

Harpswell Community Garden 2018 Annual Report



gardens & gardeners

92% of all plots were rented by 15 individuals or families this season. 60% of the 2017 gardeners returned. Two unrented plots were used for Common Good Garden growing and to experiment with fencing to deter wild animals. Paul Weeden again donated perennial and annual plants for the communal herb garden, a popular resource for the community gardeners.

infrastructure

We continued our efforts to improve the water system. Having the well dug deeper in 2017 improved its reliability in providing a steady supply, but the distance from a single spigot to the plots still made watering a time-consuming and strenuous chore. Grant funding provided for the installation of a solar-powered, pressurized system to transport water from the well to two 275-gallon storage tanks. Volunteers built a raised wooden stand on a gravel bed to support the cisterns, and a shed for the pressure tank and pump. They also dug trenches to extend water pipes to five outlets in convenient locations among the plots.



critter reduction

Each year the garden has become increasingly invaded by four-footed opportunists. Perimeter fencing keeps out deer, but chipmunks, squirrels, skunks, porcupines and raccoons enter by climbing over or burrowing under it. Many crops such as tomatoes, melons and cucumbers were decimated this year, causing great disappointment among gardeners. We conducted informal experiments using various deterrents. The most successful strategy involved the combination of partially-buried wire fencing with electric fencing. Based on this observation, landscaping professionals have been consulted and are helping to form a plan of action to secure the garden's boundaries in 2019.

soil issues

Bulk purchases of organic compost in spring and fall were used to enrich and build up raised beds, fostering improved soil drainage and fertility. Due to existing drainage issues and further compaction of ground caused by large vehicles brought in for the new water supply project, much of the common area lawn lies underwater from late winter through spring. Funding for a drainage system and the addition of loam for leveling will be sought through grants in 2019.

community outreach

A record-breaking harvest from the Common Good Garden, as well as surplus from gardeners' plots, was donated to local organizations addressing community food needs: Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program's Food Mobile visited the town office monthly; weekly drop-offs were made to the MCHPP food bank in Brunswick (which also serves Harpswell residents); and Harpswell Aging at Home was supplied with take-home fresh vegetables at its "Lunch With Friends" events.

Due to heavy equipment traffic that resulted from the Mitchell Field pier removal project, our usual workshops and other summer activities did not take place this year. Open Garden Days, a composting workshop in conjunction with the town, and Harpswell Heritage Land Trust's Nature Day Camp field trips are planned for 2019.



volunteer efforts



618 volunteer hours were spent improving and maintaining lawn areas and the Common Good Garden, as well as helping to build and install portions of the new water system. Work Days were held every other month. Mary Ruchinkas continues to manage all aspects of the CGG from seed-starting through harvest. Volunteers mowed and weed-whacked throughout the season, and several dependable gleaners harvested and transported produce to be given away through food programs. 11 Apogee Adventures campers pitched in for a half day in July, and eight students chose to lend a hand at the garden as part of Bowdoin College's Common Good Day.

grants

We were awarded a \$2,700 grant from Harpswell Heritage Land Trust in 2018, which provided for operating expenses and allowed us to proceed with the solar-powered, pressurized water system.

communications

Articles about HCG appeared in the May issue of the Harpswell Anchor, and the August 31st issue of the Mid-Coast Forecaster. Information about the community garden was on display at the Harpswell Town Meeting in March. Our Facebook page continues to highlight progress of plants and people through photos and keeps both gardeners and the public informed.

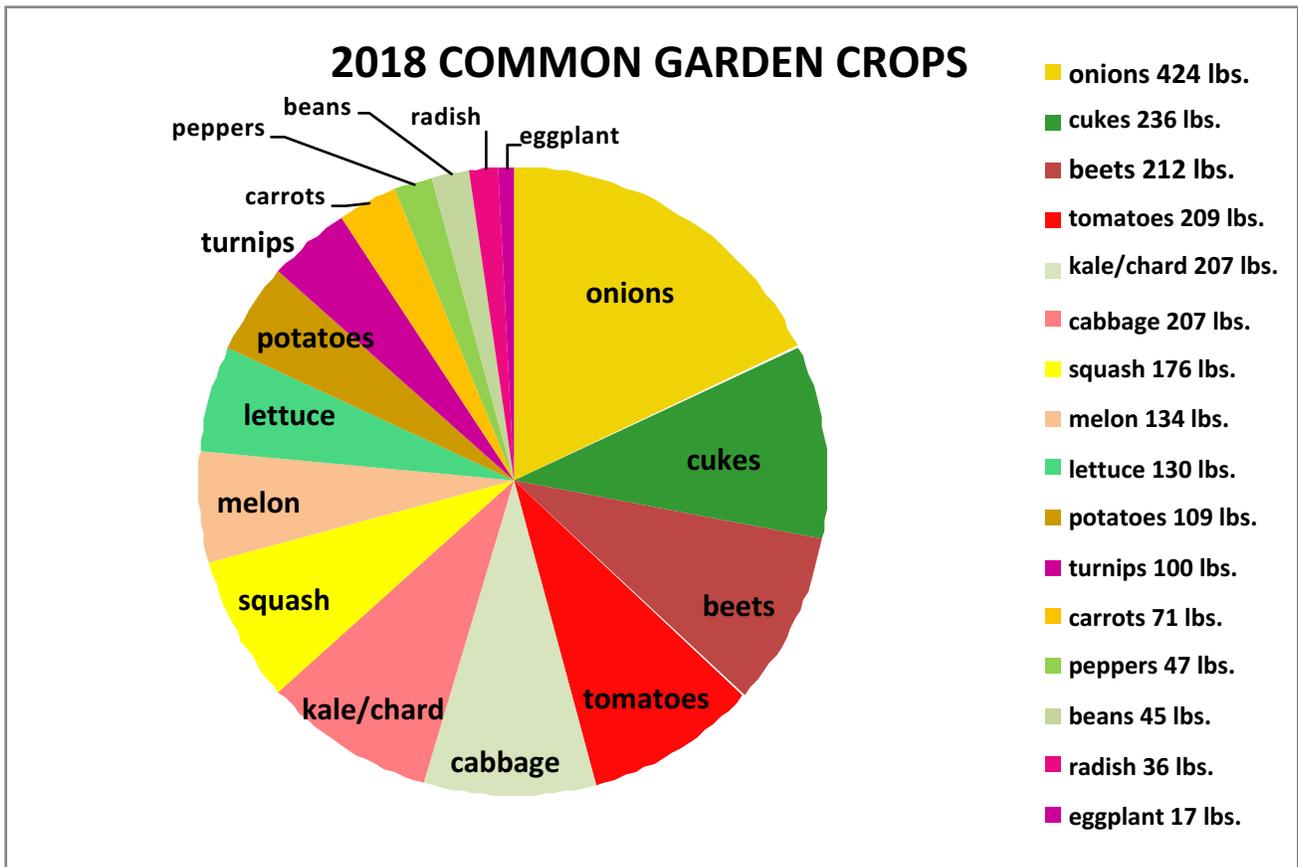
Brochures and posters were again distributed by committee members to stores, libraries, restaurants, and other locations around Harpswell and Brunswick. They are also available year-round in a weatherproof literature holder mounted on the garden entrance gate.

gardening for the common good project

This was a banner year for the Common Good Garden. We had a big jump in the amount of produce harvested, and a new pressurized water system and drip irrigation were installed. Lots of volunteer time in planning, grant writing, ditch digging, and troubleshooting went into that multiyear effort.

Production grew by 53% this year, with a total harvest of 2,371 pounds of vegetables (an increase from 1,506 in 2017). This bounty allowed us to distribute 1,394 pounds of fresh organic food in Harpswell at seven monthly Food Mobiles and eight Harpswell Aging at Home luncheons. Our harvests extended from May until November. The remainder of produce went to the Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program's food bank in Brunswick.

We did not have a student intern this year but a dedicated crew including Jane Covey, Peg and Don Newberg, Susan Stemper, Nadia Harris, Lisa Cass and other plot holders kept the gardens thriving, even through three very dry months. Many individual gardeners donated their surplus crops, as did the Merrymeeting Gleaners. In 2019 we will be expanding plantings of perennial crops (asparagus, strawberries, raspberries, etc.) and hope to reduce the amount of plants lost to animal damage.



2018 goals accomplished

Improve water availability

Revision Energy lent their expertise to plan a system consisting of a well pump, solar panels, pressure tank and cisterns with a capacity of over 500 gallons of water. All labor was donated by the company. Volunteers led by Lance Demond took it from there to install conduit and spigots within the garden. With the help of Bert Temple, all facets of this system were winterized, and a how-to manual was written to guide future managers.

Recruit Volunteers

We were fortunate to have committee members, plot holders and some local residents who were enthusiastic about helping out when needed. It is still somewhat difficult to attract volunteers during the summer when people are especially busy.

Further Develop 'Gardening for the Common Good' Project

The amount of produce grown and donated to food programs increased for the fifth straight year.



community support

The Harpswell Community Garden greatly appreciates the contributions of individuals and organizations during the 2018 season. Following is a partial listing.

Groups and individuals who volunteered time and labor:

Dave Brooks	Peg and Don Newburg
Dave Brown	John Ott
Lisa and Bruce Cass	Jamie Pacheco
David Chipman	Mose Price
Philip Conner	Sven Pulsifer
Jane Covey	Dorothy Rosenberg
Joan and Bob Dehetre	Mary Ruchinskas
Lance Demond	Judith and Michael Stanton
Joni Foster	Susan Stemper
Tom French	Eric Van Gorder
Spike Haible	Paul Weeden and family
Nadia and Ed Harris	Nate Wildes
John Holland	Andrea Yammine
Peter Lieberwirth	
Michael McCabe	
Robert McIntyre	
Don Miskill	



continued

community support

Businesses and organizations who donated materials, services and funds:

Agren Appliance
Apogee Adventures
Bart Flanagan Tree Service
Bowdoin College students
Brooks Farm and Feed
Harpwell Garden Club
Harpwell Heritage Land Trust
Lowe's Home Improvement
Master Gardeners Development Board
New England Grassroots Environment Fund
R.A. Webber & Sons
Ray Labbe & Sons
Revision Energy
Skillins Greenhouses
Temple Well Drilling
Town of Harpswell Recreation Department
UMaine Cooperative Extension
Vail's Tree Service

Harpwell Community Garden Committee:

Cyndy Bush
Jane Covey
Peg Newberg
Jamie Pacheco
Mary Ruchinkas
Judith Stanton
Susan Stemper



2018 financial report

Garden Operations

Regular operating expenses were well under budget this year due to deferred maintenance on garden equipment and generous in-kind donations from individuals and Lowe's (more than \$550).

Irrigation Improvements

We were able to complete the water system this year with grants from Harpswell Heritage Land Trust, New England Grassroots Environment Foundation, plot rental fees, cash contributions and in-kind donations (more than \$1000 in value) that offset some expenses. We also used just over \$450 of garden reserve funds to complete this project. In addition, volunteers from the community at large and garden members built and installed the water tank tower, pressure tank shed, and water distribution system.

We owe special thanks not only to those volunteers, but to all those who made in-kind and labor contributions essential to the completion of this project: Revision Energy - labor; R.A. Webber & Sons Construction - gravel for the water tank base; Chuck Perow (town recycling/transfer station manager) - shed structure; Ray Labbe & Sons - soil to fill all the ruts; David Chipman for use of his backhoe (saving us countless hours of digging); and Bert Temple of Temple Well Drilling who assisted us in winterizing the system, while teaching us how to do so on our own.

Gardening for the Common Good Project

As noted in the annual report, the water system project was redesigned as one rather than two systems resulting in the ability to deliver pressurized water to the entire garden, benefitting plot holders as well as the Common Good Garden. Hence, the garden committee assigned the cost of the pressure tank and shed to the general garden budget.

Recruiting a student intern has become very difficult, so the Common Good Garden was managed entirely through volunteers, some of whom also made in-kind contributions of seedlings and other garden supplies.

Johnny's Selected Seeds donated a drip irrigation system for a portion of the Common Good Garden in 2017. However, they declined our request for further supplies to complete the project. We will seek new grant funding for this in 2019.

HARPSWELL COMMUNITY GARDEN

2018 Financial Report

	A	B	C	D	E
1		Budget	Actual	Variance	
2		Revenue	Revenue		
3		Expenses	Expenses		
4	REVENUE				
5	HHLT Grant	2700	2700	0	
6	2018 Rental Income	350	625	275	
7	Cash Contributions	100	100	0	
8	Well and Irrigation System Grants	2500	0	-2500	
9	Carry over of NGRF Grant	381	381	0	
10	Total Funds Available	6031	3806	-2225	
11					
12	Operating Expenses:				
13	Equipment/Water System Maintenance	350	0	-350	DONATED
14	Air Compressor	100	0	-100	DONATED
15	Fuel for Mowers	30	79	49	
16	Fruit bushes	0	0	0	DONATED
17	Landscape Cloth (250 ft)	215	83	-132	
18	Outreach Education Materials	150	99	-51	
19	Fence improvement (critter control)	100	0	-100	DONATED
20	Volunteer Support/Recognition	50	43	-7	
21	Compost Delivered	500	275	-225	
22	Grass seed, lime	0	44	44	
23	Garden supply	0	71	71	
24	Subtotal Operating Expenses	1495	693	-802	
25					
26	Irrigation Improvements				
27	Storage tanks/Platforms	350	605	255	+DONATED gravel
28	Ditchwitch Rental	150	0	-150	
29	Solar pump system installed	400	2371	1971	
30	Hoses and spray heads	250	230	-20	
31	Pressure Tank	0	280	280	
32	Subtotal	1150	3485	2335	
33					
34	Common Good Garden				
35	Student Internships (1)	500	0	-500	
36	Student Supervisor - volunteer	0	0	0	
37	Pressure Tank/Pump Installed	2500	0	-2500	
38	Protective Shed Pressure Tank	250	0	-250	
39	Soil Ammendments/Pest Control/row cover	125	85	-40	
40	Plant Material/Seeds	50	0	-50	
41	Subtotal	3425	85	-3340	
42					
43	2018 Total Revised Budget and Total Expenses	6070	4264	-1806	
44					
45	Net		-458		
46					
47					
48	Reserve Funds:				
49	Net Rental Income	625			
50	Net Grants/ Donations 2018	481			
51	Net Reserve Funds 2012-2018	3371			
52	Less 2018 spend from reserve	-458			
53	2018 total Net Reserve Funds	4019			
54					
55	NOTES:				
56	Line 14 - for winterization of irrigation system				
57	Line 16 - to improve wood chip paths on test basis				
58	Line 17 - pilot for edible landscape demonstration				
59	Line 19 - to test ways to deter critters				