



DEKALB COUNTY

**COMMUNITY
GARDENS**

Walnut Grove Vocational Farm

Program Guide

DeKalb County Community Gardens
WALNUT GROVE VOCATIONAL FARM
REV. FEB2019

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ABOUT DEKALB COUNTY COMMUNITY GARDENS

History of DeKalb County Community Gardens

DeKalb County Community Gardens (DCCG) was started in 2012 by Dan Kenney to help end hunger and food insecurity in DeKalb County, IL. DCCG employs an innovative approach to end hunger and food insecurity in our community by providing access to fresh, local, sustainably-grown organic vegetables for all who may be in need. With more than 15 acres of growing space, in the first two years of operation, DCCG produced nearly ten tons of food donated to local food pantries, day care centers, schools, community meal locations, senior citizen centers and housing units, as well as to the Meals on Wheels program. DCCG has gardens all over the county, with over 200 raised beds as well as large acreages.

Mission

DeKalb County Community Gardens (DCCG) empowers DeKalb County residents to choose healthy and sustainable foods through community education.

Values

Social Justice and Equity: DCCG is committed to equity and equality for all; particularly those populations who do not have equal access to nutritional food; involving all residents with all levels of ability, from all backgrounds.

Sustainability: DCCG is committed to using sustainable and organic methods for food production; to being fiscally responsible and ensuring financial sustainability for the organization; to supporting personal health and knowledge for self-sustainability.

Education: DCCG is committed to collaboration and engagement in all educational programs to support strong and healthy communities; to support the personal and professional growth of their volunteers and employees.

Community Service: DCCG is committed to serving and empowering the community by producing and distributing food throughout DeKalb County, particularly where it is needed most.

Integrity: DCCG is committed to be an honest, transparent organization that earns and keeps the community's trust due to thoughtful and professional management practices.

Non-discrimination Statement and Policy

DCCG does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers or vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, participants, volunteers, subcontractors, vendors and clients.

DCCG is an equal opportunity employer. We will not discriminate and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant on the bases of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

ADA Compliance

DCCG intends to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which prohibits discrimination in the provision and inclusion of programs and services to individuals with disabilities. Some programs, because of the inherent nature of the activity, are suggested for specific disability groups. If you or any person wishes to participate but are not among the suggested groups, please contact DCCG and every reasonable effort will be made to include the individual in the program. If you have any questions regarding the ADA, or if you feel you have been discriminated against in the inclusion of programs or the provision of services, please contact the DCCG Executive Director or DCCG Board President to register your complaint and for its prompt resolution.

About Walnut Grove Vocational Farm

Walnut Grove Vocational Farm (WGVF) is located north of Kirkland, IL at 33600 Pearl Street. DCCG staff provides horticulture and agriculture training and employment exploration in an integrated setting for adults with developmental disabilities, youth, volunteers and other groups at WGVF. The fastest growing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities are with farms and ranches. Horticulture and agriculture related training opportunities allow those with disabilities a healthy, fun, integrated, and meaningful way to participate and contribute to the broader community.

GUIDELINES

Expectations and Rules

Our goal is to assist everyone in strengthening their skills associated with working in an integrated environment. Therefore, all participants, support staff and volunteers are expected to display appropriate behavior while at WGVF.

- Be prepared to work indoors and outdoors.
- Dress for the job.
 - No jewelry, (Exception: wedding band)
 - Wear clothes that can get dirty.
 - Good sturdy shoes for being out in the field when needed.
 - Outer wear appropriate for the weather forecast.
 - If you have artificial finger nails or finger nail polish you must wear gloves when handling produce.
- Follow directions from DCCG staff and volunteers.
- Show respect to all individuals at the Farm.
- Refrain from all abusive, aggressive or foul language.
- Refrain from inflicting bodily harm to any individual.
- Respect the equipment, supplies and facilities at the Farm.
- Control his or her own hygiene needs (Personal assistants are welcome to attend programs to assist with personal needs.)

Note: Additional or individual behavior management plans may be developed on the advice of DCCG staff and other authorities associated with participants.

DCCG reserves the right to dismiss any participant, support staff or volunteer who does not adhere to the above noted expectations and rules. Each incident will be evaluated individually and on its own merit.

Program Cancellations

DCCG reserves the right to cancel a program or special event due to insufficient enrollment, inclement weather or other situations as deemed necessary.

PROGRAMS AT WALNUT GROVE VOCATIONAL FARM

Individualized Program

WGVF provides agriculturally-based training, along with assistance in job placement for individuals with developmental disabilities, in an integrated supportive setting. DCCG staff at WGVF will develop individualized training programs specifically for each participant's needs. Participants will work in small groups supervised by DCCG staff and volunteers. Last year, 75% of our participants involved in individualized programs found employment after training. Training received could also be used for individuals pursuing their own small business. Below are examples of what individuals may learn during their training, depending on their skill level:

- Sow seeds
- Fill pots/trays with media
- Transplant plugs
- Prune plants
- Plant vegetable plants in outdoor garden
- Plant flower beds
- Identify weeds and remove from garden or flower beds
- Harvest and wash vegetables
- Prepare Boxes of Hope
- Proper food handling and sanitation
- Inventory products
- Sanitize growing materials
- Proper use of garden equipment

Transportation Options

DCCG has partnered with the Voluntary Action Center (TransVac) for transportation needs. Transportation to WGVF is available on Mondays and Fridays. To access this transportation, participants must be signed up with TransVac. The TransVac form is available online at <http://vacdk.com/about-dialaride/>. The form must be completed and on file prior to the first ride. This transportation is a door-to-door services set up by DCCG staff and TransVac. The cost for transportation, is billed monthly to the individual participant. If you are interested in the transportation option, please speak with DCCG staff for more details.

Required Paperwork

Participant Application for individuals in training sessions (updated annually), found online at <https://www.dekalbgardens.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2019-WGVF-Participant-Application-1.pdf>

Participant Waivers (both injury and photo - updated annually)

TransVac, if using transportation, found online at <http://vacdk.com/about-dialaride/>

Groups-Sessions

DCCG welcomes groups to experience WGVF.

When groups attend sessions at the Farm, they will have the same opportunities as our individual participants to learn skills in the agriculture/horticulture field. Due to limited staff at WGVF the expectations for visiting groups are as follows:

- All groups must designate a group supervisor. DCCG staff will communicate any concerns or cancellation with the group to the designated group supervisor.
- The group supervisor will be responsible for contacting DCCG staff should there be a cancellation by the group or any concerns that arise while at the Farm.
- WGVF's goal is for everyone to participate.
- DCCG staff will supply direction for each planned activity along with equipment needed to complete the activities. **Groups are responsible to have adequate staff/supervision for individuals in the group that visit the Farm.**
- Activities will be completed by the individuals in the group with the support of the group's supervising staff and group leaders that attend with the groups. DCCG staff will only be available to monitor the activities.
- DCCG staff seeks to meet the need of everyone to be successful at WGVF. If a group participant has specific accommodations needed to be successful such as wheelchair, service dog, or walker please inform DCCG staff prior to group session
- Lack of support or supervision by group staff/leader will be communicated to the group supervisor. Should it become an issue the group or individual staff/leader may be asked not to return to the Farm on subsequent visits.
- DCCG relies on our volunteers at WGVF.
 - There may be times when visiting groups may have volunteer support while at the Farm. DCCG Volunteers are not to be direct supervisors of participants.

- DCCG staff will be the direct supervisor to all volunteers. No group support staff is to give direction to a DCCG volunteer.
- No DCCG volunteer is to assist an individual or group member at WGVF without specific direction to do so by DCCG staff.
- All members of a group (participant and support staff) are expected to adhere to WGVF **expectations and rules** listed in this guide.

Safety

The WGVF program is intended to challenge and engage the physical, mental, and emotional resources of each participant. Despite careful and proper preparation and instruction there is still a risk of serious injury when participating in the program. All hazards and dangers cannot be foreseen. Certain risks, dangers, and injuries may exist due to inclement weather, slips and falls, poor skill level or conditioning, and carelessness. In this regard, it is impossible for DCCG staff and volunteers to guarantee absolute safety. The group supervisor and staff are responsible for determining if a participant is physically fit and/or adequately skilled to participate at WGVF.

Photos

DCCG often takes photos in connection with activities at WGVF that may be used in print or electronic form. When your group attends programs at WGVF it is assumed participants are agreeing to have his or her picture taken. If someone in the group wishes not to have their picture taken, please communicate this request to DCCG staff.

Questions, Comments, or Concerns

All visitors to the Farm (staff, participants and volunteers) are expected to adhere to WGVF **expectations and rules** listed in this guide. Should you have any questions, comments or concerns with the expectations, rules and policies with in this Program Guide, or any services you receive through DCCG please do not hesitate to contact any of the following:

CONTACT INFORMATION

Jackie DiNatale, DCCG Board President

Email: President@dekalbgardens.org Phone: 825.981.1744

Dan Kenney, DCCG Executive Director

Email: dkenney@dekalbgardens.org Phone: 815.793.0950

Heather Edwards, DCCG Program Director

Email: hedwards@dekalbgardens.org Phone: 779.212.9543

Julie Craig, Program Assistant at WGVF

Email: jcraig@dekalbgardens.org Phone: 779.212.9543

DeKalb County Community Gardens

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Walnut Grove Vocational Farm

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(please send all mail correspondence to the DCCG address)