

IKIGAI GARDENS- COMMUNITY GARDEN STARTER KIT

Where Purpose Takes Root

Everything Your Church Needs to Start a Successful Community Garden

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SECTION 1: TEAM BUILDING GUIDE

BUILDING YOUR CHURCH GARDEN LEADERSHIP TEAM

A successful community garden requires committed leadership. Here's how to build your team:

STEP 1: IDENTIFY KEY ROLES

- Garden Coordinator (Overall leader)
 - Organizes meetings and volunteers
 - Communicates with church leadership
 - Liaison with Clemson Extension/Ikigai Gardens
 - Time commitment: 5-10 hours/week during growing season
- Volunteer Coordinator
 - Schedules work days
 - Recruits and manages volunteers
 - Tracks volunteer hours
 - Time commitment: 3-5 hours/week
- Garden Manager
 - Oversees planting, maintenance, harvest
 - Works with Extension agents on crop decisions
 - Manages garden tools and supplies
 - Time commitment: 5-8 hours/week
- Outreach/Distribution Coordinator
 - Identifies families/individuals in need
 - Organizes produce distribution
 - Communicates garden impact to congregation

- Time commitment: 2-4 hours/week
- Communications Lead (Optional)
- Social media updates
- Newsletter content
- Photo documentation
- Time commitment: 1-2 hours/week

STEP 2: RECRUIT YOUR TEAM

Best recruitment approaches:

- ✓ Sunday announcements for 3-4 consecutive weeks
- ✓ Insert in church bulletin with contact information
- ✓ Personal invitations to members with gardening experience
- ✓ Small group/Sunday School presentations
- ✓ Sign-up table in fellowship hall

Sample Announcement:

"Our church is starting a community garden to serve our neighbors and fulfill Matthew 25:35 - 'I was hungry and you gave me food.' We need committed leaders to help make this vision a reality. No gardening experience required - just a heart to serve! Contact [name] to learn more."

STEP 3: HOLD YOUR FIRST TEAM MEETING

Agenda for Kickoff Meeting (90 minutes):

1. Opening prayer (5 min)
2. Share the vision - why a community garden? (15 min)
3. Review roles and time commitments (15 min)
4. Discuss available land options (20 min)
5. Set timeline and next steps (20 min)
6. Q&A (10 min)
7. Closing prayer and commitment (5 min)

STEP 4: ESTABLISH REGULAR MEETINGS

Monthly leadership team meetings during planning (Jan-Mar)

Bi-weekly meetings during growing season (Apr-Oct)

Monthly meetings during fall/winter (Nov-Dec)

STEP 5: GET CHURCH LEADERSHIP BUY-IN

Present to church leadership (pastor, deacons, elders):

- ✓ Written proposal with vision and mission
- ✓ Land assessment results
- ✓ Estimated budget
- ✓ Volunteer commitment plan
- ✓ Community impact goals

SECTION 2: LAND ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

EVALUATING YOUR CHURCH PROPERTY FOR A COMMUNITY GARDEN

BASIC REQUIREMENTS

SIZE

Minimum: 1,000 sq ft (20ft x 50ft) - feeds 5-8 families

Ideal: 2,000-4,000 sq ft - feeds 15-25 families

Measured dimensions: _____ ft x _____ ft = _____ sq ft

SUNLIGHT

Community gardens need 6-8 hours of DIRECT sunlight daily

Observe your site throughout the day:

Morning (6am-10am): Full sun Partial shade Full shade

Midday (10am-2pm): Full sun Partial shade Full shade

Afternoon (2pm-6pm): Full sun Partial shade Full shade

Total hours of direct sun: _____ hours

✓ SUITABLE: 6+ hours

△ MARGINAL: 4-6 hours (leafy greens only)

X UNSUITABLE: <4 hours

WATER ACCESS

Outdoor spigot within 100 feet

Outdoor spigot within 100-200 feet (hose extension needed)

No nearby water source (irrigation system required)

Distance to nearest water source: _____ feet

Water pressure adequate? Yes No Unknown

SOIL QUALITY

Visual assessment:

Dark, rich soil (good)

Light brown/tan soil (needs amendment)

Clay-heavy (red/orange, compacted)

Sandy soil (drains too quickly)

Rocky soil

Construction debris present

Recommendation: Get FREE soil test from Clemson Extension

Contact: Richland County Extension - (803) 576-2140

DRAINAGE

Does water pool after heavy rain?

No standing water (excellent)

Water drains within 2-4 hours (good)

Water stands 6+ hours (poor - may need raised beds)

SLOPE

Flat or gentle slope (ideal)

Moderate slope (may need terracing)

Steep slope (not suitable without major work)

FINAL ASSESSMENT

Total score your site (check all that apply):

- 6+ hours sunlight
- Water within 200 feet
- Good drainage
- Adequate size (1,000+ sq ft)
- Vehicle access for deliveries
- Safe and secure location

5-6 checks = EXCELLENT site, proceed with confidence

3-4 checks = GOOD site, minor improvements needed

1-2 checks = CHALLENGING site, consider alternatives or major amendments

SECTION 3: DESIGN TEMPLATES

GARDEN LAYOUT OPTIONS FOR SOUTH CAROLINA CHURCHES

OPTION 1: SMALL GARDEN (1,000 sq ft / 20ft x 50ft)

Best for: 5-8 families, first-time gardens

Suggested crops: Tomatoes (10 plants), Peppers (12 plants), Squash (6 plants), Cucumbers (8 plants), Beans (2 rows), Okra (1 row), Collards/Kale (2 rows), Herbs (basil, cilantro, parsley, green onions)

Estimated Harvest: 800-1,200 lbs/season

Feeds: 5-8 families with weekly produce

OPTION 2: MEDIUM GARDEN (2,500 sq ft / 50ft x 50ft)

Best for: 15-20 families, established gardens

Include all crops from Small Garden plus: More tomatoes (20 total), Eggplant (10 plants), Melons (6 plants), Sweet potatoes (1 row), Turnips (2 rows), Lettuce (4 rows - spring), Perennial herb bed

Estimated Harvest: 2,000-3,000 lbs/season

Feeds: 15-20 families with weekly produce

OPTION 3: LARGE GARDEN (4,000 sq ft / 50ft x 80ft)

Best for: 25-30 families, ambitious congregations

Include all crops from Medium plus: Sweet corn (3 rows), Cabbage (2 rows), Broccoli (1 row - fall planting), Carrots (2 rows - fall planting), Additional tomato varieties

Estimated Harvest: 3,500-5,000 lbs/season

Feeds: 25-30 families with weekly produce

DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR ALL GARDENS

ROW ORIENTATION

- ✓ Plant rows North-South (maximizes sun exposure)
- ✓ Leave 3-4 feet between rows for walking/wheelbarrow access

SECURITY MEASURES TO PREVENT HARVEST THEFT

Security has emerged as an important consideration for church community gardens. Professional landscape design can address this through:

Fencing:

- Perimeter fencing (6ft rear, 4ft front for visibility)
- Locking gates with restricted access
- Natural barriers (thorny shrubs like roses, barberry)

Lighting:

- Motion-sensor security lighting
- Solar-powered pathway lights
- Well-lit parking and entry areas

Visibility Planning:

- Clear sightlines from church building to garden
 - Strategic placement near high-traffic areas
 - Signage indicating security measures
-

SECTION 4: SUPPLY LIST AND BUDGET GUIDE

STARTUP COSTS FOR SOUTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY GARDENS

BASIC SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR COMMUNITY GARDENS

LAND PREPARATION:

- Soil test kit (FREE from Clemson Extension)
- Tilling service or tiller rental
- Compost/soil amendments
- Mulch or wood chips

SEEDS & TRANSPLANTS:

- Tomato transplants
- Pepper transplants
- Squash seeds (zucchini, yellow squash)
- Bean seeds, Okra seeds, Collard/kale seeds
- Herb starts (basil, parsley, cilantro)
- Green onion/scallion sets, Garlic cloves, Shallot sets, Radish seeds

TOOLS & EQUIPMENT:

- Shovels (2-3), Rakes, Hoes (2), Garden fork
- Hand trowels (4-6), Wheelbarrow, Garden hose (100+ feet)
- Watering cans (2-3), Pruning shears, Gloves (multiple pairs)

INFRASTRUCTURE:

- Tomato cages or stakes, Trellis materials

- Tool storage shed or lockbox, Garden markers/labels
- Signage, Fencing materials (if needed), Pathway materials, Lighting

PRICING INFORMATION

Prices for garden supplies vary by location, season, and supplier. Churches should check with local retailers for current pricing:

Local Suppliers to Check:

- Lowe's, Home Depot, Tractor Supply Co., Local hardware stores, Agricultural supply stores, Nurseries and garden centers

FREE SEED DONATION PROGRAMS

Churches can significantly reduce costs by applying for FREE seeds from verified donation programs. Below are four confirmed sources that support community gardens:

1. HIGH MOWING ORGANIC SEEDS

Program: Seed Donation Program

Annual Donations: 100,000+ seed packets

Focus: Community gardens, school gardens, church gardens, food bank gardens

Contact : donations@highmowingseeds.com

Phone : (866) 735-4454

Website: highmowingseeds.com/donations

2. SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE

Program: Herman's Garden Seed Donation Program

Annual Donations: 60,000+ seed packets to 600+ gardens

Application: seedsavers.org/seed-donation-program

3. UPRISING SEEDS

Contact: info@uprisingorganics.com (Subject Line: DONATION)

Phone: (360) 778-3749

Website: uprisingorganics.com/pages/donations

4. RICHLAND SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT - SEED SANCTUARY

Program: Free seed distribution for Richland County residents

Location: Richland County Administration Building (2020 Hampton St., Columbia, SC)

Note: RICHLAND COUNTY CHURCHES ONLY - up to 4 packets per household

5. ADAPTIVE SEEDS Program: Seed Packet Donation Request Focus: Organic, open-pollinated, regionally-adapted seeds Contact: use the [Donation Request Form](#) on their site. Website: adaptiveseeds.com/seed-packet-donation-request/ Requirements: Community gardens, educational programs, food security projects Note: Specializes in climate-adapted varieties for diverse growing conditions

SEED DONATION REQUEST TEMPLATE

Churches are welcome to use this example as a starting point or create their own customized request. Most seed companies require these requests to be submitted on official church letterhead.

Subject: Donation Request: [Church Name] Community Garden for Food Security

[Date]

To the Donations Coordinator at [Company Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I am a volunteer leader with [Church Name] in [City, South Carolina]. I am writing to you because of [Company Name]'s well-known commitment to supporting community agriculture and food sovereignty.

Our church is launching a community garden initiative. Our mission is to utilize our land to produce fresh, high-quality vegetables that will be shared freely with the community. We believe that local gardening is a vital way to foster connection and provide a direct source of nutrition to anyone who visits our garden.. Our goal is to transform [Number, e.g., 2,000] square feet of church land into a high-yield vegetable garden.

Our Commitment to the Community:

- 100% Donation: Every pound of produce grown in this garden will be donated directly to our local food pantry and shared with families in need within our congregation and neighborhood.
- Educational Opportunity: The garden serves as a site for community members to learn about food production, gardening techniques, and seasonal planting..
- Longevity: We have a dedicated team of [Number] volunteers committed to the long-term maintenance of this space.

Because we are located in South Carolina (USDA Zone [e.g., 8a/8b]), we are specifically looking for heat-tolerant varieties. We would be honored to receive a donation of surplus or "end-of-season" seeds to help us get our first rows in the ground. We are particularly interested in:

- Vegetables: A variety of vegetable seeds that are recommended for our specific USDA growing zone.—such as greens, fruiting crops, and legumes.

We are a [501(c)(3) nonprofit / tax-exempt religious organization]. If you are able to support us, we would love to recognize [Company Name] on our garden signage and in our monthly community newsletter.

Thank you for your time and for the work you do to keep our communities growing.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Your Title/Role]
[Church Name]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]
[Mailing Address for Seeds]

3 PRO-TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL SEED DONATION REQUESTS:

1. THE LETTERHEAD RULE

If the church has official stationery, print the letter on that. It adds a level of legitimacy that helps move the request to the top of the pile.

2. TAX ID/EIN READY

Have your church's Tax ID (EIN) number ready. Most seed companies require this to process a donation as a tax write-off for their records.

3. TIMING IS EVERYTHING

The best time to send these letters is August through November (for the following spring) or January (for the current year). Companies are most likely to donate when they are rotating their inventory.

RESEARCH-BASED BUDGET ESTIMATES

According to University of Minnesota research (2024), community gardens typically cost between \$3,750 and \$7,500 to start for a basic 1,000 sq ft garden. A 2025 community gardening study found startup costs ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000 depending on site conditions, infrastructure needs, and scale.

PILOT CHURCH FUNDING:

Ikigai Gardens is pursuing fundraising efforts including corporate sponsorships, organizational partnerships, and crowdfunding to cover starter kit costs for pilot churches. While we work to secure these funds, churches can apply for grants, seek free seed donations, or use the budget ranges above for planning purposes. Updates on funded starter kit availability will be shared as sponsorships are secured.

SECTION 5: GRANT APPLICATION RESOURCES

GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOUTH CAROLINA CHURCH GARDENS

TIER 1: SMALL GRANTS (\$500-\$5,000)

1. AGSOUTH FARM CREDIT - COMMUNITY GRANTS

Amount: Up to \$5,000

Website: agsouthfc.com/community/grants

Contact: (803) 799-5000

TIER 2: MEDIUM GRANTS (\$10,000-\$50,000)

2. TRIDENT UNITED WAY - COMMUNITY GARDENS INITIATIVE

Amount: \$10,000-\$25,000

Geographic Focus: Richland, Sumter, Fairfield, Calhoun counties

Website: tridentunitedway.org

3. WHOLESPIRE (FORMERLY PALMETTO HEALTH FOUNDATION)

Amount: \$15,000-\$40,000

Geographic: Midlands SC

Website: wholespire.org

TIER 3: LARGER OPPORTUNITIES (\$50,000+)

4. DUKE ENDOWMENT - RURAL CHURCH GRANTS

Amount: Up to \$400,000

Eligibility: UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES ONLY (rural SC)
Website: dukeendowment.org
Note: Individual United Methodist churches CAN apply independently

GRANT APPLICATION ESSENTIALS

STANDARD APPLICATION COMPONENTS:

1. Organization Information

- Church name, address, EIN
- 501(c)(3) determination letter (if applicable)
- Pastor/leadership contact info

2. Project Narrative (2-5 pages)

- Problem statement (food insecurity in your community)
- Proposed solution (community garden)
- Goals and objectives (measurable)
- Timeline
- Sustainability plan

3. Budget

- Line-item budget
- Budget narrative (justification)
- Other funding sources

4. Attachments

- Letters of support (Extension agent, community partners)
- Site photos/plans
- Church's mission statement
- Board/leadership roster

SAMPLE MEASURABLE GOALS:

XWEAK: "Help people in our community"

✓ **STRONG:** "Provide 50 families with fresh produce weekly during 6-month growing season (totaling 1,200 family distributions)"

XWEAK: "Reduce food insecurity"

✓ **STRONG:** "Distribute 2,500 lbs of fresh vegetables to 50 food-insecure households, reducing weekly grocery costs by estimated \$15-20 per family"

LETTERS OF SUPPORT - WHO TO ASK:

- ✓ County Extension Agent (agricultural credibility)
- ✓ Local food bank director
- ✓ School principal (if serving families with children)
- ✓ County Council member
- ✓ Other churches/community partners

FREE GRANT-WRITING ASSISTANCE:

- SC Association of Nonprofits: scnonprofits.org
- Clemson Extension (some counties offer workshops)

- United Way (for funded partners)
 - Local community foundations (application coaching)
-

SECTION 6: SC CROP PLANTING CALENDAR

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY GARDEN PLANTING GUIDE

This calendar is optimized for MIDLANDS SC (Zone 8a)
Richland, Sumter, Fairfield, Calhoun Counties

SPRING PLANTING (March - May)

MARCH (After Last Frost - typically March 15-30)

Transplant: Tomatoes (mid-late March), Peppers (late March), Eggplant (late March)
Direct Seed: Beans, Squash, Cucumbers, Okra, Sweet corn, Radishes

APRIL

Transplant: More tomatoes (succession planting), Basil, Parsley, Herbs
Direct Seed: Beans (succession every 2 weeks), Melons (mid-April), Sweet potatoes (late April), Green onions, Radishes

MAY

Final tomato transplants (early May), Southern peas, More okra

FALL PLANTING (September - October)

SEPTEMBER

Transplant: Cabbage, Broccoli, Kale
Direct Seed: Lettuce, Spinach, Radishes, Carrots, Beets, Green onions

OCTOBER

More lettuce, spinach, radishes
Garlic cloves (late October) - harvest next June
Shallot sets (late October) - harvest next May-June

IKIGAI GARDENS TOP 10 CROPS FOR SC CHURCHES

(Easiest to grow for beginners)

1. TOMATOES

Plant: March-May | Harvest: June-October | Yield: 10-15 lbs per plant

2. PEPPERS (Bell & Hot)

Plant: March-April | Harvest: June-October | Yield: 8-12 peppers per plant

3. SQUASH (Zucchini & Yellow)

Plant: March-June | Harvest: 50 days | Succession plant every 3 weeks

4. BEANS (Bush & Pole)

Plant: March-September | Harvest: 50-60 days | Succession plant every 2-3 weeks

5. OKRA

Plant: April-June | Harvest: July-October | Very prolific

6. COLLARD GREENS

Plant: August-September (fall) | Harvest: 60-80 days | Sweeter after frost

7. HERBS (Basil, Cilantro, Parsley)

Plant: March-April | Harvest: Continuously | High-value crops

8. GREEN ONIONS/SCALLIONS

Plant: Year-round (succession every 2-3 weeks) | Harvest: 60-70 days

9. GARLIC

Plant: October-November (cloves) | Harvest: June | Excellent storage crop

10. RADISHES

Plant: February-March, September-October | Harvest: 25-30 days | Fastest vegetable

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED: SHALLOTS

Plant: October-November (sets) | Harvest: May-June | Milder than onions

FREE PLANTING RESOURCES:

Clemson Extension Offices (Pilot Region):

- Richland County: (803) 576-2140
 - Sumter County: (803) 773-5561
 - Fairfield County: (803) 712-6554
 - Calhoun County: (803) 874-2174
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SECTION 7: VOLUNTEER COORDINATION FORMS

MANAGING VOLUNTEERS FOR YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY GARDEN

FORM 1: VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION

[CHURCH NAME] COMMUNITY GARDEN
VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____

AVAILABILITY (check all that apply):

- Weekday mornings (6am-10am)
- Weekday afternoons (2pm-6pm)
- Weekday evenings (6pm-8pm)
- Saturday mornings
- Saturday afternoons
- Sundays after church

SKILLS & INTERESTS (check all that apply):

- Gardening experience

- Physical labor (digging, tilling, lifting)
- Carpentry/building (raised beds, trellises)
- Watering/maintenance
- Harvest and distribution
- Administrative/coordination
- Photography/social media
- Other: _____

TIME COMMITMENT:

- Weekly (preferred!)
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Special projects only
- Flexible/as available

Estimated hours per month: _____ hours

PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS:

Any physical restrictions we should know about?

- None
- Limited lifting
- Limited bending/kneeling
- Other: _____

WAIVER:

I understand that gardening involves physical activity and some risk of injury. I agree to follow all safety guidelines and release [Church Name] from liability for accidents that may occur while volunteering.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

FOR CHURCH USE:

Volunteer ID#: _____ Start Date: _____ Orientation: Complete

FORM 2: VOLUNTEER SIGN-IN SHEET

[CHURCH NAME] COMMUNITY GARDEN
WORK DAY SIGN-IN SHEET

Date: _____ Weather: ☀️☁️☔️☞ Temperature: _____°F

Garden Coordinator: _____

TODAY'S TASKS:

- Planting
- Weeding
- Watering
- Harvesting
- Mulching
- Building/repairs
- Other: _____

VOLUNTEER SIGN-IN:

(Use table format: Name | Time In | Time Out | Hours | Tasks Completed)

1-10 volunteer slots

TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS TODAY: _____

SUPPLIES USED:

Seeds: _____

Fertilizer: _____

Tools: _____

Other: _____

NOTES/OBSERVATIONS: _____

NEXT WORK DAY: _____ FOCUS: _____

FORM 3: MONTHLY VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

[CHURCH NAME] COMMUNITY GARDEN
[MONTH/YEAR] VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

WEEKLY WORK DAYS:

Every Saturday 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Week 1 (Date: _____)

Leader: _____

Focus: _____

Volunteers Needed: 6-8

Sign up:

Week 2-4:

(Repeat format for Weeks 2, 3, and 4)

WEEKDAY MAINTENANCE TEAM (Watering/Light Weeding):

Monday: _____ Tuesday: _____

Wednesday: _____ Thursday: _____

Friday: _____

HARVEST & DISTRIBUTION:

Distribution Day: _____ Time: _____

Volunteers: _____

SPECIAL PROJECTS THIS MONTH:

- _____
- _____

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION:

Date: _____ Activity: _____

FORM 4: HARVEST LOG

[CHURCH NAME] COMMUNITY GARDEN
HARVEST LOG

Date: _____ Harvested by: _____

PRODUCE HARVESTED TODAY:

(Use table: Crop | Quantity | Unit | Condition)

Tomatoes, Peppers, Squash, Cucumbers, Beans, Okra, Collards, Sweet Potatoes, Herbs,
Other

TOTAL POUNDS HARVESTED TODAY: _____

DISTRIBUTION:

Families served today: _____

Distributed to:

- Church members in need
- Community members (walk-up)
- Local food bank: _____
- Senior center: _____
- Other: _____

Leftover produce (if any):

- Refrigerated for next distribution
- Donated to: _____
- Composted (overripe/damaged)

NOTES: _____

NEXT HARVEST DATE: _____

FORM 5: VOLUNTEER IMPACT REPORT (Quarterly)

[CHURCH NAME] COMMUNITY GARDEN
VOLUNTEER IMPACT REPORT

Reporting Period: _____ to _____

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT:

Total registered volunteers: _____

Active volunteers this quarter: _____

New volunteers recruited: _____

Average volunteers per work day: _____

VOLUNTEER HOURS:

Total volunteer hours: _____ hours

Average hours per volunteer: _____ hours

Estimated value (@ \$25/hr): \$_____

TOP CONTRIBUTORS (most hours):

1. _____ hours
2. _____ hours
3. _____ hours

HARVEST & DISTRIBUTION:

Total pounds harvested: _____ lbs

Total families served: _____

Total distributions: _____
Food bank donations: _____ lbs

ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS QUARTER:

- _____
- _____

CHALLENGES:

- _____

GOALS FOR NEXT QUARTER:

- _____

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Sunday announcements (4 consecutive weeks minimum)
- ✓ Bulletin insert with photos from garden
- ✓ Personal invitations (most effective!)
- ✓ "Bring a friend" days
- ✓ Youth group service projects
- ✓ Senior adult opportunities (low-impact tasks)

RETENTION STRATEGIES:

- ✓ Celebrate milestones (100 hours, 1 year service)
- ✓ Quarterly appreciation events (potluck with garden produce!)
- ✓ Share impact stories (families helped)
- ✓ Provide clear task assignments (people like structure)
- ✓ Rotate leadership roles (prevent burnout)
- ✓ Send thank-you notes/emails
- ✓ Feature volunteers in church newsletter

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS:

- ✓ Provide water station (especially summer)
- ✓ Encourage sunscreen, hats, appropriate clothing
- ✓ Have first aid kit on site
- ✓ Know location of nearest bathroom
- ✓ Establish emergency contact protocol
- ✓ Provide tools training (proper lifting, tool use)
- ✓ No children under 12 without parent supervision

AGE-APPROPRIATE TASKS:

Youth (12-17):

- ✓ Weeding, Watering, Harvesting (supervision required), Planting seeds
- X Heavy equipment, pesticide application

Adults (18-64):

✓ All tasks

Seniors (65+):

✓ Light weeding, Harvesting, Seed starting, Mentoring younger volunteers

△ Monitor for heat exhaustion

NEED MORE SUPPORT?

CONTACT IKIGAI GARDENS:

Email: ikigai@capps@gmail.com

Website: <https://ikigaienterprises.biz/>

Phone: 803-728=1255

SOURCES & REFERENCES

This Community Garden Starter Kit is based on peer-reviewed research, government Extension publications, and verified donation programs to ensure accuracy and reliability.

COMMUNITY GARDEN ECONOMICS & BUDGETING:

1. University of Minnesota College of Continuing and Professional Studies. (2024). "7 Effective Steps to Start a Community Garden." Retrieved from <https://ccaps.umn.edu/story/7-effective-steps-start-community-garden>
- Cited for: Community garden startup costs (\$3,750-\$7,500)
2. Community Gardening.org. (2025). "How Much Does It Cost to Start a Community Garden?" Retrieved from <https://www.community-gardening.org/how-much-does-it-cost-to-start-a-community-garden/>
- Cited for: Startup cost ranges (\$2,500-\$10,000)

SEED DONATION PROGRAMS:

3. High Mowing Organic Seeds. (2025). "Seed Donation Program." Retrieved from <https://www.highmowingseeds.com/donations>
- Contact: donations@highmowingseeds.com
4. Seed Savers Exchange. (2025). "Herman's Garden Seed Donation Program." Retrieved from <https://seedsavers.org/seed-donation-program>
5. Uprising Seeds. (2025). "Donations Program." Retrieved from <https://uprisingorganics.com/pages/donations> Contact: info@uprisingorganics.com
6. Richland Soil and Water Conservation District. (2025). "Seed Sanctuary Program." Retrieved from <https://richlandcountysc.gov/conservation>
7. Adaptive Seeds. (2025). "Seed Packet Donation Request." Retrieved from <https://www.adaptiveseeds.com/seed-packet-donation-request/>

SOUTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION:

7. Clemson University Cooperative Extension. (2025). "School & Community Gardening." Retrieved from <https://www.clemson.edu/extension/school-community-gardening/>

8. Clemson University Home & Garden Information Center (HGIC). (2025). Retrieved from <https://hgic.clemson.edu/>

GRANT RESOURCES:

9. AgSouth Farm Credit. (2025). Community Grants Program. Retrieved from <https://agsouthfc.com/community/grants>

10. Trident United Way. (2025). Community Impact Grants. Retrieved from <https://tridentunitedway.org>

11. Duke Endowment. (2025). Rural Church Division. Retrieved from <https://dukeendowment.org>

METHODOLOGY NOTE:

All budget estimates in this Starter Kit are based on:

1. Published research on community garden economics (sources 1-2)
2. Verified seed donation programs (sources 3-7)
3. Clemson Extension SC-specific recommendations (sources 8-9)
4. Verified grant opportunities (sources 10-11)

Budget ranges reflect 2024-2025 research findings. Churches are encouraged to apply for free seed donations, seek local supplier quotes, pursue grants, and contact Clemson Extension for site-specific guidance to reduce costs.

"...for I was hungry and you gave me food to eat." Matthew 25:35a

You're not just growing vegetables. You're growing HOPE.

Welcome to the Ikigai Gardens pilot program!