

Union County Means Green - 2018 Community Garden Grants



The Union County Means Green Community Garden Grants program is part of Union County Plant A Seed, a 2018 initiative of Freeholder Chairman Sergio Granados that engages residents of all ages with educational and environmental programs, helping to foster individual empowerment and community service.

Welcome

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders is proud to present the 2018 Union County Means Green Community Garden Grants program.

Mission & Goals

This countywide program is funded by the Freeholder Board to help children and adults connect with the experience of growing fresh produce in their communities, leading to improved nutrition as well as opportunities for education, recreation, social activities, community service and neighborhood beautification. Educating gardeners on best practices for a healthy and successful garden is also an important part of this program.

Schedule

Applications for 2018 are now being accepted. Applications must be received **by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 16, 2018** in order to qualify.

Applicants will be notified of their award on or about **Friday, March 23, 2018**.

Successful applicants will receive their awards at the start of the Freeholder Board meeting scheduled for **Thursday, April 12, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.**, at the 6th Floor Meeting Room, County Administration Building, 10 Elizabethtown Plaza in Elizabeth. Attendance is required by a head gardener or other garden representative.

Awardees will also attend a grant workshop in April (date tbd).

Who May Apply

Funding from the Union County Means Green Community Garden Grants program is awarded only to non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, and to municipal entities including but not limited to senior housing, public libraries and community centers.

Other groups or organizations are welcome to apply but ***must*** designate a municipal or local 501(c)(3) grant partner to accept an award on their behalf. Groups that are organized as LLCs or other commercial entities are not eligible for this program.

What the Grants Cover

Three grant options are available to accommodate a wide range of garden projects and engage all levels of skill, from beginning to experienced gardeners. Gardeners may apply for more than one grant.

Option 1: Start a New Garden (\$1,250.00). Option 1 provides a simple, economical way to start a new garden. As grant administrator, the nonprofit organization Groundwork Elizabeth provides a complete garden package including installation of new beds along with soil, seeds or seedlings, tools, materials and follow-up support. Applicants can specify raised beds, Earth Boxes, or waist-high “senior” beds.

Option 2: Garden Improvements (\$500.00). Option 2 provides materials and equipment needed to complete a new garden, or enhance an existing garden. Qualifying purchases include but are not limited to soil, compost, new beds (including raised beds, senior beds and Earth Boxes), irrigation, fencing, tools, benches/tables (for social engagement and education), seeds, seedlings, saplings, harvest supplies, storage bins and sheds. The grant cannot be used for decorative items, food/drink, advertising/outreach, etc.

Option 3: New Garden Innovations (award varies). Option 3 is designed to bring leading trends in community gardening and urban agriculture to Union County residents.

- **Start a Pollinator Garden** (\$750.00). This is a pre-budgeted package developed by Groundwork Elizabeth. It includes installation and support. These gardens include pollinator-attracting herbs and vegetables.
- **Start a Hydroponic Garden** (\$3,000.00) This is a pre-budgeted package developed by Groundwork Elizabeth. Groundwork will provide delivery, setup and follow-up support.
- **High Tunnel Installation** (up to \$2,000.00). This award is intended for experienced gardeners who have already obtained a US Department of Agriculture grant for high tunnel installation. The USDA grant typically covers 80 percent of the cost and the Union County grant would cover the remainder of the cost, up to \$2000.*

**High tunnels are raised crop coverings that increase yields by extending the growing season. They also help to prevent erosion, retain moisture, and reduce weeds and pests. Under its Natural Resources Conservation Initiative, USDA promotes high tunnels for use in community gardens and urban farming as well as in traditional farming.*

Grant recipients are required to display a garden sign provided by Union County, enroll their garden in the free community garden resource network “Come Grow With Us” (a project of Groundwork Elizabeth), and attend an award distribution event to be scheduled in April.

Applicants must designate a Head Gardener (Head Gardener #1), who will be responsible for coordinating the garden and communicating with the Grant Administrator, and a back-up contact (Head Gardener #2).

Awardees must spend their grants in 2018. Block grant awardees must provide receipts for their purchases.

Awardees must include members of the Freeholder Board in garden events, send biweekly photos for use in an online photo gallery, and provide recognition of Freeholder Board in any promotion of the grant program.

For more information on the Groundwork Elizabeth Come Grow With Us! community garden program please visit groundworkelizabeth.com or call Groundwork, 908-289-0262.

Download the Application Form

[Click here to download the 2018 Garden Grants Application](#)

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Board of Chosen Freeholders**