

Final harvest for master gardeners at Giving Gardens

Crow Wing County master gardeners, interns and volunteers gathered at the Giving Gardens at the Northland Arboretum for a final harvest before winter Thursday.

By [Steven L. Kohls](#)

October 01, 2021 05:00 AM



A group — including master gardener intern Marsha Thomson, left, Minnesota Green Corps' Nick Bachman, Northland Arboretum Executive Director Candice Zimmermann, master gardener Sally Jacobsen, and master gardener and Arb Board President Judy Morgan — celebrate the bounty from the Giving Gardens Thursday, Sept. 30, 2021, with fruit juice toasts and bars. The produce will be donated to the Salvation Army and Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen for their use and for area food shelves. Steve Kohls / Brainerd Dispatch

Master gardeners were busy Thursday morning, Sept. 30, at the Giving Gardens in the Northland Arboretum harvesting vegetables for distribution to the Salvation Army, Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen and food shelves within Crow Wing County.

In the second year of production, the Giving Gardens, in partnership with the Northland Arboretum, were created in response to the inability to host in-person youth and adult gardening classes. Other than education, the gardens were created to help with food insecurity for Crow Wing County residents.

This year's goal for the garden was 2,000 pounds or 4,000 vegetable portions. The goal was exceeded, with a total of 2,862.5 pounds, or 5,724 vegetable portions. The gardeners celebrated with toasts of fruit juice and bars around a picnic table piled with vegetables.

The Giving Gardens are one pillar of the Master Gardeners' Community Giving Project, which includes the garden, providing bedding plants and container gardens for county residents. This year, 250 tomato, pepper and squash seeds were planted and tended for the container and Giving Garden projects. The container gardens comprised of 144 patio gardens with educational materials provided to countywide organizations by the gardeners.

Gardens on the perimeter of the Giving Gardens are certified monarch butterfly waystations, which contain native plants providing habitat for pollinators such as bumblebees and monarchs.



1/2: Carrots from the Giving Gardens are washed after being picked Thursday, Sept. 30, 2021, at the Northland Arboretum. Volunteers and master gardeners harvested the produce from the garden and prepared the vegetables to be donated to the Salvation Army, Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen and area food shelves. Steve Kohls / Brainerd Dispatch



2/2: Master gardener intern Diane Wiener wheels a load of flowers and vegetables Thursday, Sept. 30, 2021, at the Giving Gardens in the Northland Arboretum. The volunteers were harvesting the last produce of the season from the garden. Steve Kohls / Brainerd Dispatch