

KPOV – *The Point*  
Gardening: Get Good at It  
“Grow A Row”  
August 7, 2018

After my morning salutations to all that I am thankful for and with my basket in hand, I set out to the vegetable garden early today. It's going to be another hot one so I want to get out to see what has grown since yesterday and harvest what I can before the heat sets in. At my heels are my two dogs anxious to make the morning rounds between the garden beds. There will be a plethora of critters to chase around and out of the yard bringing order back to my oasis of plentitude.

Walking through my garden, I see green beans and chard, kale and lettuce, tomatoes and zucchini. To look at what all I've planted you might think me a little nuts. There is more food here than my family of four can eat. In my garden, I plant for plenty and “grow a row” to share.

Food insecurity is a problem in this land of plenty for individuals and families who do not have access to adequate nutrition. The USDA defines food insecurity as a state in which “consistent access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources at times during the year.” The most recent 2018 report from the Oregon Center for Public Policy states, “Oregonians across the state are having trouble getting enough food for an active, healthy life. More than one in 13 people in every county in Oregon struggles to put food on the table.” Those statistics include our tri-county area where on average 14% of our people and 23% of our children are at risk of hunger.

A team of dedicated Master Gardeners manages and cares for the demonstration garden at the Oregon State University Extension Office in Redmond. Teams of Master Gardeners volunteer their time in two community gardens- one in Hollishead Park in central Bend, the other in Discovery Park on Bend's west side. As the gardening season ramps up, the Central Oregon Master Gardeners donate vegetables from the demonstration and community gardens to NeighborImpact as they are the central hub for the food banks in Central Oregon and distribute donations to local food pantries.

The website for NeighborImpact reads:

**Grow A Row or Donate Fresh Produce**

Planting a Garden? Why not grow an extra row for your neighbors in need! Someone in need would be thrilled to get your extra zucchinis or tomatoes. Food pantries and soup kitchens need produce that stores and transports well. Refrigerated space is often limited, so foods that don't require refrigeration are always wanted.

Here are some recommendations:

- Tomatoes (pick when slightly under-ripe)
- Green beans
- Winter squash (acorn or butternut)
- Garlic
- Hot peppers
- Spinach

- Cucumbers
- Zucchini
- Collard greens
- Lettuce
- Kale

Tomatoes are a good choice. Many a tomato variety grown in Central Oregon is prolific-making tomatoes an easy share. Even those crazy big, jumbo sized zucchini can find a home at the food pantries. Who doesn't like Zucchini Lasagna? Or zucchini breads- to name the obvious.

There are many places that people can donate their summer harvest from churches to food banks. When a gardener decides to make the leap and Grow a Row and share their harvest with those in need, it's recommended that a call be made to the local food bank or organization to discuss and confirm the drop off times and places.

Please join the Central Oregon Master Gardeners and me in growing a little extra and giving from your horn of plenty to ease the hunger of food insecurity. Grow an extra row, Central Oregon! A friend... a neighbor will thank you. Your community needs YOU!

For more information about food donation sites and food insecurity, and other topics, go to our website at [www.gocomga.com](http://www.gocomga.com) and click the KPOV tab on the orange bar. Thanks for listening to, Gardening- Get Good at it! on KPOV, *The Point*.

Resources:

NeighborImpact <http://www.neighborimpact.org>

Plant a Row in your Garden and Share the Harvest with Oregon Food Bank and other Food Relief Agencies <http://www.neighborimpact.org/services/food/donate-food/>

Monthly Food Box Program <https://www.thegivingplate.org/services/>

Bend Food Project <https://bendfoodproject.com/community-events/>

Food Insecurity in Oregon: Consider the Role of Housing  
<https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/sites/agscid7/files/oregonhungerreportoctober2016.pdf>

Oregon Lags in Fighting Food Insecurity <https://www.ocpp.org/2018/05/17/oregon-food-insecurity-lag/>

Oregonians in Every County and Congressional District Suffer Food Insecurity  
<https://www.ocpp.org/2018/06/20/oregonians-every-county-and-congressional-district/>