



## ***Good Garden Works – Growing Food in a Bag***

by Susan Richardson  
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In Africa, the farming charity called SEND A COW teaches poor families and children how to grow food through many different styles of gardening, and one of those is bag gardening.

An African Bag Garden is simply a sack filled with compost, soil, cow manure and a column of stones up the middle. It is designed to use wastewater and composted food with the emphasis on reuse of resources by African gardeners. This is hugely important because it increases what can be grown in a small area.

This method of growing food prompted the Community Garden Partnership to request permission from the charity to replicate their idea for a pilot to learn how this same idea might assist people in poverty in the Fox Cities.

With assistance from our Goodwill's marketing team and the Contractively team at the Shiner Center, our bag garden project known as Good Garden Works became a reality. One hundred test bags were distributed throughout the Fox Cities to multiple groups and individuals to determine how we might proceed in developing a model that would afford us another method of urban gardening.

Among those who are growing food in the bag gardens are 16 Salvation Army food pantry recipients, including 13 who are building their gardens in the Salvation Army parking lot at 130 E. North St. in Appleton.

Bag gardens are a perfect size for people to begin learning how to grow their own vegetables. They offer a means for developing garden space anywhere you wish to grow food. They are ecologically friendly and, as one of the bag garden recipients said, "When completed, they resemble an old lady." (a rather nice simile)

Bag gardens also provide a practical introduction to major issues such as poverty, sustainability and what it takes to grow good food. They are the backdrop for discussion about good food, harvest, preparation and preservation of food.

Funding for our Good Garden Works project was provided by a state HIA ([Heath Impact Assessment](#)) collaborative grant between the Salvation Army and Community Garden Partnership. In addition, we received a grant from the Basic Needs Giving Partnership supported by the U.S. Oil Open Fund for Basic Needs within the Community Foundation for

Fox Valley Region, and the J.J Keller Foundation, Inc. We were also awarded a second collaborative grant with the Salvation Army through the CDC ([Center for Disease Control](#)).

We are truly excited to introduce this concept, and hope to continue the development of this method of producing food for the purpose of food security for all.

We hope you enjoy the pictures of the Good Garden Works garden at the Salvation Army!



*Good Garden Works is being trademarked under Goodwill NCW as a product of Community Garden Partnership.*

*Visit our website at <http://goodwillncw.org/gardens.htm>*