
[Ellettsville Branch Awarded Gardening Grant](#)



The Ellettsville Branch was recently awarded a Growing Together mini grant of \$1,500 in association with Purdue Extension–Monroe County!

Ellettsville Branch Garden

The garden was created as part of the Branch's 2019 renovation. The garden was funded in part by a grant from the Smithville Charitable Foundation to install raised garden beds and a bench and provide resources to begin gardening programming.

In the first growing season of 2019, four raised beds and a grow tower produced tomatoes, basil, squash, green peppers, and various micro greens! The produce was donated to Pantry 279, a local food pantry serving the Ellettsville community.

The garden was closed in 2020 due to the pandemic, but reopened in 2021 to produce a harvest of tomatoes and basil!

Growing Together Project

In April of 2022, the Ellettsville Branch Library and Master Gardeners of Monroe County received a Growing Together grant from Purdue Extension.

Growing Together is a collaborative project facilitated in Indiana by Purdue Extension's Nutrition Education Program (SNAP-Ed) and Master Gardener Program. The project aims to increase access to fruits and vegetables in food pantries by building and maintaining community donation gardens.

Community Engagement Librarian, Stacey Terhune, worked with Annie Eakin, Purdue Extension Community Wellness Coordinator on the grant proposal. Terhune said Eakin approached the Library with the grant opportunity after their previous conversations on food security in Ellettsville and the surrounding areas.

“Annie reached out to us because she knew that it was something we were interested in,” Terhune said. “Our garden got started right before COVID. It needed a lot of love and we were talking about what we could do to fix it up. This just gave us a nice push.”

Terhune said that 2020 census statistics show that food availability is challenging in the Ellettsville area, where it can be difficult for some residents to access affordable and nutritious food. The Library and its garden are situated in a location to serve a population area with a high level of limited resources.

“Our goal and the goal of the grant is to show people in the community that they can grow their own food. That it’s economical and within their grasp in terms of skills,” Terhune said. With funds from the new grant, two additional raised beds were added to the garden. Plans are currently underway to add soaker hoses to the beds, purchase a produce processing station, and add a trellis for climbing produce.

The produce harvested from the garden will be donated to Pantry 279 and available free to the community. “We’ve talked with Pantry 279, they’ve told us what their needs are, and what they could use the most,” Terhune said. “As a result, this year’s crops will include green beans, snow peas, onions, carrots, cucumbers, zucchini, and peppers!”

Gardening Events and Volunteer Opportunities

In addition to producing food directly through the garden, as part of the grant, the Library will work with Purdue University Extension–Monroe County and the Master Gardeners to offer free programs on food safety, soil additives, composting, and harvesting.

[Learn more about upcoming related events.](#)

Terhune says the Library hopes to have volunteers help with garden maintenance and harvesting. Volunteer opportunities for all ages will be available beginning in late May. If you are interested, please contact the Chris Hosler, Ellettsville Branch Manager, at 812-349-3210 or [chosler \[at\] mcpl.info](mailto:chosler@mcpl.info).

Posted by Aubrey D. on May 19, 2022 [Think Library](#)

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