



Giving Garden



Since 2004, the Hoffman Estates Garden Club (HEGC) has supported maintenance of a “community garden plot” that we rent annually at Sunderlage Farm (Volid Drive and Vista Lane) in Hoffman Estates. Harvests from the plot are donated to local food pantries and over 2,400 pounds of fresh vegetables have been grown and donated. Each year we grow a variety of vegetables and keep trying different ones to increase our yield or eliminate garden issues. Some of the vegetables we have grown are: Cabbage, Cucumbers, Green Beans, Kale, Lettuce, Tomatoes, Yellow Squash, and Zucchini. See [Giving Garden Pictures](#) .

Maintenance (planting, weeding, watering, harvesting) is performed by members of the Hoffman Estates Garden Club. We are organized into teams that are assigned a specific period to do maintenance with individuals or groups on a specific date.

This initiative has not only provides fresh vegetable to the pantries but it has also provided a learning opportunity for the volunteers. Some of the volunteers had never grown or tended a vegetable garden or even harvested from one. Together we have learned how to start seeds, tend seedlings, plant them, fertilize, water, weed, finally harvest. Along the way we’ve improved our techniques and learned from our mistakes. We’ve even shared our experiences and knowledge with other HEGC members and members of the community in general through various forums. And while a significant portion of our harvest comes from the plot directly, our volunteers and members have reached into their own back yards to donate their garden surplus to pantries. Now that is what a real “community garden” is all about with neighbor helping neighbor.