

# Helping Harvest Gwinnett

The new community garden at Lenora Park in Snellville, Georgia, can now demonstrate urban agriculture practices on a year-round basis. The high tunnel, raised beds and micro-irrigation system were provided by the Gwinnett Soil and Water Conservation District (GSWCD) through the District's Tool Kit Grant, funded by the USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).



(August 31, 2020) When Gwinnett County Parks Department mentioned they needed a high tunnel for the new community garden in Snellville's Lenora Park, the Gwinnett Soil and Water Conservation District (GSWCD) jumped in to help. Thanks to the District's Tool Kit Grant, funding was available to purchase a 36 foot long by 20 foot wide high tunnel. A High Tunnel is a hoop structure enclosed with plastic which extends the growing season for vegetables and protects crops from environmental stresses like wind, rain hail, insects and deer. As part of the package, the District also provided (3) - 32 foot long by 4 foot wide raised beds and a micro-irrigation system. In addition, Sherman Green, ACES (Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services) employee with the Lawrenceville NRCS office provided his technical and hands on expertise throughout the entire installation process.

“Working with the Gwinnett Parks staff was a real pleasure,” reflected Mr. Green. “Putting these high

tunnels up isn't easy and requires a good deal of patience and precision. One person can't do it alone. The Parks staff really came together as a team and worked hard - we were able to get the whole thing assembled in four days. That's record time!”

The installation was completed in late August of 2020, just in time to plant cool weather crops like collards, lettuce, spinach, cabbage, kale, and broccoli. This fresh, healthy produce will be shared locally through an urban agriculture initiative called “Harvest Gwinnett”, a program of Live Healthy Gwinnett. “Harvest Gwinnett” works alongside community partners to provide area residents with improved access to fresh food. Gardening opportunities are supplemented with nutritional and environmental education, and harvests from community share-rows will be donated to health and human services, cooperative ministries, housing authorities, and more. The goal is to improve local access to fresh food and strengthen communities by encouraging socialization, healthy eating and the proven benefits of being outside.



According to the Conservation District's Chairman Ellis Lamme, community gardens like the one at Lenora Park can play a key role in fighting local food insecurity. “Because of COVID-19, people have been talking about Victory Gardens, like what folks planted in World War II. It's a great idea - growing your own food helps keep families from going hungry during tough times, and there are ways to garden that produces the most food, while protecting our soil and water resources,” he said. “I think this new garden at Lenora Park is opening just in time to help folks through the winter - we're proud to support urban farmers and gardeners, and especially the important work being done through Harvest Gwinnett.”



For more about the Harvest Gwinnett program, visit them online at [www.livehealthygwinnett.com/programs-events/harvest-gwinnett](http://www.livehealthygwinnett.com/programs-events/harvest-gwinnett). For more about the Gwinnett Soil and Water Conservation District, visit [www.Gwinnett SWCD.or](http://www.GwinnettSWCD.or) or on Face Book @gwinnettSWCD