

THE PEOPLE'S GARDEN and FEDS FEED FAMILIES

Working Hand in Hand



Above, a harvest bouquet from the Lancaster USDA Service Center's People's Garden. The Service Center also participated in the Feds Feed Families campaign this summer and donated over 95 pounds of fresh vegetables from the garden to their local Food Bank.

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE WAY

New Hampshire USDA Feds Feed Families donation totals for the 2011 campaign totaled 2263 pounds of food! A special thanks goes to all those who donated, and to the Concord Coop for donating 50 pounds of rolled oats and 50 pounds of brown rice.

The Lancaster USDA Service Center has grown a People's Garden for the past three years. This year 97 pounds of vegetables were donated to the local Food Bank. Patty Matte, Coos-Carroll County Executive Director with FSA, had this to say after delivering the donations:

“The ladies organizing the food bank were so appreciative and said our timing was perfect. I noticed that the food bank shelves were sparsely stocked with food to give out. The whole experience made me feel really good in the efforts we were making to help those in need. I think I felt the appreciation much more by being able to deliver the food. I know we all understand that our donations are appreciated, but to hear it first hand was amazing!”

The efforts put forth by the employees at the Lancaster Service Center exemplify the purpose of both the People’s Garden and Feds Feed Families Initiatives.

THE PEOPLE’S GARDEN

The People’s Garden Initiative is an effort that began on February 2, 2009 by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) which challenges its employees to establish People's Gardens at USDA facilities or to help communities create gardens.

People's Gardens vary in size and type, but all have a common purpose - to help the community they're within and the environment. All gardens are required to have three components in common:

1. They must benefit the community, in some cases by creating recreational spaces and in others by providing a harvest for a local food bank or shelter.
2. They must be collaborative - that is, the garden must be created and maintained by a partnership of local individuals, groups, or organizations.
3. They should incorporate sustainable practices. The gardens might use compost or mulch made by participants. They might contain native plants or encourage beneficial insects. They also might exemplify water conservation, for instance, capturing rain in a barrel to water the garden.

All produce grown at a People's Garden on USDA owned or leased property is donated to help those in need.

FEDS FEED FAMILIES

Feds Feed Families is a government-wide effort led by the Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCO) Council, in partnership with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). These agencies and departments challenged their employees to donate to their local food banks this past summer by participating in the Feds Feed Families Campaign.

In too many families, one or both parents are under-employed or searching for work. Also of concern is that during summer months, children are out of school, and don't benefit from school nutrition programs.

Food banks are facing shortages across the country, so thank you all for supporting the 2011 Feds Feed Families Food Drive. USDA had an original goal of collecting 500,000 pounds of food and OPM set the overall goal for the entire Federal Government at 2,000,000 pounds. In the end, USDA employees alone collected **1,740,544** pounds of food for hungry families across the country!