

# Let's Get Growing! Partnering to Encourage Backyard Food Production

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## NEED

Interest in backyard and community gardening continues to grow. Extension services, Master Gardener Volunteers, non-profit organizations and many others encourage growing produce for health, community development and food security reasons. However, gardening is not a practice that everyone has experience with and there is a recognized need to offer support and technical training to help interested persons develop self-sufficiency skills

The Ohio State University Extension and Summit County Master Gardener Volunteers have partnered with Let's Grow Akron for the past five years to host an annual, day-long gardening season kick-off event called "Let's Get Growing". The day consists of workshops, seed distribution, and networking opportunities..

## GOALS

The goals of this event are to:

- provide gardening education on basic and advanced horticulture topics.
- introduce community members to other community groups in the region that support gardening.
- provide networking opportunities for those seeking more engagement in the local food system.

## PLANNING TIMELINE

Month	Activity
November	Date of event selected Venue secured Discuss workshop topics
December	Invite community partners Workshops and speakers finalized
January	Create on-line registration Open registration
February	Confirm speakers and participating partners Set up the day before event. Event is held
March	Evaluation and reflection



## PARTICIPATING PARTNERS

Partners who participate or who have participated:

- Asian Services in Action, Inc.
- Community Action Akron Summit
- Countryside Conservancy
- Permaculture Akron
- Summit County Department of Health
- Summit County Metro Parks
- Summit County Soil and Water District
- Summit Food Coalition
- The Well Community Development Corporation
- Urban Honey Bee
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

### Let's Get Growing Community Garden Workshop & Expo

a FREE learning and sharing event  
All are welcome!  
\*bring a brown bag lunch and refillable water bottle\*

First Congregational Church  
292 E. Market St. Akron, OH 44308  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED  
online at <https://conta.cc/2rzv7KM>  
or call 330 745-9700

10:00 til 2:00 doors open @ 9:00

Keynote Speaker: **SOPHIA BUGGS**  
Lady Bugs Farm

FEB 8th 2020

The Ohio State University  
Summit County Master Gardener Volunteers



## FUNDING

Let's Get Growing is a low-cost event. Primary expenses include:

- breakfast snacks and coffee
- facilities rental
- folder and copies
- keynote speaker fee and mileage

Each year, community organizations have offered to provide in-kind services or donations cover to the costs of the event.



## EVALUATION

Evaluation activities occur at the end of the event. In 2020,

- **96%** of participants indicated the event was extremely or quite helpful.
- **90%** heard about the event via email or Social media.
- **95%** found the location either extremely or very convenient.

Other questions asked are:

- what is the most important thing that you learned today?
- what is one thing that you will do differently as a result of this workshop?
- what topics would you like to learn more about?

Responses help drive planning and activities the next year.

## CONCLUSION

Let's Get Growing is a highly anticipated community event and collaborative effort offered by several partners in the Summit County, OH region. Each partner brings unique skills and talents to the table. Over the past five years over 400 persons have participated highlighting the value of partnering to reach common goals.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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