunities for exercise,
- Increase access to fresh and healthy food,
- Reduce crime,
- Break down barriers,
- Teach people new skills and hobbies, and
- Build and strengthen relationships.

Why use this toolkit?

Community gardens use this tool kick because increasing the social impact of a garden will increase the garden's sustainability. There are additional reasons as well.

Reason 1: Learning from others - Sharing experiences, thoughts, and ideas in an open and safe forum helps gardeners learn from the experiences of others.

Reason 2: Recognizing and celebrating strengths - The reflection exercises bring positive experiences and stories to the surface. Documenting and sharing a garden's accomplishments gives gardeners energy and motivation. Also, knowing the strengths of a garden helps garden leaders make informed decisions.

Reason #3: Opportunities for growth - The reflection process assists garden leaders to identify opportunities for growth. The exercises help identify these areas so that a garden will have a greater impact on its members and greater community.

Reason #4: Demonstrating Value - The reflection exercises help community gardens advocate for themselves. Sometimes gardens need to demonstrate value to

local city councils, government workers, zoning and planning working groups, neighbors, or other organizations. Gardens must first document their impact before they can demonstrate their value.

Reason # 5: Sharing with other gardens - Community gardens can learn lots of useful things from the exercises in this toolkit. The toolkit helps other garden groups understand how to help their community gardens become better at supporting relationships.

Toolkit overview

- **Preparing for the assessment** – This section will help a community garden form a working group to plan the assessment. The toolkit has three different reflection exercises. Each exercise collects different information. A garden can do all or one of the exercises. It depends on the garden’s needs and available resources.
- **Reflection Exercise #1** – This exercise is an organized discussion group. The discussion group is made up of different members from a community garden. The exercise guides the working group through organizing the discussion, asking questions, the roles of the working group, and analyzing the information from the discussion group.
- **Reflection Exercise #2** – This exercise is a survey for community garden members. It assesses how gardeners build relationships within the garden. It also assesses the benefits gardeners receive through those relationships, and how those relationships benefit the garden. In addition, the exercise collects ideas for improving the social impact of a garden.
- **Reflection Exercise #3** – This exercise is a survey for neighbors of a community garden. It helps gardeners reflect on how others perceive the garden. It also identifies how the garden is benefiting the neighborhood. The survey gives neighbors an opportunity to make recommendations for improving the impact of a garden.
- **Exercise #4** – This exercise is intended to help the working group use the information they collected. It has a series of community building and advocacy ideas.

The toolkit is easy to use!
“The toolkit seems like a lot, but it is broken into pieces so we could pull things out easily. The exercises and the toolkit are very accessible.”

Table I on the next page compares reflection exercises one, two, and three.

Table I: Comparing the Reflection Exercises

	Group Discussion	Community Garden Survey	Neighbor/local community survey
Collects stories	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
Collect in depth information	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
Allow for diverse perspectives	Yes	Yes	Yes
Requires meeting skills	Yes	No	No
Requires some computer knowledge	No	Yes	Yes
Collects information from a lot of people	No	Yes	Yes
Requires purchasing some supplies	Yes	Maybe	Yes

Preparing for the Reflection:

Outcome:

- Learn about forming a working group

Why form a working group?

Forming a working will be very useful. First, the exercises in the toolkit require different skill sets. Second, it is important to include several points of view. Including multiple perspectives will help the garden leaders have a more accurate view of the garden. Third, assessments take work. A working group will help share the workload. Fourth, gardeners are more likely to follow through with the assessment if they are doing the work with others.

How to form a working group

Creating a working group doesn't have to be challenging. People generally want to help and be apart of a community effort. Using the right steps to recruit is the key success.

First, be clear about the message. The working group will conduct the assessment, which will help improve the garden. Second, personal invitations work much better than mass emails. Third, give the option of using service hours towards the assessment.

Ideal characteristics of the working group

Every garden is different. No garden could create the "perfect" working group. The working group should represent different groups of people from the community

Think about who the members are in your community garden.

- Are there different ages?
- Are there from different economic groups?
- Are there from different social groups?
- Are there "old-timer" or new gardeners?

garden. It is good to look beyond the garden's normal coordinators or board members for this group. In addition, the assessments require different skill sets.

Include people with different characteristics and skill sets. This will help the working group increase its effectiveness.

Roles of the working group

The working group has two primary roles. Doing the exercises in the toolkit and analyzing the information. Doing the exercises and analyzing the information requires lots of smaller tasks that will be shared by its members including:

- Planning,
- Recruitment,
- Editing,
- Leadership,
- Working with software, and
- Organizing.

Think about the skill sets required for the assessment.

- Are they comfortable talking in front of people?
- Are they skilled with a computer?
- Do they have time to volunteer?
- Do they know many gardeners?

Why form a working group?

“Our working group was made up of four members. Two of the members were good with computers and I was not. The fourth gardener was new to the country and recovering from cancer. She used her service hours on the assessment. It was good to have different perspectives and skills in the working group.”

Forming a working group will help make the workload lighter and easier.

Reflection Exercise #1: Discussion Group:

Outcomes:

- Understand how and what kinds of relationships are formed in the garden.
- Understand the benefits of relationships in the garden.
- Identify what changes a garden wants to make.
- Develop shared understanding.

Time commitment

Prep time:	2-3 hours
Implementation:	1-2 hours
Analyzing data:	1 hour
Total:	4-6 hours

Materials:

- Flip Chart paper
- Markers
- Half sheets of scrap paper
- Masking tape
- Beverages and snacks
- Name tags

Why discussion groups?

Discussion groups are useful tools in assessing a garden's social impact. Discussion groups give the working group real life stories of how a community garden impacts gardeners. Discussion groups also help leaders and group members develop shared understanding.

Why do Exercise #1?

"There were some really good questions about building community. We wanted to learn whether or not people were actually building community."

Preparing for a discussion group:

Discussion groups require some prep work. This is why Gardening Matters recommends forming a working group. The working group can decide which tasks to split or share among the members. The working group will have

several tasks to complete before the discussion group.

- Decide the time, location, and day of the discussion group.
- Recruit participants from the garden.
- Create a discussion group agenda.
- Organize materials.
- Prepare beverages and snacks.

Location and time:

The discussion group should be held inside. The discussion group can place at a local community center or any building that the community garden has access to. Other places the discussion group could meet including faith-based organizations or a home. There are four reasons Gardening Matters recommend that the working group hold the discussion group inside.

1. **Comfortable seating** - Many community gardens don't have comfortable seating. The discussion group will last approximately 1.5-2 hours. Everyone participating should have a comfortable seat.
2. **Weather** - A hot summer or cold rainy day can spoil the group discussion. The last thing a working group want is to prepare for the discussion group and have it be spoiled by weather.
3. **Wall space** - Gardening Matters recommends that working groups have some wall space where the group will use large sheets of paper. The paper will capture the ideas and comments from the gardeners.
4. **Distractions** - If gardeners are at the garden they may be distracted from the conversation and want tend to the garden.

<p><i>Tips for choosing location:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The location should be comfortable with tables and chairs. • Easy to find and access. • Close to the garden.

<p><i>Tips for choosing a time or day:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a weekday evening or weekend morning. • Plan the day and time at least one month in advance.
--

Recruiting participants from the garden.

Recruiting participants for the discussion group is an important task. The gardeners in the discussion should represent the diversity of the garden. Equal representation will ensure different points of view are incorporated.

Tips for recruiting:

- **Use phone calls to recruit participants** - Some gardeners don't have access to the Internet and rely on the telephone for their communication. In

addition, gardeners are generally more willing to participate if they receive a personal invitation.

- **Explain why their participation is important** - Saying something like, “we want to learn from your experiences in the garden,” or, “we value your input,” will help gardeners feel valued and increase their level of participation.
- **Provide an incentive** - The incentive might be the snacks or beverages that the working group will organize. The discussion group can count towards garden workday or service hours for the garden.
- **Recruit different kinds of gardeners** - Recruit long-time gardeners, experts, new gardeners, novices, and different age or social groups. A discussion group should reflect the different types of gardeners in the garden.

Remember, no matter what day or time, there will be gardeners that cannot attend.

Create a discussion group plan

Creating a good plan for the discussion is important. Having a plan will ensure that everyone’s time is respected and used well. The plan will set ground rules for the discussion. In addition, it will guide the facilitator in asking the important questions during the discussion. Below are the steps for creating a discussion plan:

- **Step 1: Choose one or two facilitators** – The facilitator(s) is the person responsible for leading the discussion. This person will help the discussion remain balanced, ask questions, and enforce the ground rules for the group.
- **Step 2: Choose one or two note takers** – One or two persons from the working group should take notes and make observations during the discussion.
- **Step 3: Create an agenda** – Plan the flow of the discussion group. What questions are asked? For a sample agenda see page 17. A word document version of the plan that can be edited can be found at www.gardeningmatters.org
- **Step 4: Finalize the questions** – If the working group wants to change or amend the questions make sure it’s done before the discussion group.

The six questions that Gardening Matters recommends asking are organized to help answer three big questions.

Big Question #1: What kinds of relationships are formed?

1. How are relationships built in the community garden?
2. What kinds of relationships are built among gardeners?

Big Question #2: So, what benefits do they bring?

3. How do gardeners benefit from these relationships?
4. How does the garden benefit from these relationships?
5. How does the neighborhood or local community benefit from the community garden?

Big Question #3: Now, what kinds of changes do you want to make?

6. Now that we know how our garden builds relationships and some of the benefits what changes do we want to make so that more people can experience those benefits?

Prepare the room:

Arrive early and set up the room for the discussion group. This will take 15-20 minutes.

Step 1: Arrange a paper wall - Arrange one of the walls with six or nine sheets of flip-chart paper. Each sheet should be taped to the other sheets. At the end of the discussion group remove the paper wall in its entirety. See page 18 for an example. The paper wall will be where the working group will put the answers to the exercise questions. To create the paper wall use masking tape and large sheets of flip chart paper or butcher paper.

Step 2: Arrange beverages and snacks – Snacks and beverages always help groups feel more comfortable.

Step 3: Post signs if necessary – Some gardens will utilize rooms in large buildings such as schools or large community centers. If the room is hard to find make sure there are signs leading the way.

Step 4: Arrange chairs and tables to face the paper wall – The discussion group will be interactive and require participants to regularly leave their chairs and have discussions around their paper wall. Arrange the chairs and tables to face the paper wall. Leave enough space around the wall for participants to stand and discuss.

Create a welcoming environment – Snacks and beverages can go a long way in making participants feel welcome and valued. A welcoming environment will help participants share openly and freely. In addition, a brief and fun icebreaker before the discussion will create an open atmosphere. For example, have everyone

introduce their names, how many years they have been apart of the community garden, and what their favorite vegetable is.

Establish ground rules – To keep the conversation moving along and focused the facilitator will need to establish some ground rules. Examples of ground rules that work well include:

- Keep answers short and concise,
- Respect everyone’s answers,
- No interrupting,
- Stay on topic, and
- The facilitator may interrupt to keep the discussion going. Please don’t be offended.

Manage the discussion

To help manage the flow of the discussion, take notes, and capture the bulk of the discussion we suggest that the discussion is visible. This is where the paper wall comes into use.

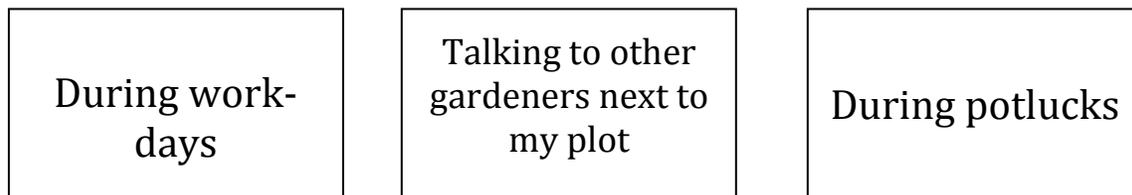
Step #1: Hand out half sheets of paper, masking tape, and markers - Every participant should have 10-20 half sheets of scrap paper, masking tape, and a marker.

Step #2: Write down answers - Every time the facilitator asks a question each participant will place one answer per sheet of paper. For example: Question #1 is, “How do you build relationships in the community garden?”

Possible answers include:

- During work-days,
- Talking to other gardeners next to my plot, or
- During potlucks.

By following this process each of the three responses will be written on separate sheets of paper. See below for an example:



Step #3: Place answers on the wall – When everyone is done writing his or her answers each person should place his or her responses on the paper wall. The questions in this exercise follow a specific flow. It is important to organize the questions according to the flow. Place the answers to question onw on the lowest

part of the paper wall. Place answers to two above them, etc. See the diagram on page 18 for an example.

Step #4: Why – Sometimes it is helpful to ask why an answer is important to each participant. Asking why can help key the facilitator onto new ideas. Sometimes participants get stuck on an idea because they don't feel heard. If participants are able to say why an answer is important they will more willingly move onto the next topic.

Step #5: Organize by common answer – After each participant places the answers on the paper wall direct participants to organize the answers by common answer. This process will cause the participants to have lots of discussion about what their statements mean. The facilitator and note-takers should be pay close attention to these conversations.

Step #6: Label each group – Once the answers are grouped according to common answers direct participants to label each group. Use a half sheet of paper or one of the answers as the label.

Step #7: Summarize each group – Once the answers are labeled have one of the participants summarize what is meant in each group.

Step #8: Repeat the process for each question – Using this process will help the group leaders get lots of information that are organized and coherent.

Step #9: Analyzing the data – After the discussion is done the working group will analyze the information. This includes making decisions about what to do with the information. For a more detailed discussion for acting on this information see page 38 of this toolkit.

At the end of the discussion the working group will have a paper wall of information that tells the working group:

- How relationships are built in the community garden,
- What kinds of relationships are built through the community garden,
- The benefits those relationships bring, and
- Ideas for increasing the social impact of the garden.

The advantage to using the group conversation technique is that the group effort in organizing the information helps the working group analyze the information during the discussion.

Step #10: Storing the information – By now the working group has spent up to 6-10 hours on this project and has collected lots of information. The working group will share the information with the rest of the garden, with other gardens, use it to

demonstrate the garden's value, and use to make changes in the garden. It is important to keep a record of the results in the form of photographs of the paper wall, keeping the paper wall in storage, or entering the wall into a word document. Whatever record of the exercise is made be sure to send a copy to Gardening Matters at toolkit@gardeningsmatters.org

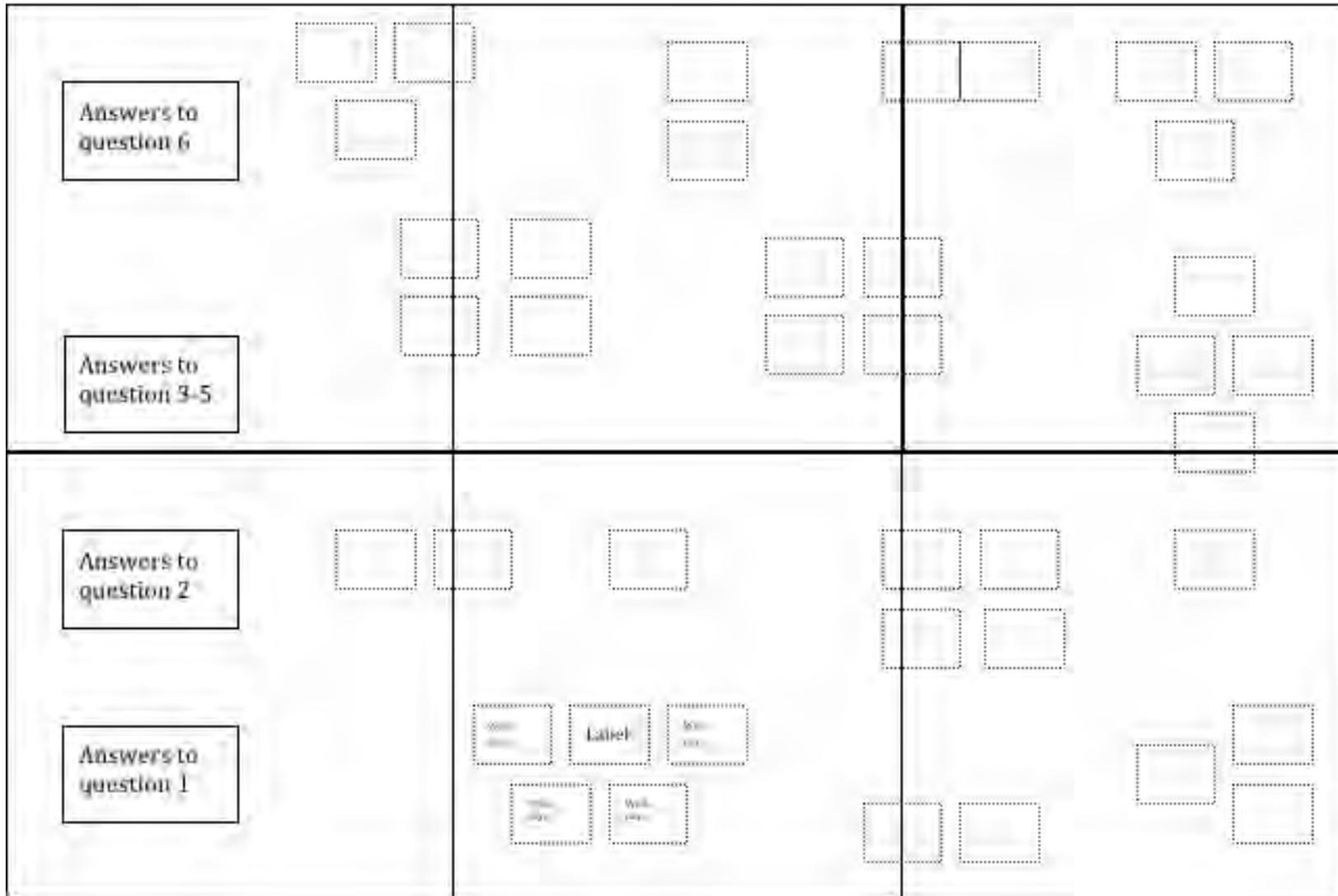
Group think

The disadvantage of the discussion process is that it can result in, "groupthink." Groupthink happens when the desire for harmony or peace in a group doesn't let diverse answers have enough weight in the conversation.

Remember, the working group is not looking for participants to change their answers. Developing shared understanding means everyone learns how the garden has helped in different ways.

Discussion Group Agenda		
Facilitator(s):		
Note taker(s):		
Task/Question	Content or details	Facilitator
Welcome and Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank everyone for coming. • Tell participants where to find the refreshments. • Remind everyone about the purpose of the discussion group. • Group introductions and icebreaker. 	
Set ground rules:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep answers short and concise. • Respect everyone's answers. • No interrupting. • Stay on topic. • The facilitator may interrupt to keep the discussion going. Please don't be offended. 	
Questions		
What kinds of relationships are formed?		
Question #1	How do you build relationships in the community garden?	
Question #2	What kinds of relationships are built among gardeners?	Example
So, what benefits do they bring?		
Question #3	How do gardeners benefit from these relationships?	Example
Question #4	How does the garden benefit from these relationships?	Example
Question #5	How does the neighborhood or other community organizations benefit from the community garden?	Example?
Now, what kinds of changes do you want to make?		
Question #6	Now that we know how our garden builds relationships and some of the benefits what changes do we want to make so that more people can experience those benefits?	

Example: Paper Wall



Reflection Exercise #2: Community Garden Survey

Outcomes of the survey:

- Understand how relationships are formed in a community garden.
- Understand the impact of relationships that are built in a garden.
- Understand what to do in the future to strengthen relationships.

Time commitment:

Prep time:	2 hours
Implementation:	1-5 hours
Analyzing data:	2 hour
Total:	5-9 hours

Materials:

- White paper (maybe)
- Printer (maybe)
- Printer ink (maybe)

Why survey community garden members?

Surveys are useful tools. Surveys can help a working group collect answers to questions about a community garden from lots of individuals. Surveys are also anonymous. Gardeners are more willing to share their true perceptions through a survey than an interview or group discussion.

Information from a survey can also be summarized easily. If the survey is used alongside the discussion group, information from the survey can help support the findings from the discussion group.

Preparing for the survey:

Preparing for a survey requires some work. But, it doesn't have to be difficult. This toolkit has provided a survey for community gardens that a working group can use or adapt for any community garden.

How much a working group changes or adapts the survey will change on how much prep time is put into the survey. If the working doesn't plan to change the survey then it only has a few items to take care of:

- Create a list of all the community gardeners.
- Create a plan to give the survey.

- Create a plan to review the information collected from the survey.

Like the discussion group, planning and using a survey should be a collective effort. Rely on the working group to share the tasks.

Setting up the survey is easy!

“When I finally set down to do prepare the survey it only took a couple of hours. But, I had to find all the emails. If I had an email list it would have taken less than an hour.”

Step #1: Create a list of all the community gardeners - Create a list of all of the potential gardeners that could respond to the survey. To help the survey collect the most accurate information the list should include all of the gardeners.

List of Gardeners		
Name:	Email:	Phone Number
John Doe	Johndoe1@gmail.com	555-555-5555
Jane Doe		555-555-5511

Step #2: Create a plan to give the survey - How a working group gives the survey will depend on five questions.

- Question one:** Do all of the gardeners have access to email?
- Question two:** Does the working group have access to all of the gardeners’ emails?
- Question three:** Can one of the working group members use a website such as Google Forms?

If the working group can answer **YES** to questions one, two, and three then creating a plan to give the survey is straightforward. The survey from pages 24-30 is uploaded into Google Forms and free for the working group to use. Contact toolkit@gardeningmatters.org to access the survey in Google Forms.

To use Google Forms someone in the working group must have a Google account such as Gmail or Google +. The Form will require the working group to make minor additions to the survey including adding the garden’s name. See Appendix II: How to use Google Forms for detailed instructions.

If the answer is **NO** to questions one, two, or three then creating a plan to give the survey will require a little more work. The next question will help the working group create the plan for giving the survey.

Question four: If all gardeners don't have access to email, does the working group have access the gardeners' phone numbers?

If the working group can answer YES to question four then the group can use phone calls to reach gardeners without email. This can be difficult. But, it is possible if the workload is spread across the working group. If the working group answers NO to question four see question five.

If the working group answered NO to question four see question five below.

Tips for giving the survey through the telephone.

- Tell the gardener who you are and why you are calling.
- Remind them how useful the survey is.
- Remind them that the information will remain anonymous.
- Follow a printed copy.
- Make sure they haven't completed a survey already.

Question five: Can the working group get a large number of people to fill out the survey at a community garden meeting, workday event, or when gardeners are tending plots?

If the working group can answer YES to question five then create a plan for giving the survey at the garden.

Tips for giving the survey at the garden

- Explain how the survey is important.
- Have enough surveys printed for all of the gardeners.
- Bring enough pens and pencils
- Ask if they have completed the survey before over email or the phone. Gardeners don't want to fill out a survey twice.

Understanding the results of survey:

Each section asks questions that help the working group understand the heading of each section. For example, Section I is labeled "How relationships are formed in _____ Community Garden." The questions help working groups understand how garden members build relationships in the garden. This is one question of many that enable the working group to understand *whether or not and how* gardeners are building relationships with each other.

Section II is labeled, “What is the impact of your garden relationships?” The questions help working groups understand how relationships with other gardeners impact the respondents. For example, “rate how much you agree with this statement: “I have made a close friend because of _____ community garden?” This question tells the working group one of the *impacts* or *benefits* that the garden has had.

Section III asks garden members to make recommendations to improve the garden’s social impact.

Section IV asks gardeners to share their demographic information. This will allow the working group to know the percentage of people in the garden that are in a certain age group or ethnic group. It will also help the working group assess if the garden “represents” the larger community.

Limits of a Survey:

Surveys have some limits. For instance, this survey measures the perceptions of gardeners. Sometimes perceptions don’t always reflect reality. In addition, surveys sometimes force respondents to choose an answer to a question that they don’t understand or understand differently than the intent of the question. Unlike discussion groups, survey results don’t always translate into shared learning. Finally, Sometimes words and statements mean different things to different people.

Responses
“We had some really good responses and suggestions on how to do things differently to create more community and a stronger bond in our garden.”

Survey Planning Sheet

Method of giving survey (circle one):

- Email,
- Over the phone,
- At the garden, or
- Combination.

Task (complete all that apply):	Responsible working group member(s):	Due date:
Find or create list of all gardeners		
Locate email		
If no email, locate phone numbers		
Determine time(s) and date(s) for giving survey at the garden.		
Set up survey in Google Forms.		
Send survey to community garden members		
Call gardeners to give survey		
Add completed phone and in garden surveys to the Google Form account.		
Analyze the information		

Community Garden Social Impact Survey:

Thank you for taking time to answer this survey. This survey will help the leadership of _____ Community Garden understand the social impact of the community garden. By social impact we mean how the community garden helps gardeners access benefits by creating relationships between gardeners, community members, and outside organizations. Filling out this survey will help _____ Community Garden plan new activities for growth and demonstrate our value to the public.

Section I: How relationships are formed in _____ Community Garden

1. How many years have you been gardening at _____ Community Garden? (select one)
 - Less than 1
 - 1-2
 - 3-4
 - 5-10
 - more than 10

2. In the last two weeks how many times have you tended your community garden plot? (select one)
 - None
 - One time
 - Two times
 - Three times
 - Four times
 - Five + times

3. On average, when you tend your garden plot, how many hours do you spend at the garden? (select one)
 - Less than one hour
 - About one hour
 - About two hours
 - More than two hours

4. When you tend your garden plot how many people do you normally interact with?
 - None
 - 1-2
 - 3-4
 - 5+

5. When you are at the garden, how much time do you spend chatting versus gardening? (select one)
 - I don't chat with other gardeners
 - 1-25% chatting
 - 26-50% chatting
 - 51-75% chatting
 - 76-100% chatting

6. When do you interact with other gardeners (check all that apply)?
 - Never
 - Tending my plot
 - Work days
 - Events at the garden
 - Outside the garden

7. In one growing season, how many workdays do you expect to attend? (select one)
 - None
 - One day
 - Two days
 - Three days
 - Four days
 - Five + days

8. Do you share a plot with another gardener? (select one)
 - Yes
 - No

9. How many names of your fellow gardeners do you know? (select one)
 - None
 - 1-3
 - 4-6
 - 7-9
 - 10+

10. How often do you attend social events at your garden? (select one)
 - Never
 - One time per year
 - Two times per year
 - Three times per year
 - Four times per year
 - Five or more times per year

11. How often do you spend time with gardeners outside of the community garden setting? (select one)
- Never
 - Once a year
 - Several times per year
 - Once per month
 - More than once per month
12. Rate how much you agree with this statement: "I desire to build relationships at my community garden."
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
13. Why did you start gardening at _____ community garden? (check all that apply)
- I wanted to learn to garden
 - I needed a space to garden
 - I wanted to meet new people
 - I wanted to do something for my community
 - I wanted to grow food for myself/family
 - I wanted a place to exercise
 - Other

Section II: What is the impact of your garden relationships?

14. Why do you keep gardening at _____ community garden? (check all that apply)
- I learn about gardening here
 - I need a space to garden
 - I need the food I produce
 - I enjoy the food that I produce
 - The relationships I have formed at the community garden keep me coming back
 - I enjoy the garden
 - Other

15. Scenario – if you perceived that there was a need to make a major improvement to the garden’s layout, how easy would it be to organize other gardeners to approve and work on this project? (select one)
- Very difficult
 - Difficult
 - Somewhat difficult
 - Somewhat easy
 - Easy
 - Very easy
16. Scenario – Its mid-July and you’ve noticed weeds are getting out of control in common areas. Indicate how easy or difficult it would be for you to address this issue? (select one)
- Very difficult
 - Difficult
 - Somewhat difficult
 - Somewhat easy
 - Easy
 - Very easy
17. In the last three years, has the community garden organized to address a need or problem that affected the community garden? (select one)
- No
 - Yes
18. (Skip to question 19 if you answered no in question 17) If so, what issues did the community garden address?
19. In the last three years has the community garden organized to address a need or problem in the local community? (select one)
- No
 - Yes
20. (Skip to question 21 if you answered no in question 19) If so, what issues did the community garden address?
21. Scenario – Its August, and everyone’s tomatoes are ripe. You show up to harvest a few for dinner and you realize all your ripe tomatoes have been stolen.

Indicate how easy or difficult it would be for you to address this issue? (select one)

- Very
- Difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Somewhat easy
- Easy
- Very easy

22. How often to you talk to people passing by on the street? (select one)

- Never
- Sometimes
- Regularly

23. How often to neighbors or community members use the garden? (select one)

- Never
- Sometimes
- Regularly

24. What other associations, affiliations, members, or organizations is your garden connected to? (select all that apply)

- Religious institution
- Local business
- Neighborhood Association
- District Council
- Food shelf
- Police
- School
- Senior center
- Public Housing Association
- Other

25. How important is the community garden for you in building relationships? (select one)

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Important
- Very important

26. Rate how much you agree with this statement: "I have made a close friend because of _____ community garden." (select one)

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree

- Agree
- Strongly agree

27. What kinds of relationships have you formed with other members of the garden?
(check all that apply)

- None
- Acquaintances
- Friendships
- Close friendships
- Garden mentors
- Relationship with someone from an older or younger generation
- Relationship with someone from a different race or ethnicity.
- Other

28. Please rate how much you have learned about gardening through receiving advice from fellow community gardeners. (Select one)

- None
- A little
- Somewhat
- A lot

29. Do you share/swap your harvest with other gardeners? (select one)

- No
- Yes

30. Do you know who the landlord is for your garden? (select one)

- No
- Yes

31. Please rate how much you agree with this statement: The people that make decisions in the garden reflect the general (age, race, economic status) diversity of the garden?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

32. Please rate how much you agree with this statement: "I can easily approach the people that make decisions in the garden about my concerns or ideas."

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree

- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

33. Please rate the level of trust you feel towards your fellow community gardeners?

None					High
1	2	3	4	5	

34. Do you feel safe when you are in the garden?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

35. Can you please share any stories of how relationships that you have formed with gardeners, other community members, or organizations because of the community garden and how they have benefited you?

Section III: The future?

36. What can the community garden do to help gardeners build relationships with other gardeners? (open ended)

37. What can the community garden do to help gardeners build relationships with other community members (neighbors, etc)? (open ended)

38. What can the community garden do to help gardeners build relationships with other local organizations? (open ended)

39. What question do you wish we asked? (open ended)

Section IV: Demographic info

40. What gender do you identify as?

- Male
- Female

41. What race do you identify as?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White

42. What ethnicity do you identify as?

- Hispanic or Latino
- Non Hispanic or Latino

43. How old are you?

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- 65+

Reflection Exercise #3: Neighbor or Local Community Survey

Outcomes of the survey:

- Understand how the neighborhood or local community interacts with the community garden.
- Understand the impact of the garden in the broader community.
- Identify ways the garden can have more impact in the broader community

Time commitment

Prep time:	2 hours
Implementation:	1-5 hours
Analyzing data:	2 hour
Total:	5-9 hours

Materials:

- White paper (maybe)
- Printer (maybe)
- Printer ink (maybe)

Why survey the neighbors or the local community?

The most important reason to survey neighbors or local community is for the garden's sustainability. In addition surveys are useful in the neighborhood context because they are anonymous, easy to summarize, and are able to be used on large groups of people.

Preparing for a survey

Preparing for a survey requires some work but doesn't have to be difficult. This toolkit has provided a survey that can be used with neighbors or local community members. It can be adapted or used exactly how it is. How much the working group changes will influence how much time is spent on the exercise. If the working group doesn't plan to change the survey then only a few items have to be taken care of:

- Create a plan to give the survey, and
- Create a plan to review the information collected from the survey.

Like the discussion group, planning and using a survey should be a collective effort. Rely on the working group to share the tasks. Below are the steps for giving the survey.

Step #1: Create a list - Create a list of all of the potential streets or part of the community that the working group wants to survey. The working group probably will not have the contact information for all the members of the neighborhood or local community. Therefore the working group need to think carefully about who will be surveyed.

This could be a two or three block radius in a dense urban setting. It could be an entire small town. It could also be the entire congregation in a religious institution, an entire apartment complex, or a public housing community.

When planning who to survey ask these questions of the working group:

- Who does the working group want to use the garden?
- Who does the working group want to recruit to the garden?
- How does the working group want these groups to view the garden?

Step #2: Create a plan to give the survey - If the working group is able to access email addresses, the steps for using email to send the survey is in Appendix II: How to Use Google Forms. However, most likely the working group will not be able to give this survey using email. That means going door-to-door with the survey.

This process can take a lot of time. It takes time to explain the purpose of the survey, ask, and answer each question in the survey. It also takes time to walk from door-to-door.

How many people the working group hopes to survey will depend on how many people it can use to give the survey. It should be possible to get approximately 30-45 people to complete the survey if the working group can organize five to seven gardeners to give the survey for a period of one and half hours.

Ways to give the survey

- Door to door
- Email
- Neighborhood newsletter
- Block club contact list
- Facebook or Twitter

Step #3: Access the Survey on Google Forms - Gardening Matters has the survey for this exercise ready for use in a Google Form. Contact toolkit@gardeningmatters.org to access the survey in Google Forms.

Google Forms lets the working group do two different things. First, it can send the survey to the recipients email addresses. Second, the working group can enter the results of the survey into Google Forms. Google Forms will calculate the results for the working group. To use Google Forms someone in the working group must have

a Google account such as Gmail or Google +. The Form will require the working group to make minor additions to the survey including adding the garden's name. See Appendix II: How to use Google Forms for detailed instructions.

Step #4: Giving the survey in person - This step includes instructions for giving the survey in person.

- **Introduce yourself:** Make sure you introduce yourself to each person the survey is given to. Also tell them you are from _____ Community Garden.
- **Explain the purpose of the survey:** When someone knows the purpose of a survey they are more likely to complete the survey.
- **Asking questions:** The survey can be given two ways.
 - **Option #1:** You can ask the questions, share the possible answers, and fill in the sheet yourself.
 - **Option #2:** You hand each individual a copy of the survey to fill out him or herself. He or she can then give the survey back to you when it is completed.
- **Confidentiality:** It is important to ensure that answers are kept confidential. When someone shares information it should not be connected to information that could identify that person such as an email address, name, or address.
- **They can choose to not answer a question:** No-one can be forced to answer a question. If someone chooses to end the survey early or doesn't want to answer a question that is his or her right.

Understanding the results of the survey:

The survey is broken into three sections.

- **Section I: Dealings with the community garden**
- **Section II: Impact of the garden in the broader community**
- **Section III: The future**

Each section asks questions that help the working group understand the heading of each section.

For example, Section I is labeled "Dealings with the community garden." The questions help the working group understand how the garden's neighbors experience the community garden. For example, "Have you ever visited or walked around _____ community garden?" This question tells the working group whether or not people have visited the garden. This is one question of many that helps the working group understand *whether or not and how* neighbors experience the garden.

Section II is labeled, “Impact of the garden in the broader community.” The questions help the working group understand how the garden impacts people in the neighborhood/local community. For example, “has anyone shared flowers, fruits, or vegetables from the garden with you before?” This question tells the working group one of the *impacts* or *benefits* that the garden has had on the neighborhood or local community.

Section III asks the garden’s neighbors to make recommendations to improve the garden’s impact in the neighborhood/local community.

Limits of a Survey:

Surveys have some limits. For instance, this survey measures perceptions. Sometimes perceptions don’t always reflect reality. In addition, surveys sometimes force respondents to choose an answer to a question that they don’t agree with. Finally, sometimes words and statements mean different things to different people.

Survey Planning Sheet		
Method of giving survey (circle one):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email, • In person • Other _____ 		
Task (complete all that apply):	Responsible working group member(s):	Date to be completed by:
Decide who will receive the survey (Neighbors , members of religious institution, etc?)		
Date survey is to be given		
Arrange volunteers to give survey (include working group)		
Make changes to the survey		
Print survey		
Set up Google Form		
Giving the survey		
Entering survey info into Google Forms.		
Analyze the information		

Neighborhood or local community survey:

Thank you for taking time to answer this survey. This survey will help the _____ Community Garden understand the social impact of the community garden. By social impact we mean how the community garden helps to bring the benefits of relationships to the community.

Section 1: Interacting with the community garden

1. Have you ever visited or walked around _____ community garden?
 - No
 - Yes
2. Have you ever interacted with one or more persons at _____ community garden?
 - No
 - Yes
3. If you answered yes in Question 2: How would rate the kindness of the interaction(s)?
 - Not kind
 - Somewhat kind
 - Kind
 - Very kind
4. Have you ever tried to find out information about the garden?
 - No
 - Yes
5. If yes, how?
 - Talked to someone at the garden
 - Found information on a bulletin board
 - Flyer
 - Called a hotline number
 - Emailed the garden coordinator
 - Used the internet
 - Other: _____
6. How useful was the information you gathered?
 - Not useful
 - Somewhat useful
 - Useful
 - Very useful

Section II: Impact of the garden in the broader community

7. Has anyone shared flowers, fruits, or vegetables from the garden with you before?
- No
 - Yes
8. How safe do you think your neighborhood or community is?
- Not safe
 - Somewhat safe
 - Safe
 - Very safe
9. How would you rate the trust you feel between your neighbors or community members?
- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|------|
| Low | | | | | High |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |

Please rate how much you agree with the following statements:

10. _____ Community Garden makes our neighborhood more beautiful.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Somewhat Disagree
 - Somewhat Agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
11. I am safer in my community because of _____ Community Garden.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Somewhat Disagree
 - Somewhat Agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
12. I know more of my neighbors/community members because of _____ Community Garden.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Somewhat Disagree
 - Somewhat Agree

- Agree
- Strongly Agree

13. I feel excluded from the _____ Community Garden.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

14. If I wanted to, I could join _____ Community Garden.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

15. What benefits does _____ community garden bring to the neighborhood or community? (open ended)

Section III: The future

16. _____ Community Garden wants to bring more benefits to the neighborhood or community? What recommendations do you have for them? (open ended)

Exercise #4: Using the New Information

The introduction outlines five different reasons the assessment and reflection exercises can be useful for a community garden including:

- Learning from others,
- Sharing lessons,
- Recognizing and celebrating strengths,
- Demonstrating value, and
- Identifying opportunities for growth.

The following section explores in more detail each area of use.

Sharing lessons and learning from others

Learning occurs most in the process of the reflection. By gathering information from many people the working group will learn how the garden impacts people in similar and different ways. One way of documenting the things the working has learned is to create list and share ***lessons learned***.

- ***Lessons learned*** - are short statements that summarize some of the important new insights and lessons that the working group learned.

If the working group creates a list of lessons learned please share them with the garden, Gardening Matters, and other community organizations.

Recognizing and celebrating strengths

Through the assessment and reflection process the working group will discover many strengths of the garden. They may be strengths that are new to the working group. They may be strengths that the working group has always known about. The point is, the garden should recognize and celebrate them. This can be done in several ways:

- ***Host a celebration event at the garden*** – one way to recognize and celebrate the garden’s strengths is to do it at the garden. Organize a potluck and have a working group member speak for 5-10 minutes on the lessons learned about the garden. During this time highlight the garden’s strengths.
- ***Note the strengths during orientation***- many community gardens have an orientation meeting each year. For some gardens this is the only time everyone is together. This is a great time to energize gardeners by recognizing the strengths of the community garden.

Demonstrate value

Many gardens are required to demonstrate their value. It may be because a neighborhood association, landlord, donor, or a city council wants to understand what the garden does and how it benefits the community. There are a number of different ways that the working group can use this information to demonstrate the garden's value.

- **Prepare a presentation:** The presentation can be a poster board format or power point presentation. The presentation can be used at fairs, recruitment events, or city council meetings where the garden may have to justify the existence of the garden.
- **Prepare a Youtube video:** Not everyone will have the means to do this. But, Youtube videos that show off the value of a community garden can be fairly easy to make. The working group can film different parts of the garden and ask gardeners to talk about the impact the garden has had on their lives.
- **Write a newspaper article:** Many communities still have local newspapers. A local newspaper is a good place to publicize the value the garden adds to a community.

Identifying opportunities for growth

The reflection process will help the working group assess ways a community can grow. Hopefully the working group will receive some helpful suggestions from gardeners or other neighbors. Below are some ideas for increasing the social impact of a community garden:

- ***Building community assets into the garden*** – Some gardens already have assets that gardeners and members of the local community can use at any time. The different kinds of community assets that gardens have include:
 - Water fountains
 - Berry patches
 - Orchards
 - Meeting spaces
 - Walking paths
- ***Use a list serve*** – List serves are one way to facilitate communication between gardeners. Helping gardeners communicate better will help gardeners manage their plots if they are out of town, share produce if they have extra, or discuss problems with pests, disease, or vandalism in the garden. For more information on setting up a list serve see the links below.
 - <http://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Listserv>
 - http://www.ehow.com/how_12203329_make-listserv.html

- **Create skill share events** – everyone in the garden has skills that they can share with other gardeners. They may be related to gardening or other topics. By organizing a monthly skill share where gardeners can share their knowledge the garden will increase its social impact. The garden can even invite neighbors or local community members to the skill share events. Skills that many of gardeners want to learn include:
 - Preserving food,
 - Fixing a bike,
 - Changing the oil in a car,
 - Using coupons,
 - Fixing a broken faucet, and
 - The possibilities are endless.

- **Potlucks** – There is no better way to get to know people than with good food. Organizing a potluck once or twice a growing season will get people together and build relationships.

- **Serve the local community** – Community gardens do a lot of work and maintenance on the garden through workdays. One day per year the garden can do a workday that benefits the local community or neighborhood. The garden could pick up trash or organize a neighborhood clean up.

Caution: Remember, most people that coordinate community gardens are volunteers. Try to share the workload with others and keep the tasks simple.

Appendix I: Methodology

The toolkit was developed using a comprehensive methodology.

First, the author reviewed the professional research literature under the topics:

- Social capital,
- Community building,
- Social capital in community gardens, and
- Community building in community gardens.

The author used search engines, bibliographies, and existing literature reviews to gather the names of authors and studies that contribute to the topic of social capital within community gardens. In addition, the author contacted several organizations that work with community gardens around the United States for research or evaluation material related to social capital and community gardens. To see the bibliography of works that the author used to inform the toolkit please see Appendix II.

Second, the author conducted twelve interviews with community garden stakeholders and leaders in Minnesota. The interviews informed the design of the toolkit and the questions about social capital.

Third, five community garden leaders reviewed the first draft of the toolkit. The leaders provided critical feedback on the exercises, questions, and design of the toolkit.

Fourth, the staff at Gardening Matters provided important insights from their rich knowledge and experience base. They were instrumental in developing the questions for the evaluation exercises.

Fifth, the author organized a test phase of the toolkit. Representatives from eleven community gardens participated in a toolkit workshop. Six community gardens completed at least one exercise. The author interviewed a representative from each garden that completed an exercise and received useful feedback designed to improve the toolkit.

Appendix II: How to use Google Forms:

Google Forms is a free service from Google that will send a survey to gardeners through email. To use Google Forms, someone in the working group **must have a Google account** to edit and send a Google Form. Visit the following link to set up a Google account for free. www.google.com

Using Google Forms for creating the survey – Both surveys in this toolkit have been entered into Google Forms. This makes it easier for working groups to give the survey to gardeners.

Step #1: Email gardening matters at toolkit@gardeningmatters.org - To access the survey template email Gardening Matters. Make sure to tell them the name of the garden and which exercise the working group needs access to.

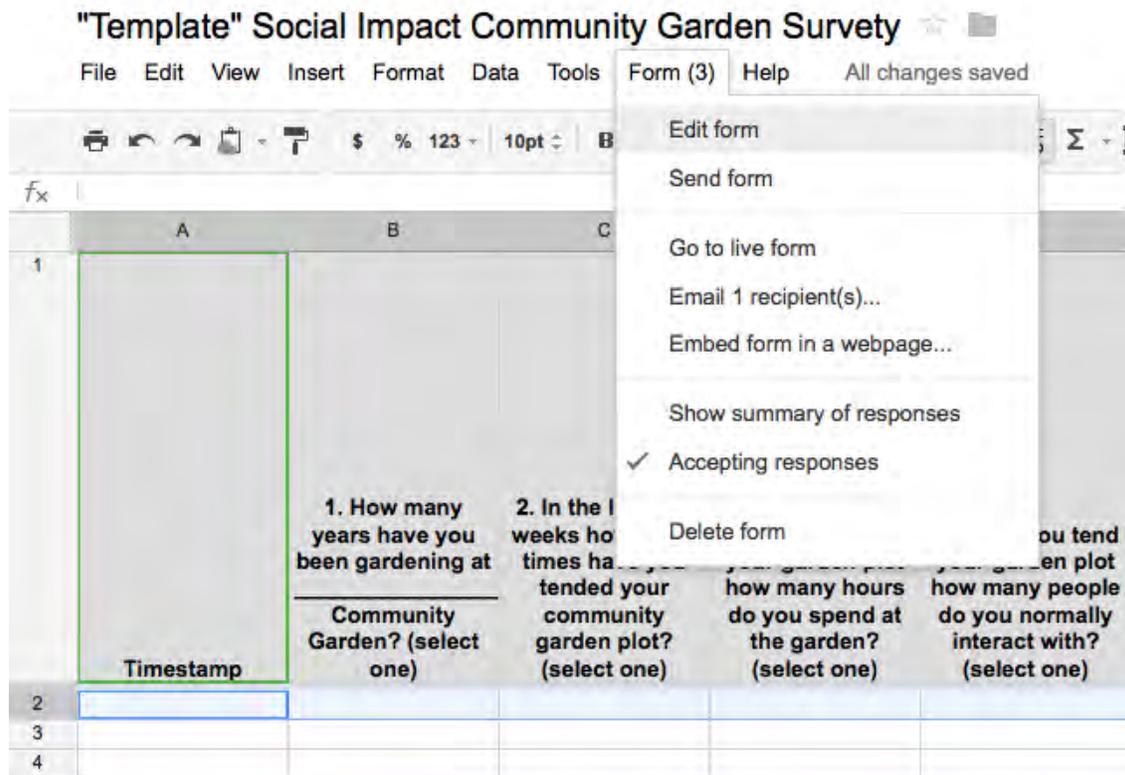
Step #2: Open the link - The link that Gardening Matters sends through email will open the survey in Google Forms. The name of the survey will be included in the title of the Google Form.

Step #3: Edit and make changes to the survey – If the working group is going to add, change, or subtract questions this is the time to do it. To edit click on **“Forms”** then click on **“Edit form.”** See Image I: Editing the Google Form (a) below.

For more help information visit:

<http://support.google.com/docs/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=87809>

Image I: Editing the Google Form (a)



Once **“Edit Form”** is selected it will bring the user to a new page. On this page the user will be able to add, delete and change the survey. See Image II: Editing the Google Form (b).

- To add a new question, select **“Add Item”** in the upper left corner of the window.
- Select the kind of question:
 - Text,
 - Paragraph text,
 - Multiple choice,
 - Checkboxes,
 - Choose from a list,
 - Scale, or
 - Grid.

Image II: Editing the Google Form (b).

The screenshot displays the Google Forms editor interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with options: '+ Add item', 'Theme: Plain', 'Share', 'Email this form', 'See responses', and 'More actions'. Below this, a sidebar on the left lists various question types: Text, Paragraph text, Multiple choice, Checkboxes, Choose from a list, Scale, Grid, and Other (Section header, Page break). The main area shows a form titled 'Garden Social Impact Survey'. The form content includes a paragraph: 'ng time to answer this survey. This survey will help the leadership of _____ Community id the social impact of the community garden. By social impact we mean how the community garden helps create ig relationships between gardeners, community members, and outside organizations. Filling out this survey will help _ Community Garden plan new activities for growth and demonstrate our value to the public.' Below the paragraph is a question: 'ars have you been gardening at _____ Community Garden? (select one)'. At the bottom of the form, there are radio button options: '5-9' and '10+'. The bottom right corner of the editor shows icons for undo, redo, and save.

Step #4: Edit the Survey's Description - The survey will have a title and a description. Using positive and motivating statements in the description of the survey will motivate the respondents to take the survey. The description of the survey will be included in the email when the survey is sent. The description will be the only explanation of the survey they might see.

To edit the description click on the text box below the survey's title. See Image III: Editing The Survey's Description.

Image III: Editing The Survey's Description

Community Garden Social Impact Survey

Hello! _____ Community Garden is doing some reflecting and assessing of our social impact as a community garden. We want your knowledge and experiences to be apart of the reflection. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

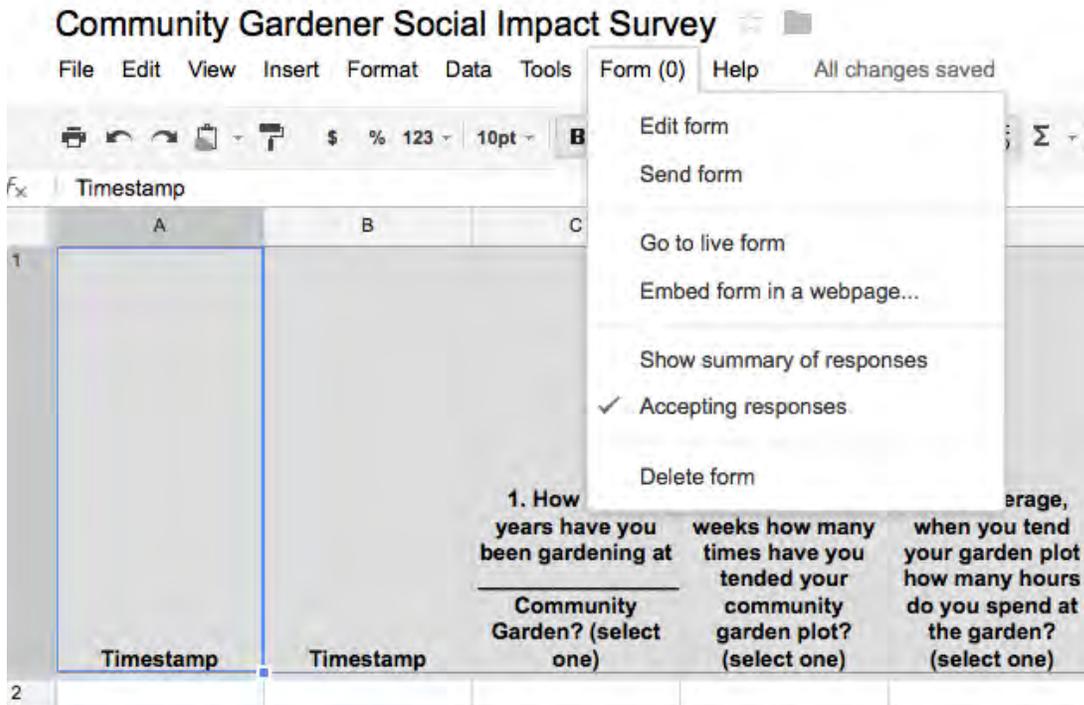
By social impact we mean how the community garden help creates relationships between gardeners, community members, and outside organizations. Filling out this survey will help _____ Community Garden plan assess what we have achieved and identify new areas for growth. It will also help us demonstrate our value to gardeners, community members, and outside organizations. If you have any questions please email _____.

Thank you so much for your time!

1. How many years have you been gardening at _____ Community Garden? (select one)
- Less than 1
 - 1-2
 - 3-4
 - 5-9
 - 10+

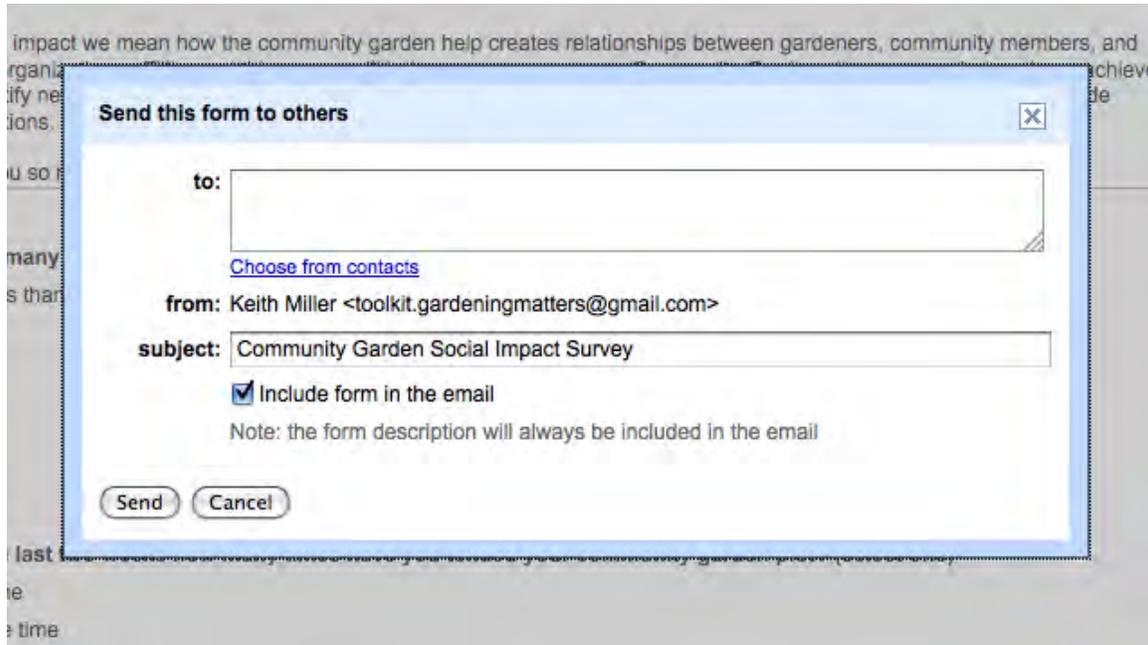
Step #5: Send the Survey with Google Forms - Once the survey is finalized send the survey to the community gardeners through Google Forms. To send the survey click on **“Form”** then **“Send form.”** See Image IV: Send the Survey (a) below.

Image IV: Send the Survey (a)



After **“Send form”** is selected a new window will pop up. This window is where email addresses will be entered. Enter the email address in the **“to:”** text box. See Image V: Send the Survey (b).

Image V: Send the Survey (b)



Step #6: Enter Hard Copy Survey Results - If the working group collected responses to the survey in the garden or over the phone Google forms allows the working group to enter these results online. To enter the survey results in the Google form select **“Form”** then select **“Go to live form.”** See Image VI: Entering Survey Results (a) on the next page.

This will bring the working group to a live copy of the survey. It looks just like the survey that the working group would send to the gardeners through an email account. Enter the data into the survey. Selected **“submit”** at the end of the web page when the task is finished. See Image VII: Entering Survey Results (b) on the next page.

Image VI: Entering Survey Results (a)

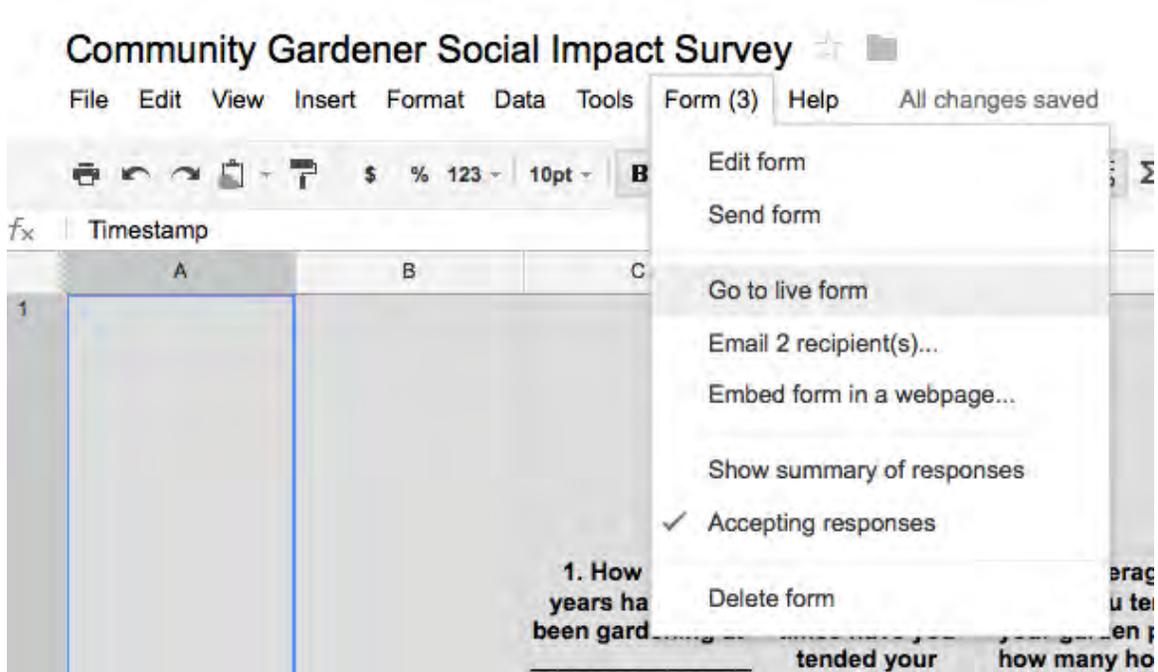
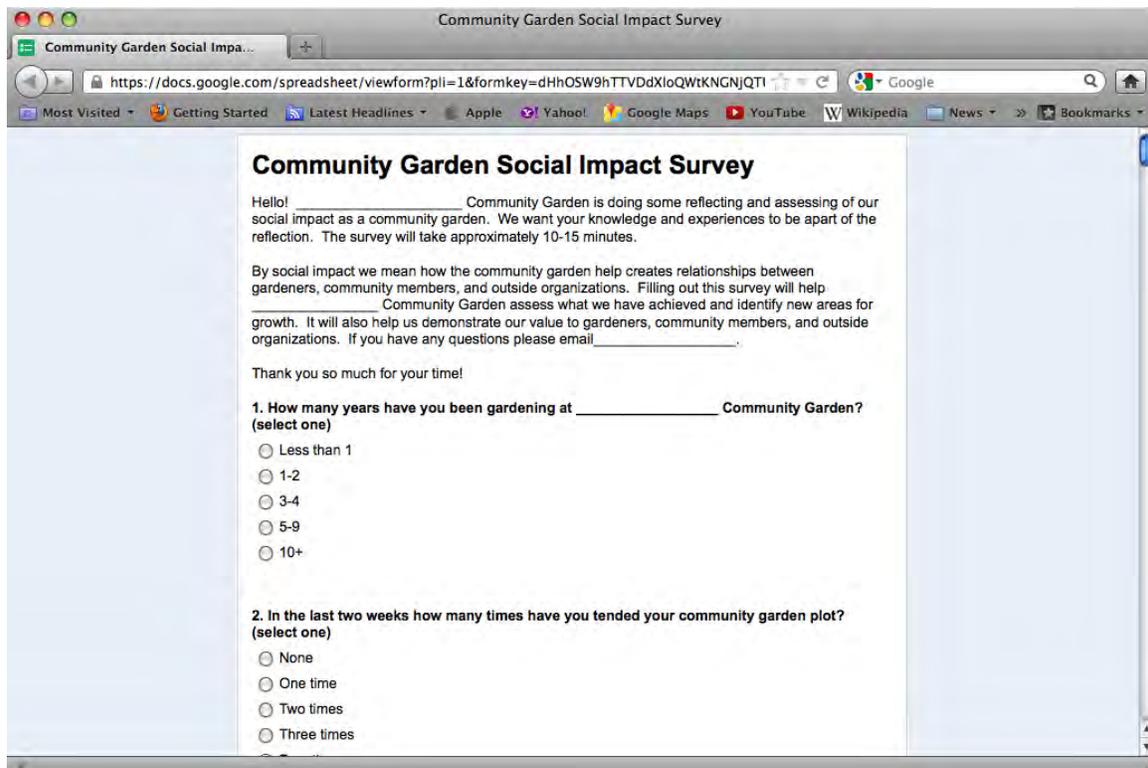
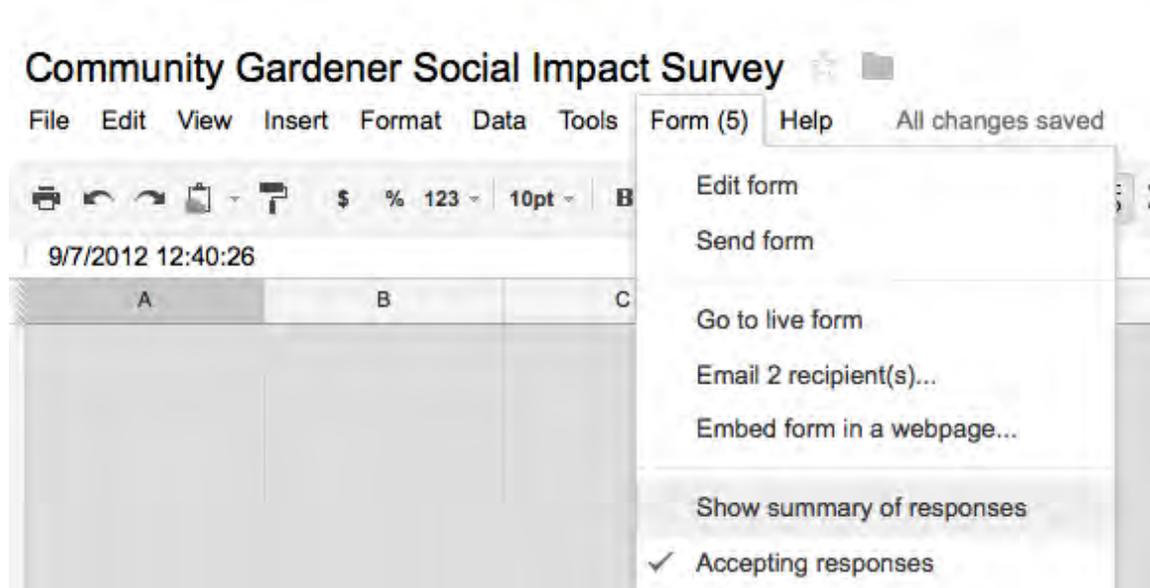


Image VII: Entering Survey Results (b)



Step #7: Analyze the Results - Google Forms has a nice tool that helps working groups analyze the results. Select **“Form”** then select **“Show summary of responses.”** See Image VIII: Analyzing the Results (a) below.

Image VIII: Analyzing the Results (a)

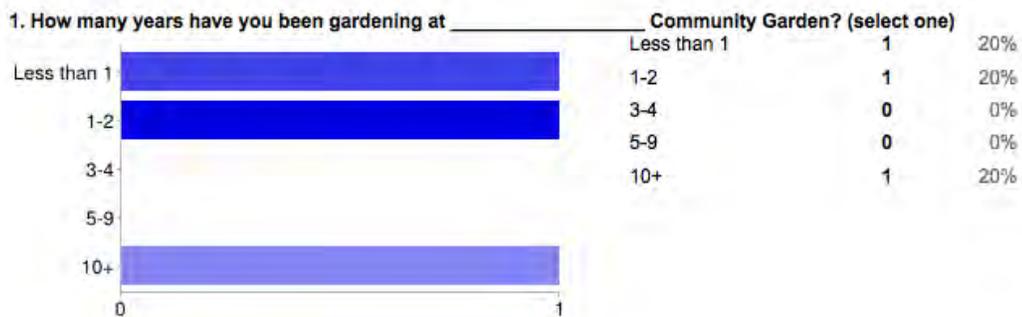


Select **“Show summary of responses.”** Google forms will bring open another webpage. The webpage will give display bar graphs and percentages for each answer. See Image IX: Analyzing the Results (b) below.

Image IX: Analyzing the Results (b)

5 [responses](#)

Summary [See complete responses](#)



Google Forms limits and troubleshooting

Google has tutorials and troubleshooting help online. The working group are also free to email toolkit@gardeningsmatters.org for help.

Where are my questions in the spreadsheet?

One common problem that gardeners experience with Google Forms occurs when they add questions to the survey. Sometimes when adding question in the “editing” page or “response” page the questions aren’t ordered properly in the spreadsheet. This happens frequently. If this happens and the question is in the ‘summary of responses’ or “editing” pages then the survey will be ok. Sometimes when users add questions to a Google Form the new questions are added to the right side of the spreadsheet. Scroll to the right to find the question.

Why are there dates in the spreadsheet?

Another common problem in Google Forms is that responses sometimes show up as dates or odd figures. There is nothing that can be done about this. Almost always the response was accounted for properly in the “summary of responses” page.

Appendix III: Additional Assessment Tools

There are many other ways to collect information from gardeners. This appendix discusses how to use two additional assessment tools: observation and interviews.

Observation – is a very practical and useful way to get information about how gardeners interact at the garden. Observation is just a way to be intentional about watching gardeners participate in relationships. Observe a garden once. Or, observe the garden for a few hours over a week or several days. Observation can add to the interpretation of the survey or group discussion results.

Tips when observing

- Take notes.
- Blend in.
- Look for themes.

Interviews – are a good way to get in-depth information from gardeners. It is a good idea to start with a set of questions the working group wants to ask. That way the interviews are organized and have some structure. Interviews allow the working group to ask follow-up questions that the working group can't do in a survey. Be prepared to ask questions that aren't on the list.

Tips when interviewing

- Take good notes.
- Ask follow-up questions.
- Look for themes.

Interviews also allow the working group to listen to stories. Stories are very helpful when assessing the social impact of the community garden. Often times the working group can find good examples of the results. It is also possible to find stories that contradict the results. It's a good reminder that gardeners have different types of experiences in community gardens.

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Survey Planning Sheet

Method of giving survey (circle one):

- Email,
- Over the phone,
- At the garden, or
- Combination.

Task (complete all that apply):	Responsible working group member(s):	Due date:
Find or create list of all gardeners		
Locate email		
If no email, locate phone numbers		
Determine time(s) and date(s) for giving survey at the garden.		
Set up survey in Google Forms.		
Send survey to community garden members		
Call gardeners to give survey		
Add completed phone and in garden surveys to the Google Form account.		
Analyze the information		

Neighbor Survey Planning Sheet

Method of giving survey (circle one):

- Email,
- In person
- Other _____

Task (complete all that apply):	Responsible working group member(s):	Date to be completed by:
Decide who will receive the survey (Neighbors, members of religious institution, etc?)		
Date survey is to be given		
Arrange volunteers to give survey (include working group)		
Make changes to the survey		
Print survey		
Set up Google Form		
Giving the survey		
Entering survey info into Google Forms.		
Analyze the information		

Neighborhood or local community survey:

Thank you for taking time to answer this survey. This survey will help the _____ Community Garden understand the social impact of the community garden. By social impact we mean how the community garden helps to bring the benefits of relationships to the community.

Section 1: Interacting with the community garden

1. Have you ever visited or walked around _____ community garden?
 - No
 - Yes
2. Have you ever interacted with one or more persons at _____ community garden?
 - No
 - Yes
3. If you answered yes in Question 2: How would rate the kindness of the interaction(s)?
 - Not kind
 - Somewhat kind
 - Kind
 - Very kind
4. Have you ever tried to find out information about the garden?
 - No
 - Yes
5. If yes, how?
 - Talked to someone at the garden
 - Found information on a bulletin board
 - Flyer
 - Called a hotline number
 - Emailed the garden coordinator
 - Used the internet
 - Other: _____
6. How useful was the information you gathered?
 - Not useful
 - Somewhat useful
 - Useful
 - Very useful

Section II: Impact of the garden in the broader community

7. Has anyone shared flowers, fruits, or vegetables from the garden with you before?
- No
 - Yes
8. How safe do you think your neighborhood or community is?
- Not safe
 - Somewhat safe
 - Safe
 - Very safe
9. How would you rate the trust you feel between your neighbors or community members?
- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|------|
| Low | | | | | High |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |

Please rate how much you agree with the following statements:

10. _____ Community Garden makes our neighborhood more beautiful.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Somewhat Disagree
 - Somewhat Agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
11. I am safer in my community because of _____ Community Garden.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Somewhat Disagree
 - Somewhat Agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
12. I know more of my neighbors/community members because of _____ Community Garden.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Somewhat Disagree
 - Somewhat Agree

- Agree
- Strongly Agree

13. I feel excluded from the _____ Community Garden.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

14. If I wanted to, I could join _____ Community Garden.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

15. What benefits does _____ community garden bring to the neighborhood or community? (open ended)

Section III: The future

16. _____ Community Garden wants to bring more benefits to the neighborhood or community? What recommendations do you have for them? (open ended)

Discussion Group Agenda		
Facilitator(s):		
Note taker(s):		
Task/Question	Content or details	Facilitator
Welcome and Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank everyone for coming. • Tell participants where to find the refreshments. • Remind everyone about the purpose of the discussion group. • Group introductions and icebreaker. 	
Set ground rules:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep answers short and concise. • Respect everyone's answers. • No interrupting. • Stay on topic. • The facilitator may interrupt to keep the discussion going. Please don't be offended. 	
Questions		
What kinds of relationships are formed?		
Question #1	How do you build relationships in the community garden?	
Question #2	What kinds of relationships are built among gardeners?	Example
So, what benefits do they bring?		
Question #3	How do gardeners benefit from these relationships?	Example
Question #4	How does the garden benefit from these relationships?	Example
Question #5	How does the neighborhood or other community organizations benefit from the community garden?	Example?
Now, what kinds of changes do you want to make?		
Question #6	Now that we know how our garden builds relationships and some of the benefits what changes do we want to make so that more people can experience those benefits?	

Community Garden Social Impact Survey:

Thank you for taking time to answer this survey. This survey will help the leadership of _____ Community Garden understand the social impact of the community garden. By social impact we mean how the community garden helps gardeners access benefits by creating relationships between gardeners, community members, and outside organizations. Filling out this survey will help _____ Community Garden plan new activities for growth and demonstrate our value to the public.

Section I: How relationships are formed in _____ Community Garden

1. How many years have you been gardening at _____ Community Garden? (select one)
 - Less than 1
 - 1-2
 - 3-4
 - 5-10
 - more than 10

2. In the last two weeks how many times have you tended your community garden plot? (select one)
 - None
 - One time
 - Two times
 - Three times
 - Four times
 - Five + times

3. On average, when you tend your garden plot, how many hours do you spend at the garden? (select one)
 - Less than one hour
 - About one hour
 - About two hours
 - More than two hours

4. When you tend your garden plot how many people do you normally interact with?
 - None
 - 1-2
 - 3-4
 - 5+

5. When you are at the garden, how much time do you spend chatting versus gardening? (select one)
 - I don't chat with other gardeners
 - 1-25% chatting
 - 26-50% chatting
 - 51-75% chatting
 - 76-100% chatting

6. When do you interact with other gardeners (check all that apply)?
 - Never
 - Tending my plot
 - Work days
 - Events at the garden
 - Outside the garden

7. In one growing season, how many workdays do you expect to attend? (select one)
 - None
 - One day
 - Two days
 - Three days
 - Four days
 - Five + days

8. Do you share a plot with another gardener? (select one)
 - Yes
 - No

9. How many names of your fellow gardeners do you know? (select one)
 - None
 - 1-3
 - 4-6
 - 7-9
 - 10+

10. How often do you attend social events at your garden? (select one)
 - Never
 - One time per year
 - Two times per year
 - Three times per year
 - Four times per year

- Five or more times per year

11. How often do you spend time with gardeners outside of the community garden setting? (select one)

- Never
- Once a year
- Several times per year
- Once per month
- More than once per month

12. Rate how much you agree with this statement: "I desire to build relationships at my community garden."

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

13. Why did you start gardening at _____ community garden? (check all that apply)

- I wanted to learn to garden
- I needed a space to garden
- I wanted to meet new people
- I wanted to do something for my community
- I wanted to grow food for myself/family
- I wanted a place to exercise
- Other

Section II: What is the impact of your garden relationships?

14. Why do you keep gardening at _____ community garden? (check all that apply)

- I learn about gardening here
- I need a space to garden
- I need the food I produce
- I enjoy the food that I produce
- The relationships I have formed at the community garden keep me coming back
- I enjoy the garden
- Other

15. Scenario – if you perceived that there was a need to make a major improvement to the garden’s layout, how easy would it be to organize other gardeners to approve and work on this project? (select one)
- Very difficult
 - Difficult
 - Somewhat difficult
 - Somewhat easy
 - Easy
 - Very easy
16. Scenario – Its mid-July and you’ve noticed weeds are getting out of control in common areas. Indicate how easy or difficult it would be for you to address this issue? (select one)
- Very difficult
 - Difficult
 - Somewhat difficult
 - Somewhat easy
 - Easy
 - Very easy
17. In the last three years, has the community garden organized to address a need or problem that affected the community garden? (select one)
- No
 - Yes
18. (Skip to question 19 if you answered no in question 17) If so, what issues did the community garden address?
19. In the last three years has the community garden organized to address a need or problem in the local community? (select one)
- No
 - Yes
20. (Skip to question 21 if you answered no in question 19) If so, what issues did the community garden address?

21. Scenario – Its August, and everyone’s tomatoes are ripe. You show up to harvest a few for dinner and you realize all your ripe tomatoes have been stolen. Indicate how easy or difficult it would be for you to address this issue? (select one)
- Very
 - Difficult
 - Somewhat difficult
 - Somewhat easy
 - Easy
 - Very easy
22. How often to you talk to people passing by on the street? (select one)
- Never
 - Sometimes
 - Regularly
23. How often to neighbors or community members use the garden? (select one)
- Never
 - Sometimes
 - Regularly
24. What other associations, affiliations, members, or organizations is your garden connected to? (select all that apply)
- Religious institution
 - Local business
 - Neighborhood Association
 - District Council
 - Food shelf
 - Police
 - School
 - Senior center
 - Public Housing Association
 - Other
25. How important is the community garden for you in building relationships? (select one)
- Not important
 - Somewhat important
 - Important
 - Very important
26. Rate how much you agree with this statement: “I have made a close friend because of _____ community garden.” (select one)
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree

- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

27. What kinds of relationships have you formed with other members of the garden?
(check all that apply)

- None
- Acquaintances
- Friendships
- Close friendships
- Garden mentors
- Relationship with someone from an older or younger generation
- Relationship with someone from a different race or ethnicity.
- Other

28. Please rate how much you have learned about gardening through receiving advice from fellow community gardeners. (Select one)

- None
- A little
- Somewhat
- A lot

29. Do you share/swap your harvest with other gardeners? (select one)

- No
- Yes

30. Do you know who the landlord is for your garden? (select one)

- No
- Yes

31. Please rate how much you agree with this statement: The people that make decisions in the garden reflect the general (age, race, economic status) diversity of the garden?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

32. Please rate how much you agree with this statement: "I can easily approach the people that make decisions in the garden about my concerns or ideas."

- Strongly disagree

- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

33. Please rate the level of trust you feel towards your fellow community gardeners?

None				High
1	2	3	4	5

34. Do you feel safe when you are in the garden?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

35. Can you please share any stories of how relationships that you have formed with gardeners, other community members, or organizations because of the community garden and how they have benefited you?

Section III: The future?

36. What can the community garden do to help gardeners build relationships with other gardeners? (open ended)

37. What can the community garden do to help gardeners build relationships with other community members (neighbors, etc)? (open ended)

38. What can the community garden do to help gardeners build relationships with other local organizations? (open ended)

39. What question do you wish we asked? (open ended)

Section IV: Demographic info

40. What gender do you identify as?

- Male
- Female

41. What race do you identify as?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American

- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White

42. What ethnicity do you identify as?

- Hispanic or Latino
- Non Hispanic or Latino

43. How old are you?

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- 65+

