



Situation

Home gardeners in Kansas produce \$15-20 million worth of vegetables every year. Many new gardeners are seeking skills to improve their harvests. Many gardeners prefer to use organic gardening methods. All Kansas gardeners struggle with growing produce in Kansas weather extremes and with regular insect and disease challenges.

Public Value

Enhancing the ability of Kansas citizens to produce fresh fruits and vegetables for themselves will improve their health, their ability to make decisions about fresh produce as well as deepening their connection to their community by using Extension resources and contributing to gardening activities in their neighborhoods.

Outcomes

Short-Term (Knowledge)

- Home food gardeners learn to identify and manage garden weeds, insects, and diseases.
- Home food gardeners learn about good watering practices.
- Home food gardeners learn about fertilizers, soil health, cover crops, and composting.
- New gardeners learn techniques for starting a garden.
- Home food gardeners learn techniques for extending the growing season.
- Home food gardeners learn to plan their gardens and select varieties to meet their needs and the needs of their families.
- Home food gardeners learn garden maintenance techniques.
- Home food gardeners learn to harvest and store produce safely and effectively.
- Home gardeners learn to preserve their harvest for later use.
- Home gardeners learn to cook their produce in a variety of healthful and flavorful ways.
- Parents learn how to effectively garden with their children.
- Children learn basic gardening and cooking skills.
- Program participants report using strategies that increase their access to high-quality, abundant and safe food (e.g., gardening, home food preservation, low cost meal preparation).
- Staff and volunteers advocate or develop plans for increased access to high-quality, abundant and safe food (e.g., promoting private and community gardens, increasing local food production for food insecure persons, donations to food pantries).

Indicators

- Did you learn how to better carry out _____ gardening activities/techniques?
- What gardening techniques did you learn?
- Did you learn tips for cooking or safely preserving your produce?
- As a result of this program, I know that gardening could help feed my family high-quality and safe food.
- As a result of this program, I learned more about promoting private and community gardening to help residents in my community who have limited resources improve their access to high-quality, safe food.
- Did you learn how to better plan your garden?
- Did you learn how to water appropriately in your garden?
- Did you learn about fertilizers, soil health, or composting?
- Did you learn what you need to do to start a new garden?
- Did you learn basic gardening skills, such as when and how to plant common vegetables?
- Did you learn basic cooking skills for how to cook fresh vegetables?
- Did you learn healthy ways to add more produce to your diet?
- Did you learn how to extend the gardening season using a variety of methods?
- Did you learn how to identify and manage common garden weeds, insects, and diseases?
- Did you learn how to water appropriately and use good watering techniques to conserve water?

Medium-Term (Behavior)

- Home food gardeners effectively manage garden weeds, insects, and diseases.
- Home food gardeners use water in appropriate ways.
- Home food gardeners effectively manage the health of their garden soil, make and use compost, and plant appropriate cover crops.
- New gardeners successfully develop new gardens.
- Home food gardeners effectively extend the gardening season to harvest produce more months of the year.
- Home food gardeners plan their gardens to maximize space and yields as needed by their families.
- Home gardeners harvest and store produce safely.
- Home gardeners preserve their harvest for later use.
- Home gardeners cook and consume a wide variety of produce.
- Parents and children garden together.
- Children grow and eat produce from the family garden.

Indicators

- Have you successfully managed garden weeds, insects, and diseases?
- Do you identify and treat insect and disease problems to minimize yield loss?
- Have you watered deeply and infrequently, depending on the weather and plant needs? Are your plants healthy with less water?
- Have you maintained or improved the health of your garden soil through fertilizers, compost, and cover crops?
- Were you successful in starting a new garden?
- Have you harvested produce earlier or later in the growing season due to new techniques or methods?
- Are you storing your produce appropriately and safely?
- Are you safely preserving your harvest for later use?
- Are you consuming or preserving the produce that you grow?
- Have you increased your consumption of fresh produce? By how much?
- Are your children eating the produce that they helped grow?
- Did you plant your garden at the right time and use recommended spacings?
- Did you use any techniques to allow for more intensive plantings, such as trellises?

Long-Term (Change in Condition)

- Home gardens are healthy and productive. They are managed in a way so as not to degrade natural resources.
- Community water resources are used wisely.
- Healthy, productive gardens provide fresh produce to families.
- Increased consumption of fresh produce, resulting in improved health.
- Increased availability and access to fresh produce.
- Improved quality of life due to improved diet and exercise.
- Reduced grocery costs for fresh produce.
- Positive youth development through garden participation.
- Improved household resilience to challenges through better health, lower grocery costs, and well-managed outdoor space.

Indicators

- Is your garden healthy and productive?
- Have you experienced higher yields than in previous years? By how much?
- Does your garden provide additional produce to your family that you may not have otherwise eaten? How much additional produce do you consume?
- Have you observed improved health due to increase produce consumption or physical activity in your families?
- Has your garden reduced your grocery bills, at least during the garden season?
- Have you managed your garden in such a way that the costs are less than the value of your harvests?

Outputs

Activities

- Gardening classes & workshops
- Newsletters
- Social media
- Online videos
- Soil testing, insect & disease diagnostics

- Demonstrations
- Cooking, preserving, & nutrition classes & workshops
- Classes & workshops that integrate gardening, cooking, preserving, and nutrition information.

Participants

- Home gardeners growing vegetables, fruits, or herbs
- Audiences of particular interest may include: racial and ethnic minorities, low income people, youth, people with disabilities, young families, young adults, people living in food deserts