



First: Three cheers for Magnuson Park Food Bank Gardener Team!

How to Get Involved with Food Bank Gardening 2017

If you're interested in helping with the food bank program, contact the food bank coordinator, delivery coordinator, your pod leader, or you can ask a food bank gardener if their plot could use another helper to help with watering, weeding, and harvesting. Time spent working with the Magnuson Garden Food Bank program counts towards the required volunteer hours for the garden.

I would also encourage gardeners to grow a row for our food bank donation program in your "own" P-Patch garden and please feel free to donate from your garden when you have extra produce or want to share what you have grown. If you are going to be out of town, contact me (Chris Budech, Food Bank coordinator) or let your pod leader know, and we can arrange a food bank harvest of the produce that is ready for picking while you're away. You can also ask a P-Patch neighbor to harvest. Please keep this in mind.

Food Bank Donation Program at Magnuson Park Community Garden

The Seattle P-Patch Program grows organic produce for donation to food banks and other meal programs. Ninety P-Patch gardens city wide grow and donate over 28,000 pounds of organic produce every year to those in need.

Magnuson Park Community Garden is one of the largest in the Seattle P-Patch system. We have the equivalent of 11 food bank gardens (also known as Giving Gardens) that are planted and harvested by Mag P-Patch volunteer gardeners specifically for donation. Gardeners also donate from their "own" P-Patch gardens. Organic produce donations are made to the Lake City Food Bank, and to the programs of Transitional Housing for families and singles located in nearby Magnuson Park Housing. The organic produce is greatly appreciated by those who receive the donations.

The food bank plots are planted with starts and seeds provided by our gardeners, and seeds provided by Lettuce Link of Seattle's Solid Ground organization. Solid Ground oversees the transitional housing in Magnuson Park, as well as providing many other good services in Seattle.

Vegetable starts are provided by the Seattle Giving Garden Network. The starts are variety of vegetables that are started in greenhouses staffed by volunteers. We pick up the starts from a greenhouse located in Ballard throughout the Spring and early Summer. In May we receive donation starts from the nearby Nathan Hale High School Horticulture program. Look for their plant sale in May. It's located at their Greenhouse just north of Nathan Hale HS and Jane Adams Middle School.

You'll be impressed with the program and their huge temperature controlled greenhouse. For more information, google Nathan Hale High School Horticulture

Here is how our Mag Garden Food Bank program works:

Food Bank Coordinator is Chris Budech cbudech@gmail.com

The FB coordinator ensures that the Food Bank gardens have volunteers working the gardens, and helps troubleshoot issues that may arise. The coordinator also acts as the liaison with Lettuce Link, the Giving Garden Network, and Nathan Hale H.S. Horticulture program. This includes organizing pick-up, and delivery of the plant starts to the garden. Throughout the season I will send out Food Bank information to Mag gardeners by email.

Delivery of produce to Food Bank and Magnuson Housing

Delivery Coordinator is Judy Foley judithfoley@comcast.net

Judy has a group of volunteers and oversees the scheduling of drivers to Magnuson Housing (Mondays) and Lake City Food Bank (Fridays). The regular weekly deliveries are made starting in May when early crops become harvestable, through the Fall. If you're interested in helping with the deliveries, please contact Judy. She can always use drivers to add to her list and it's another way to get volunteer hours.

Food Bank Gardeners Volunteer gardeners work on a specific Food Bank (FB) plot, usually a few core people to a plot. Gardeners who work a specific FB plot harvest their own plots. Mag Gardeners can also help by watering, weeding and harvesting plots as back up to gardeners who are out of town or need assistance.

Gardeners are encouraged to donate extra produce from their "own" P-Patch gardens or gardens and fruit trees at home. You can also "Grow a Row" for the Food Bank in your P-Patch garden.

Where to put the produce? Food Bank End of Shed

Harvested produce from the food bank gardens are placed inside the North End of the Mag Garden Green Shed. There are baskets and shelves to put the bagged produce. Make sure that you bag the produce. We try to have a bag supply in the FB end of shed, but also save your produce bags from home. Put produce in FB shed on Sunday, for the Monday morning delivery to Magnuson Housing, and on Thursday, for the Friday morning delivery to the Lake City Food Bank, or early morning on the delivery days. There is some informational signage in the FB shed. **Do not weigh the produce or record information in the log. The driver delivery team does that.**

A few years ago we were asked by the Seattle P-Patch Office to keep track of food donations made from gardeners "Own" P-patch as opposed to the gardens we have designated for food bank growing. This hasn't been difficult to do. **There are 2 white baskets on the left side of the food bank shed that are labeled "Own Garden". If you are donating from your own P-Patch or home garden, put your produce in these baskets.**

On delivery days, the driver weighs and records the number of pounds of produce into our Food Bank record book. Notations of type of produce may also be made. Our large garden has been one of the top donators with an average of over 3000 lbs. a year. The yearly total number of pounds donated is submitted to the City P-Patch program which tracks produce donations from all Seattle P-Patches. Last year we donated 4,378 pounds.