



## COMMUNITY GARDEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

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# Garden Program Management

HELPFUL TIPS FROM **SUNFLOWER TURNING**

Creating and managing a community garden program is equally as important as the garden itself.

Before Sunflower Turning can help you with garden construction, you must develop your garden program to ensure that the garden will be well managed and it serves your community as best as possible.

This guide outlines several things you may want to keep in mind as you develop your plan and also includes a helpful checklist.



## A letter from our founder.

When I did my first garden, I realized it can take several weeks or months to complete the scoping and planning phase to develop a community garden. Having a clear vision and understanding of how a garden will work and serve the community, like your community, is vital for establishing a program that will strengthen community bonds and be a supplemental food source. I highly recommend this approach to you. It's what we use effectively at Sunflower Turning.

I also came to realize that it is critical to secure interest from the community the garden will serve to be able to understand certain details like, for instance, how many plots a community will, or can, accommodate. For you, this will be important and also directs the type of garden that you will need to create. For example, do you need to start a lottery for plots if there is high interest and not enough space? Should you be more selective and create a need-based eligibility system? Your community and space's situation will guide your unique garden management plan.

Starting early in the process, you will want to create a planning committee or have a designated leader to work with Sunflower Turning. It will make the entire project run smoother and more effectively. Although Sunflower Turning will be a resource at every step, our goal is to guide you through the process and help fill gaps by sharing gardening knowledge, resources, and materials now so that the garden you create is sustainable in your community for years to come. So it is important that we understand what your organization or community can contribute to create the garden and what Sunflower Turning may be able to add.

Construction cannot begin without first reviewing your garden program management plan with Sunflower Turning. Upon reviewing your plan, Sunflower Turning would use that plan to work with you to develop your garden.

Your garden should be inviting - consider having an area for kids, perhaps communal seating and tool storage. Aside from gardening, how might your community come together in this space?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy". The signature is stylized and includes a small drawing of a sunflower to the right of the name.

Wendy Padilla  
Founder & President



## Checklist

Not all may apply to your situation, but here are a few things you may want to consider.

### PHASE 1: SCOPING AND PLANNING

- Promote and gather interest in starting a garden program.
- Who will be participating? Do people need to qualify in some way?
- Will there be individual or group plots? Will it be a lottery? First-come-first-serve, bring-your-own-plants, how many plots, etc.?
- Form a planning committee or project leader for communication with Sunflower Turning and organization on your community's side.
- What can the community provide for the project? Supplies, top soil, plants, lumber, netting, fencing, a truck, funds etc. This will help Sunflower Turning learn about what else will be needed.
- Will there be an irrigation system or how will you ensure that plants are being watered?
- How will food be distributed? Take-what-you-plant or share?
- Will you charge participants fees to cover water use?
- Create garden rules.
- Inform Sunflower Turning about all of the items above.

### PHASE 2: CONSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION

- Work with Sunflower Turning to plan and coordinate construction
- Notify participants and volunteers about construction plan/dates
- Set dates and location(s) for donation collection.
- Ensure participants are informed of the community garden's rules.

(LIST CONTINUES)



## Checklist

Not all may apply to your situation, but here are a few things you may want to consider.

### PHASE 2: CONSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION (CONT'D)

- Work with Sunflower Turning to prepare the site.
- Construction and begin planting (hands-on education sessions from Sunflower Turning)
- Create a list of plots and assignments. Include contact information.
- Organize post-planting clean up if needed.

### PHASE 3: CONTINUED SUPPORT

- Designate a contact to receive Sunflower Turning's check-in surveys.
- Share SunflowerTurning's website and email with program participants so they can ask questions or reach out for help.

### YEAR OVER YEAR

- Winter garden care planning
- How will you get plants or seeds for the next year?  
Pre-growing seasons planning with help from Sunflower Turning as needed