



ecosource  
Growing a Green Community

# Community Gardens Program







Ecosource is an innovative environmental organization bringing green living to our community.

We specialize in fun, hands-on programs that focus on how each of us can change our daily habits to become better environmental citizens.

FOCUS AREAS

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### Waste Reduction



### Teacher Education



### Sustainability Education



### Food Literacy



### Community Gardens & Urban Agriculture



### Youth Leadership







## The Community Garden Program

Ecosource has been leading the development of community gardens in the City of Mississauga since 2006 and has continued this work in formal partnership with the Environment Section since 2013.

### Ecosource Community Gardens in Mississauga



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Churchill Meadows Community Garden<br>3715 Thomas St.                | 7 Cooksville Community Garden<br>106 King St. East        |
| 2 Hillside Community Garden<br>1311 Kelly Rd.                          | 8 Hancock Community Garden<br>2171 Camilla Rd.            |
| 3 Ecosource Community Hub<br>5070 Fairwind Dr.                         | 9 Malton Community Garden<br>7320 Darcel Ave.             |
| 4 Iceland Urban Agriculture Teaching Garden<br>705 Matheson Blvd. East | 10 Forest Glen Community Garden<br>3545 Fieldgate Dr.     |
| 5 Parkway Green Generation Garden<br>4215 Central Parkway East         | 11 Small Arms Community Garden<br>1352 Lakeshore Rd. East |
| 6 Garden of the Valley<br>1275 Mississauga Valley Blvd.                |   |

## A Growing Network

Ecosource manages urban agriculture spaces on public parkland in partnership with the City of Mississauga, including 9 community gardens, a demonstration site, and 1 urban farm

11

urban  
agriculture  
spaces in  
parks

330

garden plots

425+

community  
gardeners





## Our Services



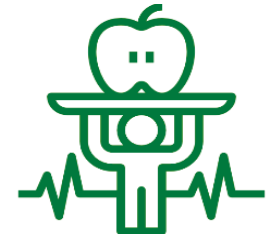
Development of new garden spaces and maintenance of existing ones



Administration and membership services



Hands-on skills development and educational programming



Partnership and collaborations with local organizations



Volunteer engagement & garden stewardship



Food donations to increase food security



Accessibility programs and features



Leadership on urban agriculture policy and networking

## Program Impacts 2019-2021



**4** new/expanded community gardens on public parkland



**32%**  
increase in food growing space in public parks



**12,332**  
people engaged at the gardens over 3 years



10,660 lbs

of food grown by residents for themselves, their families, and for donation to the community



47%

donated to food banks  
and local organizations



2021 Impacts

381

Education and volunteer  
sessions held







# Community Gardens are Essential

Focus on safely  
opening  
community garden  
spaces



Increased interest  
in food growing,  
resulting longer  
waitlists



Emerging food  
access needs for  
Mississauga  
residents



85%

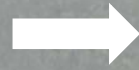
community gardeners report “food access” as  
a top reason for their participation



# Fostering Partnerships in the Garden

15+

Partners engaged  
in programming at  
community gardens



Rooted in  
the Local  
Context

Knowledge  
Exchange &  
Leveraging  
Resources

Support  
Equity,  
Diversity &  
Inclusion





## Community Voices



“ By sharing these physical seeds, we aim to share imaginary, but powerful seeds, that encourage ....conversations about the food system in Mississauga.

- Marynil

“ The whole garden was a very spiritual and healing experience for me.

- Kandy

“ The garden has supported our Syrian refugee students with a ... sense of belonging

- Ghada







## Growing with an Urban Agriculture Strategy

With increased need and interest for urban agriculture in the City, we advocate for a strategy that will encourage, foster and enable new and existing initiatives and partnerships.



“

Community gardens have significant mental health benefits for participating gardeners. It provides safe, affordable herbs and vegetables. It promotes healthier lifestyle. It provides opportunities to people who live in smaller urban areas to garden and grow for themselves as well as for the underprivileged. It provides people opportunities to grow organically. It helps build a more sustainable system. It reduces carbon footprint of food by reducing the number of kilometers for food to get from farm to kitchen. It is a great way to develop new skills.

- Community gardener







## Stay Connected

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