

Report from the Interfaith Garden

Saturday, 3/22/2025—1st day of the 16th season



Here is the “before” picture of the Interfaith Garden. It will take work, but by mid to late April, we usually are delivering some produce to the Lexington Food Pantry. Already the green shoots of the garlic planted last fall have broken through...enough for Carla to caution us not to accidentally step on them.

Saturday’s crew.



Today I learned about making custom amendments so we could feed the asparagus beds...the goal was to make enough to add a rich 2" to 3" layer. Special nurturing like this is one of the reason these asparagus beds are still going strong at ~25+ years, instead of becoming unproductive after 15 years.

Using one of the wheelbarrows, we mixed 4 ingredients—a bit of aged alpaca poop, ½ a bag of rich Vermont compost, a sprinkling of urea, and finally topping off the wheelbarrow with fully broken-down compost from Carla's bins.



Step 1.

See the mound of what looks like dirt and straw? That is an aged pile of mostly alpaca (some chicken and goat) poop mixed with a lot of hay. One of our volunteers suggested we try it this year and followed up by getting access to this free source of composted manure. But how to get to Carla's? Well, another volunteer knew someone with a truck and maybe knew of a bunch of teens at another congregation in Belmont who were looking for things to do.... Before you knew it, everything worked out. This was truly a team effort.

In this picture, Teresa screened the alpaca manure so there would be less hay in it. In its unloaded form, there was a high ratio of hay to poop.



Step 2.

The next step was to add ½ a bag of the Vermont “Black Gold” into it. Carla swears it is THE best!

Step 3.

This was followed by sprinkling some Urea into the mix.



Step 4.

Jim topped off the wheel barrel with the compost from the bins where last year we disposed of the old plants, weeds, etc. from the Garden. Carla periodically added layers of shredded paper or newspaper for balance and the decomposition magic happened over the winter. While some of the compost was frozen, enough had thawed to add to the custom mix so we could complete the mission of feeding the beds, as you see Carla doing in the next picture.

...and then you spread it.

