



TORONTO COMMUNITY GARDENS, ALLOTMENT GARDENS & URBAN FARM

*Presentation to
Toronto Parks & Environment Committee
February 5, 2009
City Hall, Committee Room 1
9:30am*



COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- **Background**

- Community Gardens Program (CGP) initiated in 1997 through partnership with FoodShare and Toronto Food Policy Council

- “Just Grow It!” youth employment and mentorship project
 - Funding from Federal government, Youth Services Canada

A background image showing a close-up of several hands holding a large bunch of green leafy vegetables, possibly spinach or basil. The hands are of different skin tones, suggesting a diverse group of people. The background is slightly blurred, showing more greenery.

COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- **Mandate**

- Community Garden Action Plan (1999)

- To establish one community garden per ward
 - To map out existing community gardens and assess need for additional community gardens
 - To Share expertise in creating and sustaining community gardens
 - To assist community gardeners through toolkit and train-the-trainer approach

The background of the slide is a photograph of several hands holding a large bunch of green leafy vegetables, likely spinach or basil. The hands are of different skin tones, suggesting a diverse group of people. The image is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the text overlay.

COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- **Mandate**

- Environmental Plan (2000)
 - Creation of food production pilot projects
- Food and Hunger Action Plan (2001)
 - City departments identify underused lands or greenhouses for use by community gardeners working with CGP Co-ordinator
- Our Common Grounds (2004)
 - Initiate a professional gardener certificate program

A photograph of a person's hands holding a large bunch of green leafy vegetables, possibly spinach or basil, in front of a chain-link fence. The background is slightly blurred, showing more greenery. The text 'COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM' is overlaid in large, bold, white capital letters at the top of the image.

COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- **Activities**

- Garden Establishment
- Inventory of Potential Sites
- Train-the-Trainer Toolkit
- Community Gardening Course
- Rockcliffe Teaching Garden & Greenhouses

The background of the slide is a photograph of several hands holding a large bunch of green leafy vegetables, likely spinach or chard. The hands are of different skin tones, suggesting a diverse group of people. The vegetables are vibrant green and appear to be freshly harvested. The overall tone of the image is natural and community-oriented.

COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- **Garden Establishment**

- Program provides technical support and resources (e.g., fencing, water hook-up, shed) for gardens on City park lands
- Various garden types (e.g., food, flower, native species)
- Application and implementation process
- Number of community gardens at inception of the Program in 1997: 30



COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- Community Gardening Course
 - Teaches basic principles and practices of organic gardening (e.g., Soil, Pests, Compost)
 - Targeted at youth and adults from vulnerable populations
 - # youth trained since 1997: 182
 - # youth trainees employed as PFR seasonal staff: 54 (45 visible minorities)



COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- Rockcliffe Teaching Garden & Greenhouses
 - Greenhouses
 - ~2,000 seedlings produced annually for community gardens and Urban Farm
 - Demonstration Garden
 - 1 acre used for production trials with heirloom and ethnocultural species (e.g., okra, eggplant, tomato)
 - Production per sq. ft.: 5-10 lbs

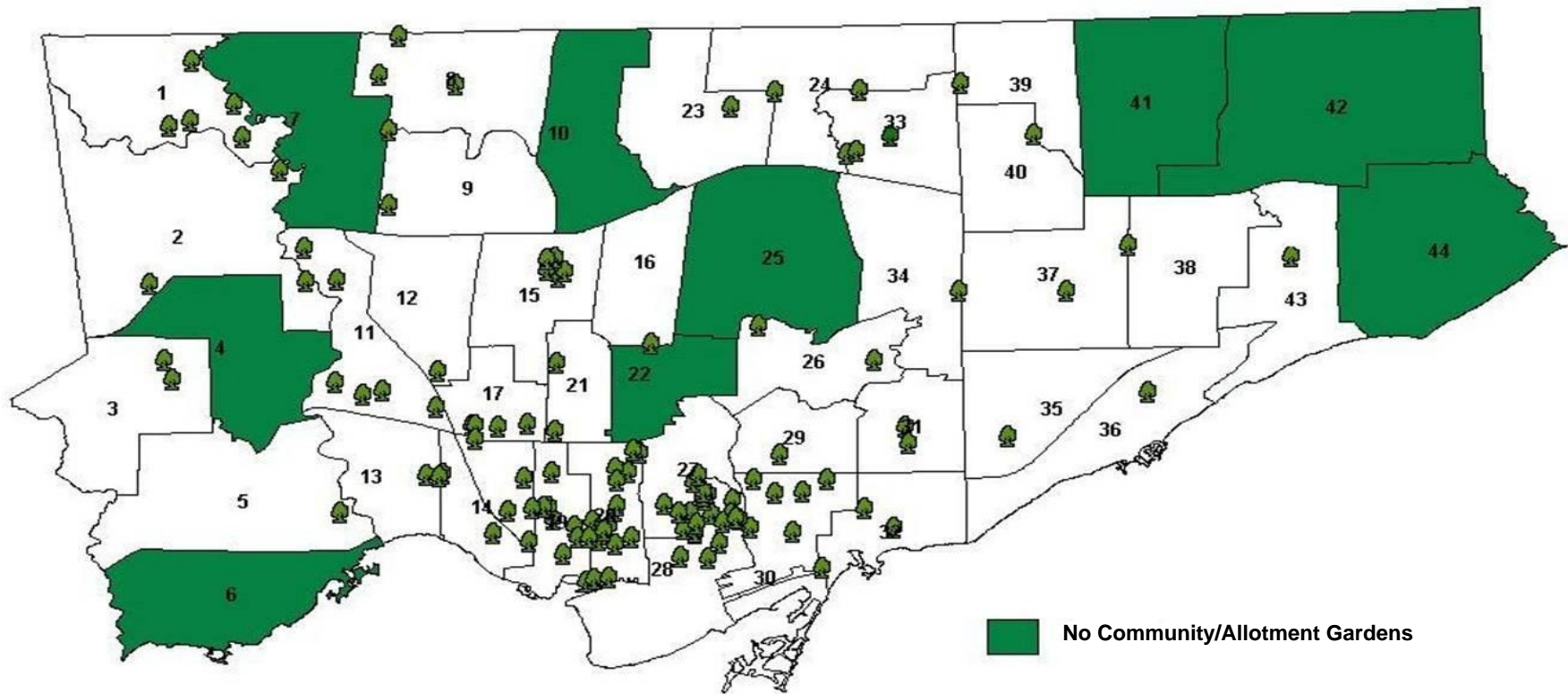
A background image showing a close-up of several hands of different skin tones holding a large bunch of fresh green beans. The hands are positioned as if they are presenting or sorting the vegetables. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting an outdoor garden setting.

COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- Rockcliffe Teaching Garden & Greenhouses
 - Peer Nutrition Community Garden
 - Targets newcomer families (Partnership with Toronto Public Health)
 - 60 families participated since 2003
 - Junior Gardener Program
 - Targets local schools in vulnerable neighbourhoods
 - 300 students participated over 3 years

COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

Community/Allotment Gardens by Ward
City of Toronto 2008





COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- Key Performance Indicators

- # of community gardens (City and non-City): 112
- # of community gardens on City lands: 50
- # of community gardens on non-City lands: 62
- # of wards with community gardens (City and non-City): 29
- # of wards with community gardens on City lands: 24

A background image showing a pair of hands holding a bunch of fresh green herbs, likely basil, against a blurred green background. The hands are positioned in the center, with one hand at the top and the other at the bottom, gently holding the stems. The overall tone is natural and fresh.

COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM

- **Key Performance Indicators**

- # of community gardens - Parks: 36
- # of community gardens - Community Centres: 5
- # of community gardens - PFR facilities: 5
- # of community gardens - other City property: 2
- # of community gardens - Hydro corridors: 2
- # of outstanding requests for gardens on City parks: 40

A background image showing a close-up of several hands holding a large bunch of fresh green leafy vegetables, possibly spinach or basil. The hands are of different skin tones, suggesting a diverse group of people. The background is slightly blurred, showing more greenery.

ALLOTMENT GARDENS

- Administered by PFR Customer Service Section
 - Individuals follow permit process over phone; Staff notify applicants when plots are available
 - Fee: \$55.10 per plot (20' x 10')
 - Mostly food (some flower) cultivation
 - Gardening Season: May-Oct.
 - Wait list generated annually Feb. 1st



ALLOTMENT GARDENS

- **Key Performance Indicators**

- # of allotment gardens in Toronto: 12
- # of allotment gardens in Hydro fields: 10
- # of allotment gardens in parklands: 2
- # of allotment garden plots: 1,674
- # wards with allotment gardens: 11
- # wards without community or allotment gardens: 9

The background of the slide is a photograph showing a close-up of several hands holding a large bunch of fresh green leafy vegetables, likely spinach or basil. The hands are of different skin tones, suggesting a diverse group of people. The background is slightly blurred, showing more greenery and a chain-link fence in the distance.

TORONTO URBAN FARM

- **Background**

- 8-acre property in Jane-Finch priority neighbourhood, owned by Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)
- Operates as extension of Rockcliffe site
- 2002 – TRCA requested support from CGP to implement Urban Farm concept
- 2003 – Funding from Ontario Works Incentive Fund to establish Urban Farm over two-year pilot period
- 2007 – Toronto City Council approved base operating budget for Urban Farm

A background image showing a close-up of two hands, one dark-skinned and one light-skinned, holding a bunch of fresh green beans. The hands are positioned as if they have just picked or are about to harvest the beans. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting an outdoor garden or farm setting.

TORONTO URBAN FARM

- **Mandate**

- To provide youth from priority neighbourhoods with life and work skills training in an urban farm setting
- To teach farming methods, gardening and horticultural skills, recreation program planning and civic engagement while promoting community safety and food security

The background of the slide is a photograph of several hands of different skin tones holding a large bunch of green leafy vegetables, possibly spinach or basil. The hands are positioned in a way that suggests they are presenting or sharing the produce. The background is slightly blurred, showing more greenery and a chain-link fence.

TORONTO URBAN FARM

- **Current Activities**

- Seasonal youth employment
- Instructional and experiential youth training
- Organic production and preservation of heirloom and ethnocultural vegetables
- Children's gardening and work camps
- Food donations for community food programs
- Public education (e.g., tours, presentations)

A background image showing a close-up of several hands of different skin tones holding a large bunch of fresh green leafy vegetables, possibly spinach or basil. The hands are positioned as if they are carefully inspecting or preparing the produce. The background is slightly blurred, showing more greenery and a chain-link fence, suggesting an outdoor farm setting.

TORONTO URBAN FARM

- **Future Activities**

- Food sales to specialized caterers, restaurants, and farmers markets
- Research & evaluation
- Seniors' programming
- Community composting

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TORONTO URBAN FARM

- **Key Performance Indicators**

- Trained and employed 50 youth (47 visible minorities) since 2003
- Conducted farm installation using mainly manual labour
- Produced food on 40,000 sq. ft. of land
- Hosted 15 work camps for schools, faith groups, and community agencies
- Held 3 end-of-season community celebrations in 2005, 2007, and 2008
- Conducted gardening, fitness, and chess programming with XCELCare Outreach Inc.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a large bunch of green leafy vegetables, possibly spinach or basil. The hands are dark-skinned and are positioned in the center of the frame. The background is a blurred green field, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text "THANK YOU" is overlaid in the center of the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a slight shadow effect.

THANK YOU