



**Purpose:** To promote and support local food production, learn and share gardening techniques and provide a place to garden for Marshfield area residents. Growing your own vegetables promotes healthier nutrition, reduces food costs, provides food security, fosters a community activity, reduces carbon footprints through local food production and provides physical and emotional wellness.

### **Background**

- Project began as part of Healthy Lifestyles – Marshfield Area Coalition community committee.
- Planning began in summer 2008 and the garden was opened in May 2009.
- Planning committee includes representatives from various organizations (UW-Extension Wood County, Wood County Health Department, Saint Joseph’s Hospital, Sustainable Marshfield, Aging and Disability Resource Center, First Presbyterian Church, Good Shepherd) and interested community members.

### **Gaining Community Interest**

- A survey was developed and distributed to gauge community interest in the project
  - Survey was sent to Coalition members, Soup or Socks, St. Vincent’s, Mary’s Place, Library and distributed to other community locations.
  - We received a great response, with more than 90 respondents indicating an interest in gardening or helping to establish the garden.
    - Over 90% of the respondents felt a community garden was a good idea
- Articles were published in the Marshfield News-Herald to gain interest in garden plots. The articles received a large response from community members who wanted an opportunity to reserve one of the 36 plots.

### **Garden Details**

- *Garden Sites:* Located at First Presbyterian Church (on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Adler Road) and Good Shepherd Church (on the corner of Mcmillan Street and Fig Avenue) which leases the land to Healthy Lifestyles – Marshfield Area Coalition.
- *Gardening Style:* 56 raised beds, square-foot approach.
- *Water:* Three rain barrels at each site are used (250-gallon); they are filled with a hose during drought. Rain barrels were donated by a local construction company and by a community member.
- *Gardener Etiquette:* An agreement was distributed and signed by all gardeners noting the “rules and regulations” of the garden site. A Hold Harmless document was also signed by all gardeners.
- *Fee:* Gardeners are asked to make a \$15 donation.
- *Funding:* Donations were acquired from gardeners, local organizations and Healthy Lifestyles – Marshfield Area Coalition.

### **Master Gardeners/Educational Sessions**

A special thank you to the master gardeners who assisted gardeners and had a demonstration plot at each site for gardeners to learn about square foot gardening. Produce from each demonstration plot was donated to Mary’s Place. Also, thank you to UW-Extension Wood County and Traditions on Chestnut for providing educational sessions on food preparation, preserving produce and cleaning up the garden. These educational sessions were open to all gardeners and the community.

**\*\* For More Information:** *If you are interested in volunteering your time, to make a donation, or for more information, please contact Marshfield Clinic Center for Community Outreach at 221-8400 or Sue Meyer at 715-384-3653, or visit [www.marshfieldhealthylifestyles.org](http://www.marshfieldhealthylifestyles.org) \*\**