

Final Report from the Interfaith Garden

2017 – 8th Season

We've done it again! Thanks to everyone who volunteered, supported and cheered this effort on. In 2017, 1,600 pounds of fresh, nutritious produce grown in the Interfaith Garden was donated to the Lexington Food Pantry, bringing the 8-year total to 12,100 pounds. And it couldn't have been done without an interfaith and community effort.

It was a good season! 46 varieties of vegetables, fruit and herbs made its way to the Pantry. Interested in knowing the top crops? Here are the 5 highest yielding crops:

	Total pounds
Tomatoes	304.6
Squash	144.6
Onions	115.3
Bok Choy	107.9
Butternut Squash	105.0

Note that bok choy slipped to 4th place at just over 100 pounds. We've been planting more and more since it is a Pantry favorite. For the prior 3 years, bok choy was the #1 or #2 top crop, with yields over 225 pounds per year. However, 2017 was different. The garden had a rough start with the rabbits and their hungry friends slipping in to enjoy the tender shoots. Carla had to keep replanting a number of crops, including bok choy.



The final day at the Garden was Sat, Oct 28th. The last delivery included tomatoes, broccoli, lettuce, cabbage, eggplant, peppers, chard and various herbs.



Saturday's tasks included pulling and clearing out beds. Compost was then spread and raked.



It looked a lot different back in July and August, peak times for Garden productivity!

At the end of every season there is an opportunity to review the numbers. Tracking how much we grew and which crops thrived is an easy metric to gather. It is a concrete measure of success that people can relate to. The big number this year was 1,600 pounds. But the other intent was to build community and have some fun in the process. So, another metric we can track relative to that is to find out how many volunteers answered the call for help and how much help did they provide.

This year we got a late start due to weather, not getting to work until 4/4th, about 3 weeks later than usual. The season was only 29 weeks vs the average of 32 weeks. We scheduled 46 volunteer days and a wonderful group of 175 caring people answered the call and filled 468 volunteer slots! An interesting side note is that over the years, more than 800 individuals have stopped by the Garden and done at least one shift. We have many volunteers who have been involved from the beginning, others who only work once. But we are thankful to all, because whether you work once or a dozen times, you have contributed to the Garden's success.



And how could this ever be without the leadership of Carla? She has shared her space, profound gardening knowledge and countless hours directing our activities. She is a Garden Angel. Thank you, Carla.