

MANTIS AWARD WINNERS Evaluation Summary – 2007



The National Gardening Association surveys grant recipients to capture quantitative and qualitative data on the impact of these programs. The following is a summary of results from winners of the 2007 grant cycle.

Grant package: Mantis Tiller/Cultivator
ComposT-Twin Composting System

Number of applicants: 271

Number of recipients: 25

- 20 programs received tillers
- 5 programs received compost systems

Number of evaluation respondents: 23*

Following is a summary of the highlights from those responses.

Number of participants in Mantis award-winning programs:

Age 2-5 (preschool-K).....	701
Ages 6-8 (grades 1-3).....	1,425
Ages 9-11 (grades 4-6).....	1,274
Ages 12-13 (grades 7-8).....	703
Ages 14-18 (grades 9-12).....	1,111
Adults (18+)	2,097
Total participants	7,311

Demographic information:

European American.....	47%
African American.....	26%
Latino	12%
Other	11%
Asian.....	3%
Native American	1%

Male.....	58%
Female.....	42%

Eligible for free or reduced lunch program41%

Hours per week a participant was involved in gardening activities:

Average	6 hours/week
Range	1 to 25 hours/week

Months of the year respondents conducted gardening programs:

Average.....	7 months/year
Range.....	3 to 12 months/year

Program continuation:

Respondents indicating they plan to continue their program next year100%

Type of audience participating in programs:

Youth	78%
Special Needs	61%
In-school	61%
After-school.....	57%
Adult.....	52%
Community Gardener	48%
Church/Youth Group	43%
Summer Program/Camp	35%
Intergenerational	35%

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Gardening has increased self-esteem, motivation, and physical activity in my intellectually disabled students, and given them an awareness of where food comes from. Often as we worked in the garden other teachers brought their classes by to visit. My students (90% of whom are in Speech/Language) would talk excitedly about the crops and their current projects, offer the visitors herbs to smell, and proudly show off the fruits of their labor.

— Linda Pillows,
Triangle Elementary,
Mt. Dora, FL



*Winners failing to submit an evaluation are ineligible to apply for future grants.

Home school.....	35%
Youth Club	26%
Preschool/Headstart	26%
Other	26%
Gifted & Talented.....	22%

Location of winners responding:

Urban.....	48%
Suburban.....	30%
Rural.....	22%

Program leaders noted participant improvements in these characteristics:

Environmental attitudes	100%
Community spirit.....	96%
Social skills	96%
Self-confidence	91%
Leadership skills.....	87%
Nutritional attitudes.....	83%
Motor skills	83%
Volunteerism	78%
Attitude towards school.....	61%
Scholastic achievement.....	57%

Reported evidence documenting the effectiveness of gardening programs:

Positive feedback from participants.....	96%
Positive feedback from family members	87%
Positive community feedback	87%
Positive feedback from administrators.....	74%
Funding and donations	43%
Decreased disciplinary actions..	39%
Awards and recognition	35%
Positive survey results	26%
Improved attendance rates	17%
Improved test scores.....	9%

Subjects taught through programs:

Community service.....	83%
Health and nutrition	78%
Science	78%

Intra/interpersonal relationships	57%
Interdisciplinary	35%
Math	35%
Cultural studies/issues	30%
Physical education.....	30%
History.....	26%
Art	22%
Social studies.....	22%
Other	17%
English	13%

Percentage of time spent on instructional techniques (note: this is the average of all the responses for each technique):

Adult-led investigation/hands-on activities	35%
Collaborative project work	35%
Student-led investigation/hands-on activities.....	27%
Independent Learning.....	12%
Lecture	11%

Source of curriculum used by gardening programs:

Original material.....	74%
Combined materials from numerous sources	43%
Nonprofit organization (such as NGA or Life Lab)	30%
Cooperative Extension (such as 4-H or JMG)	26%
State education department.....	13%
School district	9%
For-profit corporation.....	4%

Compliance with State and National Education Standards:

Respondents who connected their gardening program to State and National Education Standards	43%
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We engaged 603 volunteers this year, who grew and harvested more than 3,000 pounds of food that we donated to local food pantries.

— John Harris,
Beardsley Community Farm,
Knox County CAC,
Knoxville, TN



The garden is the thing that brought our community together. Once we began to talk and get organized, the major problems we faced in this underserved neighborhood began to fall away.

— Jeffrey Betcher,
Quesada Gardens Initiative, CA



Thanks to our Mantis tiller we enjoyed a bigger harvest this year. Children were excited to witness their accomplishment from seeds to actual vegetables. We shared our harvest with the children's families, thus encouraging healthy eating.

— Linda Kraut, Mercer Child Care Center, Trenton, NJ

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Importance of linking to the standards for respondents:

Mandatory	14%
Very important.....	18%
Important.....	14%
Somewhat important.....	4%
Not important.....	23%
N/A	27%

Approximate amount of money spent on programs:

Less than \$250.....	17%
\$250 to \$500	0%
\$500 to \$1,000	9%
\$1,000 to \$1,500	9%
\$2,000 to \$2,500	9%
More than \$2,500.....	56%

Approximate value of in-kind donations to programs:

Less than \$250.....	9%
\$250 to \$500	9%
\$500 to \$1,000	9%
\$1,000 to \$1,500	4%
\$1,500 to \$2,000	0%
\$2,000 to \$2,500	9%
More than \$2,500.....	60%

Percentage of funding programs received from other sources (note: this is the average of all the responses for each source):

Grants	45%
Donations	26%
Instructor's pocket.....	7%
Parent or Volunteer Organizations	5%
Fundraising	5%
School or School District Funds	0.25%

Publicity about the programs:

Newspaper articles.....	54
Newsletter articles	52
Web site features.....	37
Radio features	23
TV features	11

Type of organizations responding:

Nonprofit Agency	57%
Public school.....	17%
Community garden	9%
Other	9%
Charter school	4%
Private school.....	4%



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Community interaction and additional impacts noted by respondents:

In keeping with its mission to educate visitors about the experiences of soldiers and civilians during WWII, the National D-Day Memorial launched its Victory Garden program in the spring of 2007. Supported by half a dozen civic organizations and businesses, the result has been a lush and verdant 720-square-foot garden at the Memorial site, created and tended exclusively by Safe Haven, a local after-school program serving low-income families and at-risk youth.

Just as the Victory Garden's roots run deep historically, so are the benefits of the project numerous and widespread. Encouraged by the federal government during WWII, private citizens planted Victory Gardens by the millions to help offset the tremendous agricultural demands of feeding two overseas armies and a civilian populace.

Victory Gardeners felt a sense of accomplishment and self-sufficiency that was empowering. The same is true for our Victory Garden and the children who tend it. The children exercise creative control over the garden, making decisions about its layout, content, and care. As with the WWII gardens, our garden produces more than just fruits and vegetables. It also nurtures more confident, capable individuals with a stronger sense of self-worth and control over their lives.

Many of the children in this year's program had never worked in a garden before, and so every aspect of the program, from soil preparation to planting to weeding to harvest-



*We focused on enhancing existing gardens this year and our Mantis really helped. Next year, we'll install three to five new gardens, including rain gardens, and vegetable and herb gardens, and our Mantis tiller will — once again — be invaluable in helping us accomplish this.
We love it, thank you!*

— Heidi Freedman, Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo, Buffalo, NY

ing, was a brand new experience for them. They have learned about climate, plant biology, nutrition, history, and the ecology of good gardening. Through it all, the garden has been their living classroom, a laboratory where they can see real-life results of their experiments develop.

For 10,000 schoolchildren and 70,000 adults who visit the Memorial annually, our garden has been a focal point as well and a novel piece of the WWII story. Many of our visitors have never heard of a Victory Garden, though most are gardeners themselves in some capacity. The story of how millions of families raised the food to feed an army,

sometimes in soil-filled packing crates atop tenement buildings, is a powerful one for our visitors, as is the story behind the Memorial's own Victory Garden today.

— Linda Goshorn,
The National D-Day
Memorial Victory Garden Project,
Bedford, VA

