

Backyard gardening may be even more important

The Bethlehem Gadfly community gardens May 28, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts on community gardens* 

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Gadfly:

10+ years ago, I was discussing with Ellen Larmer (who was then head of CADC-B), the idea of promoting backyard gardening here in Southside. We determined that it would take someone with good organizer abilities, solid experience with organic growing, and fluency in both Spanish and English. We had a likely person in mind and Ellen figured she could cobble together the funds to pay for 30 or so weeks, 15 hr/wk, at a fair pay of \$15/hr.

While she loved the proposal for backyard gardens, our ideal candidate had already accepted summer employment on an upstate farm, and she did not feel it would be right to back out on a position she had already accepted. Sadly, we did not have another candidate in mind and decided to abandon the project and reconsider it in the future.

I think both community gardens are very important, especially in situations where they can serve a specific community. I prefer a communal growing approach when that's feasible but a hybrid approach where individuals have their own plot but also help grow crops for the community.

In the long run, I suspect backyard gardening will be even more important for families that have the tiny amount of space needed to grow key elements of their own food.

Peter

Addendum: Back in 2011, the director of the Growing Hope program spoke at Lafayette College, and one of the amazing factoids she mentioned was that the WWII-era Victory Gardens were so successful that these backyard gardeners in the US grew almost half their food needs.