



Community gardeners came out recently to help plant garlic in the market section of the New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens' plots in Marysville. Above, from left, are Madeleine Berrevoets, Hailey Lanteigne, Grace Hicks, Edee Klee. PHOTO: JAMES WEST/THE DAILY GLEANER

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Just fine, say volunteers with the New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens

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THE DAILY GLEANER

Volunteers of all ages showed up at the community garden behind Marysville Place recently to get the garden ready for winter and to have a garlic planting party.

"We're doing a fall cleanup. It's the end of the season, so now we're encouraging our gardeners to come in and clean up their beds and prepare them for winter, but it's also the optimal time to start planting garlic for next year's harvest," said Edee Klee, the co-chairwoman of the New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens.

The garlic was being planted in the 'market garden,' a portion of the community garden that will grow produce that people can purchase by donation.

"What we're doing is creating a U-pick here. We started in August and every Saturday we offer vegetables by donation to use as a fundraiser for us," Klee said.

The idea for the market garden was the result of the large crop produced last year.

"We had a surplus of food and didn't

know what to do with it," said garden co-ordinator Heather Watt.

However, it was also created due to the loss of funds the organization had experienced earlier this year.

"We're non-profit and historically we've been getting the majority of our funding through grants, that kind of thing. One of our grants we didn't get this year, so we needed to look at finding other sources of revenue," she said.

The first year of the market garden has been successful, with the organization raising close to \$1,000. The results surprised Klee.

"It was just something we decided to do (at) the last minute and started holding these U-picks, and it was so successful that we're really going to plan it for next year and make sure that we can offer some produce to the public," she said.

Although the success of the market garden can be attributed to the popularity of the concept, many of those who helped with the cleanup and planting on Saturday said they volunteered at the garden to contribute to the community.

"It's supposed to support the community. When we grow something, it goes to food banks and then people who don't have food, who are on the streets without anything, they can have food from the community garden," Nari Kuikel said.

New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens works with food banks and other organizations throughout the city to help raise awareness of food security. The promotion of how to achieve this state where everybody has access to nutritious food is one of the reasons why Arthur Taylor volunteers with the organization.

"I'm kind of involved in a few different environmental groups and one of the areas that I try to help out with is teaching about food security," Taylor said.

"The garden here is a really good example of how people can develop food security in their community by not just having the food here but also through the classes that the community harvest group offers."

New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens holds a variety of workshops in different locations. It offers basic cooking classes in the teaching kitchen at Greener Village Community Food Centre on Riverside Drive.

Gardening workshops are held both indoors and outdoors.

There is a second community garden location behind St. Mary's Anglican Church on McAvoy Street. Gardening classes are taught in the church annex and outdoors in the McAvoy Street garden and outdoors in the community garden location behind Marysville Place

where the cleanup took place.

"Generally, the whole package that they offer, with the hands-on and theoretical stuff, the presentations, they help people become more self-sufficient and self-reliant," Taylor said.

The members of New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens think the relationships and connections that are created while working in the gardens are just as important as the food that is grown.

"When you get everybody pulling together like this, it's creating relationships ... no matter where we're from, you know, we have folks from Bhutan, we've got school kids, we've got seniors and we have one thing in common and that's food," Klee said.

The work on the garden will continue until November and it will begin again in April.

The winter months will focus on the workshops that are being held at Greener Village.

Cooking workshops are currently being held until mid-November and will resume in January.

In February, New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens will begin to host its gardening workshops.

For more information on the workshops or on how to volunteer, visit the New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens website at nbchg.org.