

Growing Community: Meet the 2026 Urban Garden Grant Recipients

The 2026 Cook County Farm Bureau Community Garden Grant Committee - four experienced volunteers, reviewed applications from twenty community gardens and selected six outstanding recipients. The decision was difficult to make, please meet this year's recipients:

- **Respond Now Community Garden**, located in Chicago Heights, has a primary purpose to supplement Respond Now's food pantry with freshly grown and harvested produce and increasing pantry client's access to nutritious food. The garden also serves as a gathering place for volunteers and community members, where discussions about food security, gardening, and services provided by Respond Now. Grant funds will be used for vegetable seed, plantings and starters, compost, mulch and garden supplies.
- **69th & Stewart Garden**, located in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood is a community-based garden created to cultivate a safe, welcoming outdoor space to serve local families, youth, and residents who have limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The garden also serves as a space to educate, provide youth engagement, and wellness centered programming while beautifying the underutilized lot. Grant funds will be used for vegetable seed, seedlings, soil, compost, straw mulch and garden supplies.
- **Jen Jensen Youth Educational Gardens at Eckhart Park**, located Chicago's Noble Square Eckhart Park neighborhood, is a volunteer led, hands on food production garden. The space is designed as an outdoor classroom connecting kids to nature, culture and community, while growing and harvesting nutritious food, ecology, global food origin and shared stewardship of public space. Grant funds will be used for vegetable seed, starter plants soil, garden tools and supplies.
- **The Rising Garden**, located in Forest Park, is a community garden, garden volunteers from Freedom RISE look to serve local residents, youth and seniors living in communities impacted by food insecurity and limited access to fresh produce. This learning garden distributes fresh fruit, vegetables, and herbs , while providing a hands-on learning in the areas of gardening, nutrition, leadership and environmental stewardship. Grant funds will be used for soil, root vegetable and herb seed, mulch, vegetable seedling plants, garden supplies.
- **Phoenix Farms, NFP**, located in Chicago's Woodlawn neighborhood is a community driven urban ag initiative, cultivating pollinator habitats, develop food forest systems and provide equitable access to fresh, local produce. The garden is open and accessible to area residents receiving fresh produce as well as First Presbyterian Church food pantry. Education is central to the garden's mission, home to learning on all age levels. Grant funds will be used for fruit bushes, fruit trees, pollinator seed, garden tools and supplies.
- **Schaumburg Food Pantry Garden**, located on a church lot in Schaumburg, the garden is a volunteer ran food production garden, serving Schaumburg & Hanover Township Food Pantries averaging 3000 lbs of food production in the last 2 years. The garden is also home to educational programs to local residents and is a designated local Monarch Waystation pollinator garden also home to a large compost system. Funds will be used for fruit trees, potato seeds, seedlings, plant starters, onion sets, fertilizer and supplies.



This Community
Urban Garden is
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While we cannot provide financial grants to the remaining 14 gardens who applied, our hope is that you may provide assistance to a deserving garden near you. Please consider supporting: River Roots Garden, Chicago; Oak Lawn Community HS Garden, Oak Lawn; All Things Through Christ Comm Garden of Hope, Chicago; Three Brothers Garden, Chicago; Thomas Middle School Soil-Mates Garden, Arlington Heights; Tri-Village Garden Club Pantry Garden, Bartlett; Lemont Township Community Garden, Lemont; Green Thumb in a Box, Chicago; Roots Community Garden, Palatine; Evergreen Park Urban Barn, Evergreen Park; Chicago FarmWorks, Chicago; Community Roots Garden NFP, Chicago and Little Buds Garden, Des Plaines.

Congratulations to all the gardens and we wish you a bountiful growing season.