



## **News Release**

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### **Community Action Funds Help Grow Area Gardens**

**ROCKFORD, Ill.** – Are you interested in working with others to grow fresh, affordable food for our Winnebago and Boone County community? The Community Action Gardens project may be for you!

Applications are now available for the 2020 Community Action Garden grants through the City of Rockford Human Services Department, a Community Action Agency. Education and mentoring will also be available from University of Illinois volunteer Master Gardeners.

The following groups are invited to apply:

- Neighborhoods, schools, faith-based organizations or other groups that are interesting in learning gardening skills and are willing to donate a portion of produce to those in need
- Organizations that collaborate and include in their program education, nutrition, or expanded involvement and outreach to groups such as children, seniors, and veterans
- Neighborhoods and other types of groups that will use the gardens as part of an effort to increase neighborhood and community vitality or unity

Why garden? Community Action Gardens can:

- Assist people in growing fresh produce that may otherwise be unavailable, especially to low-income families and individuals
- Allow people to know where and how food is grown and chose items which may not be available locally
- Promote healthier lifestyles
- Increase community ownership and spirit
- Offer a unique opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds, experiences and ages to work side-by-side for common goals
- Reduce stress and increases a sense of wellness and belonging

- Connect, educate, and encourage entrepreneurial projects
- Allow families and individuals without land of their own the opportunity to produce food
- Serves as a healthy, inexpensive activity for youth that can bring them closer to nature, teach them important job and life skills, and allow them to interact with each other in a socially meaningful and physically productive way.

Applications can be found at <https://rockfordil.gov/city-departments/human-services/community-services/> or by contacting Delicia Harris at 779-348-7573.

Applications must be submitted by noon on March 9, 2020.

Community Action Gardens are funded by the City of Rockford Human Services Department, a Community Action Agency, through Community Services Block Grant funds. Community Action Gardens should not be confused with the rental garden plots available through the Rockford Park District.

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