INDIANA UNIVERSITY
CAMPUS GARDEN
INITIATIVE ANNUAL
REPORT-

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IU Campus Garden Initiative
Final Report
Academic Year 2013-2014

3 Introduction

   Founding of the Garden Initiative, History

4 Methodology

   Campus Garden Coordinator, Campus Garden Workdays, Edible Campus Steering Committee

5 Food Production

   Dining Facilities Survey, Environmental Health and Safety, Permaculture Redesign, Rotational Scheme

6 Academic Engagement

   Partnerships with Courses, SPH O111, Service Learning Interviews

8 Volunteer Recruitment and Programming

   GardenCorps, Volunteer Workdays

9 Appendix A

   Website

10 Appendix B

   Harvest Log

11 Appendix C

   Permaculture Design

12 Appendix D

   Garden Rotational Scheme
INTRODUCTION

Everyone eats—it’s the one factor that unites all of human civilization, helping shape our days and our decisions. But not everyone eats in the same way. Increasingly, Americans eat foods that have traveled thousands of miles, come in plastic packaging, are grown with chemical inputs, and were harvested and packaged by workers about which the consumer knows little. All of this requires a vast amount of energy, which, given climate change and impending oil shortages, threatens long-term food security.

A campus garden offers a way to reverse these trends by demonstrating how we might alter our food system, encouraging sustainable agricultural practices that promote healthy environments, healthy bodies, and healthy communities. In Spring 2011, former IU Office of Sustainability intern Stephanie Hopkins conducted a “Designing an Edible Campus” series involving students, faculty and staff who discussed what the presence of such a garden might mean for the IU and Bloomington community. All agreed that a public edible space would offer a meaningful opportunity to learn about food issues and broader topics of sustainability.

Following this discussion, planting in the Bryan House pilot garden began, and production in this 900 ft² space continued for the following year. In 2012, the area surrounding and including the garden underwent extensive construction, and Hilltop Garden and Nature Center offered a larger permanent home for the IU Campus Garden Initiative. This plot, boasting 8500 ft², now serves as the primary production space for the initiative. These two Indiana University campus gardens have the potential to expand into the centerpieces of campus conversations surrounding food, health, and the environment, incorporating individuals from all different backgrounds throughout the campus community.
METHODOLOGY

Campus Garden Coordinator

Coordination of the garden and its corresponding workdays are completed by an intern hired by the IU Office of Sustainability. The Campus Garden Coordination Intern is responsible for overseeing volunteer workdays, organizing GardenCorps meetings and projects, meeting with stakeholders, and increasing awareness throughout the IU campus through media and events, among other things.

Volunteer Workdays

Biweekly garden workdays are hosted at the Campus Garden at Hilltop during the peak growing season (April-November); workdays transfer to once a week during the off-season (December-March). These workdays are open to interested students or student groups, Greek communities, classes, and other campus individuals; they also vary in size, ranging from three volunteers to thirty folks. Volunteers participate in all aspects of the gardening process, engaging in seeding, transplanting, tending, harvesting, and working with the composting system. During the winter months, work is done in the two available greenhouses and in the hoop houses, a structure that serves as a season extender and in which greens can be grown throughout the winter.

Edible Campus Steering Committee

The Edible Campus Steering Committee was organized in 2011 as a part of the “Designing an Edible Campus” series; the committee serves not only to promote the IU Campus Garden Initiative but to encourage the incorporation of other edible spaces around the IU campus. The group is comprised of students, faculty, and staff; members are chosen from various constituents around campus and are expected to represent these diverse interests. Members of the ECSC meet on a monthly basis. The ECSC is presently divided into the following three subcommittees with the corresponding mission statements:

Food Production: Establish a sustainable agricultural method that maximizes food production from the IU Edible Campus Garden while protecting human health and the environment.

Academic Engagement: To create academic research, coursework, and service learning opportunities at all edible gardening spaces.

Volunteer Recruitment and Marketing: To create a volunteer infrastructure capable of sustaining edible gardening spaces, market the Edible Campus Program to the community, and engage individuals in informal learning opportunities.
The Edible Campus Steering Committee has two co-chairs, Amy Roche and James Farmer.

**Food Production**

The Campus Garden at Hilltop serves as the primary production space for the Campus Garden Initiative—here, a number of different crops are grown organically for distribution to both volunteers and dining facilities. Over DALKDJSALKDJALKDJLKASD pounds of food were donated during the 2013 growing season. Crop varieties vary from items that the dining facilities request, like potatoes and specialty herbs, to those items that students want to grow, including husk cherries and peanuts. A harvest log is available in Appendix B.

**Food Production Survey**

During November 2013, a survey was sent out to the twelve different dining facilities managers in order to create a planting plan and seed order. This survey asked what varieties of produce the dining facilities would like to receive from the garden, the months they would need produce, and how much of each crop they would like to source. Bell peppers, potatoes, tomatoes, and lettuce were among the most popular choices, and requests ranged from twenty-five pounds per week to one hundred pounds per week.

**Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) Training**

Garden coordinator received Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) training in July 2013 in order to better understand proper harvest techniques and provide similar training to garden volunteers. Graham McKeen of Environmental Health and Safety created an equivalent training slideshow and online quiz required of any garden volunteers to take part in garden harvest.
**Permaculture Redesign**

Permaculture is a design system that works with existing natural processes in order to increase the efficiency of a growing space. In fall 2013, Jonas Carpenter, a permaculture consultant in Bloomington, worked with the Campus Garden Initiative and three students as part of an independent study course to create a new design for the Campus Garden at Hilltop. The design featured swales that follow the natural contour of the garden—these will serve as water catchment systems to improve irrigation and drainage of the garden and decrease the erosion and stripping of nutrients from the soil. Additionally, students placed perennial fruit trees, berry bushes, and pollinator attracting plants throughout the garden in a perennial border. Implementation of the design took place on March 30, 2014; over forty students dug, mulched, and planted. This design is available in Appendix C.

![Students Gather for a Photo during the Design Implementation Day](image)

**Rotational Scheme**

Hilltop Garden Coordinator Lea Woodard helped create a four-year rotational scheme for the garden, outlining the square footage of yearly crops and the anticipated yields for each. This plan takes into account companion plantings, feeding habits, and soil nutrients to determine an appropriate schedule for garden plantings (Appendix D).

**Academic Engagement**

**Service Learning**

The IU Campus Garden Initiative has partnered with a number of different courses since its move to Hilltop under the guidance of garden intern Frances Einterz. These courses serve to highlight
the relevancy of sustainable food production in various topics and bring a more diverse group of students out to the space. Courses incorporating direct service in the garden included Christine Barbour’s “The Politics of What's for Dinner” and Heather Reynolds “The City as an Ecosystem.” Additionally, Andrea Wiley’s Human Biology class created signage for the garden highlighting health benefits and possible harvest preparation.

Faculty Interviews

The garden coordinator conducted interviews with faculty members from different departments in order to better understand the ways in which the garden space might be better incorporated into course curricula. Results from these interviews showed an interest in an in-class presentation by members of the garden, as well as a preference for direct service, a form of service learning that involves an assigned number of volunteer hours.

School of Public Health Course

Gardening and Nature Education (SPH-O111) was offered during the Spring 2014 semester for the first time as part of the IU Campus Garden Initiative. This course, which had twenty students enrolled, was taught at Hilltop and was offered as one credit hour. Half of each class period was spent in the classroom, and the second half was spent doing work in the greenhouses and garden.

Volunteer Recruitment and Marketing

GardenCorps
The GardenCorps program first started in Summer 2012 and revitalized for the Fall 2013 semester. GardenCorps members dedicate 50 hours/semester in the garden, help lead garden workdays, submit blog posts about their experiences, and undertake an independent project that relates to their personal interests. GardenCorps members can apply for internship or class credit, gain valuable gardening experience, and have access to fresh produce. The Spring 2014 GardenCorps had eight members, some of whom worked on projects involving natural cosmetics, sustainable agriculture in film, beekeeping, a harvest cookbook, and ecology and geology demonstrations. GardenCorps members took field trips to Bread and Roses Farm and Nursery in Bloomington, IN and participated in a mushroom hunt. Additionally, GardenCorps members hosted a radio show called “Garden Talk” on WIUX B-side, an hour-long segment during which they discussed various sustainability-related topics and interviewed some individuals from the Bloomington community.

Volunteer Workdays

IU Campus Garden Initiative members attempted to improve the attraction and retention of garden volunteers by hosting dynamic weekly workdays; these workdays incorporated all
aspects of gardening (including seeding, transplanting, weeding, tending, harvesting, and seed-saving) and included guest lectures from community members and GardenCorps members, yoga practices, and food talks. Members of the Edible Campus Steering Committee also discussed the possibility for various community spaces, including a central gathering space and a pizza oven, to increase volunteer retention. Volunteers are welcome as individuals or as part of a larger student group, often from Greek houses, sports teams, or department organizations.

Fraternity members help mulch the garden in November 2013
Appendix A: Website
Appendix B: Harvest Log
Appendix C: Permaculture Design
Appendix D: Garden Rotational Scheme