Starting a Community Garden and Growing Fruit Trees – Why, What and How

August 7, 2013
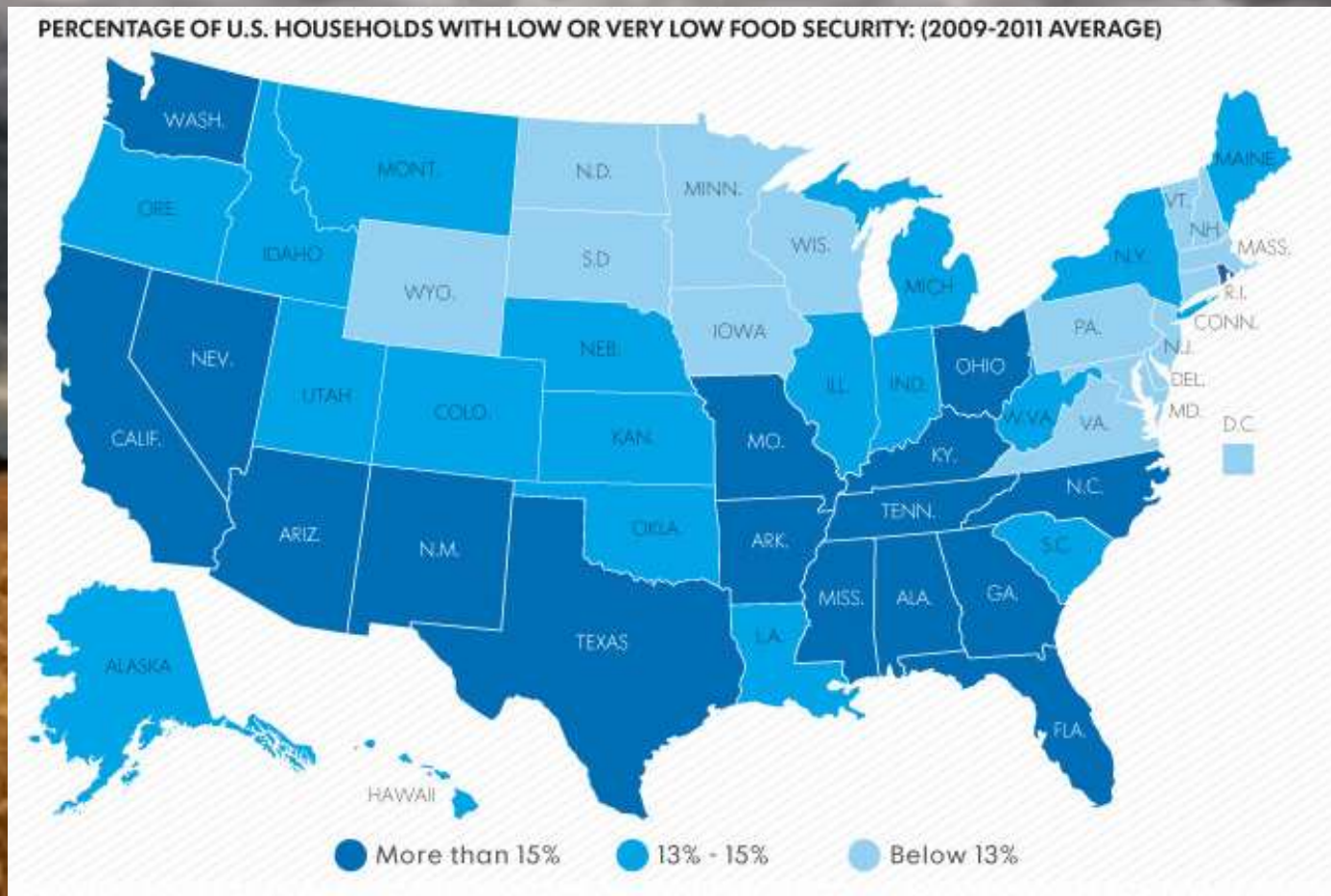
KANSAS CITY COMMUNITY GARDENS
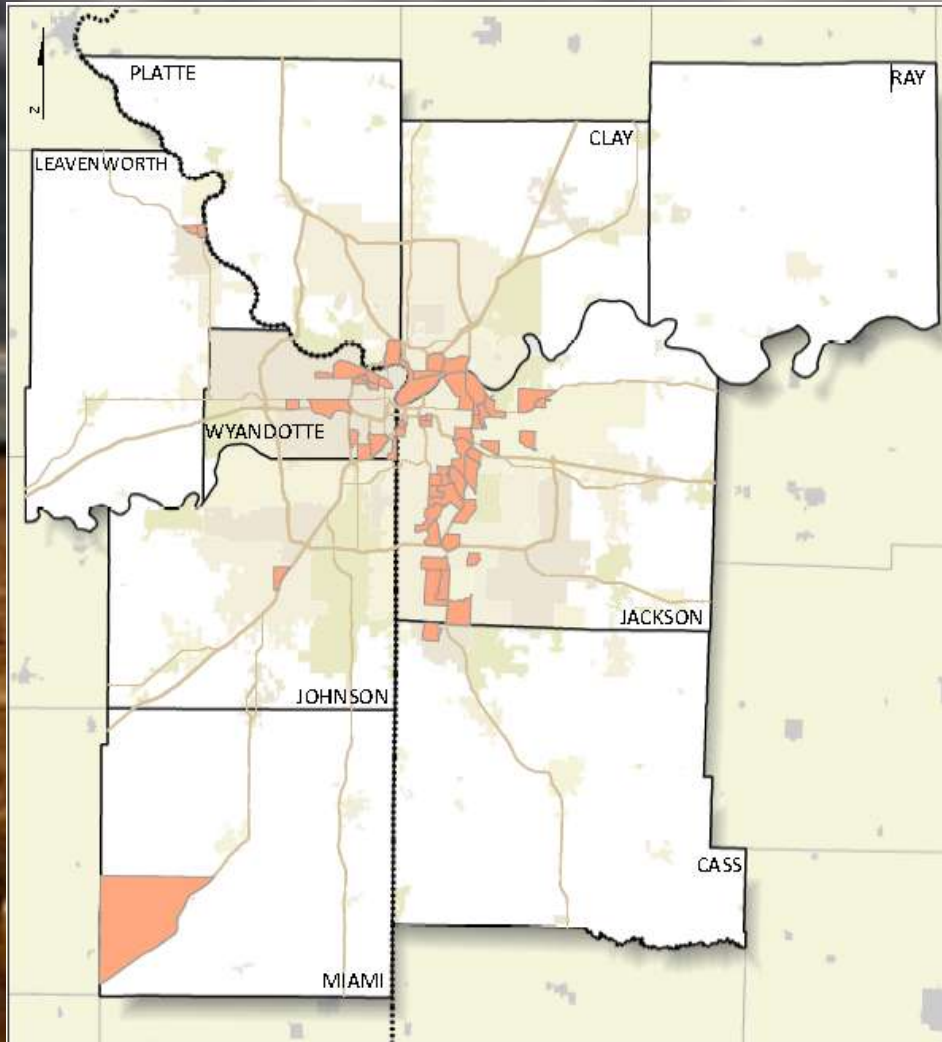
the GIVING GROVE

Healthy Food Access

PERCENTAGE OF U.S. HOUSEHOLDS WITH LOW OR VERY LOW FOOD SECURITY: (2009-2011 AVERAGE)

We face a perpetual lack of food in our country – especially fresh, high quality nutritious food.

Food Access Problem – KC

Within our metro area, substantial numbers of residents struggle to feed the family & many have very low access to supermarkets

Local Food Insecurity

- Hunger in America exists for over 50 million people. That is 1 in 6 of the U.S. population – including more than 1 in 5 children.

- Good nutrition, particularly in the first three years of life, has implications for a child's future physical and mental health.

- Our Local Hunger Challenge:
  1. Jackson – 19.1% or 128,180 food insecure people
  2. Johnson – 11.7% or 62,990 food insecure people
  3. Wyandotte – 20.5% or 32,130 food insecure people
  4. Clay – 13% or 28,340 food insecure people

- Across America faith communities are jumping on the gardening bandwagon.

- Community gardens are springing up in church parking lots all over the Kansas City metro area, and some urban churches have even taken over vacant blocks of land to start gardens.

- In Kansas City, we also have the opportunity to engage "The Giving Grove" which extends the more common vegetable garden with fruits, nuts and berries.

Community Partner Gardens:

How to Start Group Gardens and Community Gardens

Basic Steps in Starting a Community Partner Garden:

- Determine garden goals and structure
- Determine if sufficient support exists

- Identify and recruit garden users
- Site selection
- Site development plan
- Garden planting plan
- Garden budget and project funding
- Garden organizing
- Garden operations

Identify the Goals for Your Community Partner Garden

What is the purpose of your garden?
Who do you want to participate?
What will you do with the produce?

1. Primary Goals - **Food**

   - Food for others
   - Food for your group
   - Food for individuals
   - Food for selling

2. Secondary Goals

   - Education
   - Beautification
   - Community building
   - Socialization
   - Exercise

Identify and Recruit Garden Users

- Determine who is going to use the garden before you begin
- Gauge interest- surveys, door-to-door, working with neighborhood organizations and informational meetings
- Lay out tasks and expectations at the beginning

Site Selection: Picking the BEST Site

Criteria and Factors

- Finding land
- Location- proximity to garden users
- Soil test
- Previous uses
- Existing vegetation- trees
- Sun exposure (FULL SUN!)
- Soil conditions
- Drainage and slope
- Water source

Site Selection: Soil Tests

- pH
- Organic matter
- P (phosphorus)
- K (potassium)
- Lead and other heavy metals

Garden Development: Raised Beds vs. Ground Plots

Garden Development: Water for Your Garden

Water Sources:
- Existing on-site water
- Neighbor's water
- Rain barrels and water storage containers
- New water line

Garden Development: Fencing

The type of fence you choose should be based on who/what you want to keep out.
- 4' or 8' tall
- Material: cattle panels, t-posts and wire fencing, chain link, decorative

Developing a Budget: Estimating Your Costs

Development Budget (start-up costs)

- Raised beds
- Tilling
- Soil Amendment
- Water
- Fencing
- Tools
- Tool Storage
- Shelter

Developing a Budget: Estimating Your Costs

Operations Budget (on-going)

- Tilling
- Seeds and plants
- Fertilizer
- Mulch
- Water
- Tomato cages, trellises and stakes
- Insect control
- Compost
- Insurance
- Portable Toilet Rental

Garden Operations

Common Garden Activities to Plan for:

- Tilling
- Planting
- Watering
- Thinning
- Weed control
- Mulching
- Insect control
- Fertilizing
- Caging and trellising
- Harvesting
- Mowing and trimming
- Trash pick-up

Kansas City Community Gardens

Helps group gardens with:

- Site evaluation and site selection
- Site planning
- Budget estimating
- Garden tilling
- Seeds, vegetable plants and fertilizer at low cost
- Educational workshops

- **Call (816) 931-3877 for more information**

Growing Fruit Trees

the GIVING GROVE

Our Objective:

Inspiring and empowering communities to grow their own nutritious fruit, nuts and berries....
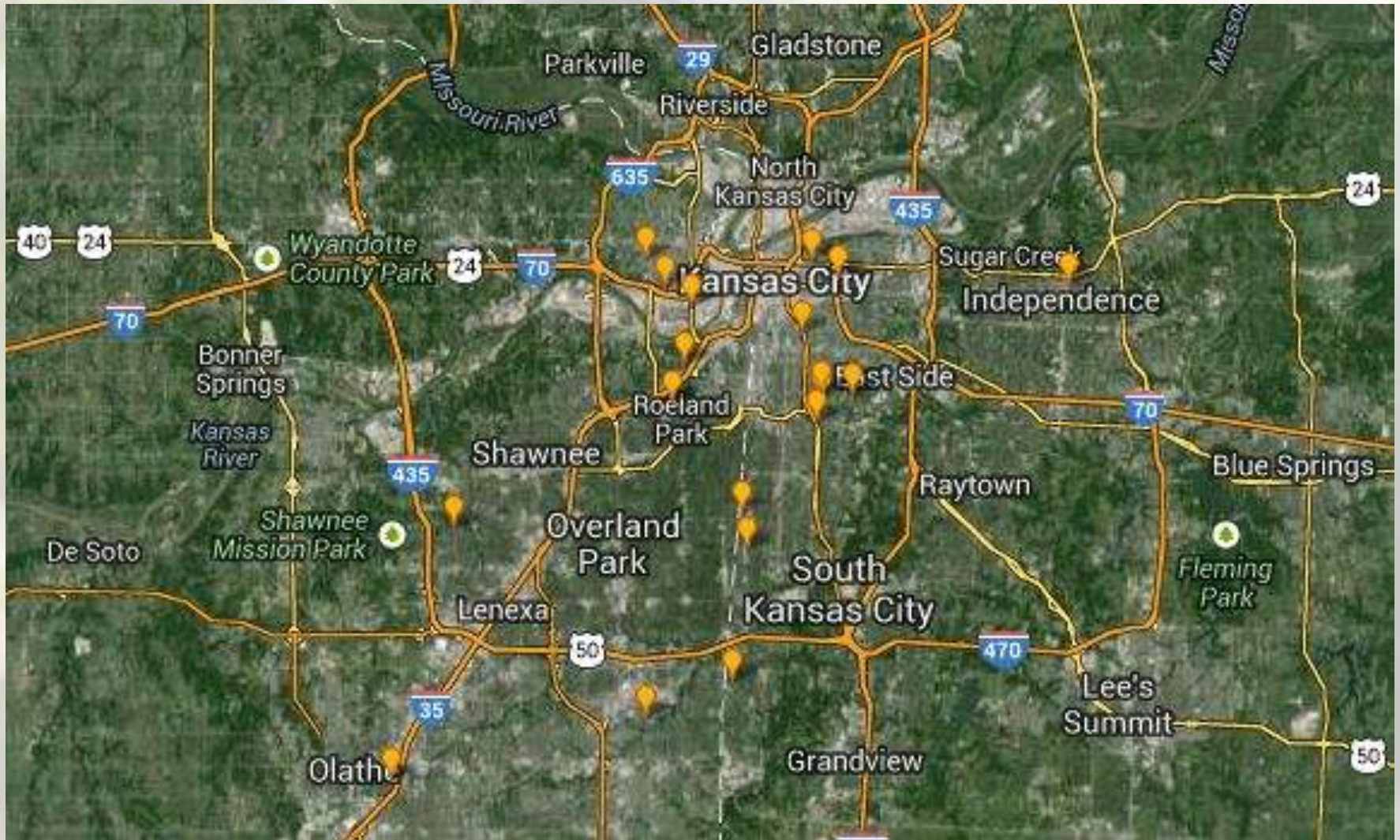
Children

....And helping our Children "reconnect" with nature and gardening

Our Vision:

We envision:

- fresh perennial produce made available to urban neighborhoods

- food-producing "parks" of varying sizes and complexity

- people, especially children reconnected with growing healthy food

- communities inspired to come together to grow, tend, harvest, use and share their own food

Our Progress:

Giving Grove Provides:

– Landscape planning and design

– Access to disease resistant nursery stock

– Help with installation

– Education

– Coaching from our Horticulturists

– Gleaning (via Society of St. Andrew)

– In some cases, funding

Groups we partner with must provide:

– The land

– People to plant (and community involvement)

– A committed site steward and apprentice, attending periodic training

– Access or a plan for a sustainable water source

Projects:
Hale Cook Elementary

First of thirteen spring projects

Faith-Based Projects:

Cherith Brook

Faith-Based Projects:

KANSAS CITY

JERUSALEM FARM

Prayer - Community - Simplicity - Service

Jerusalem Farm

Faith-Based Projects:

Mitzvah Garden

Faith-Based Projects:

SPUMC - Lenexa

Faith-Based Projects:

Metro-Lutheran Ministries

Faith-Based Projects:

St Pius Catholic Church

For more information - go to:
kccg.org
givinggrove.org

Or Contact Rob Reiman, rcreiman@gmail.com
Bobby Wright, bobby@kccg.org