



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PROVIDE FOR NEW SEASON OF COMMUNITY GARDENS

Applications now being accepted for 2012 grant funds and garden space

With the calendar showing the first day of Spring just two weeks away, Franklin County Commissioners are launching a new season of community gardening across the county, by investing up to \$20,000 in local garden grants and offering available space at the Franklin County Gantz Road Community Garden.

"Growing up on a farm, my family was fortunate to spend a lot of time together working in the garden and growing our own vegetables," said Board of Commissioners President Paula Brooks. "More than the flowers and vegetables that grow in these gardens, this investment provides a catalyst for neighborhood and community development, stimulates social interaction, and creates opportunities for income and economic development."

Starting this week, the County is accepting applications to rent garden plots at its Gantz Road Community Garden located in southwestern Franklin County. This year marks the garden's fourth growing season.

Approximately 60 plots are available, ranging from a 10'x10' plot for \$10 to a 40'x10' plot for \$30. Garden fees include on-site water and access to the garden during daylight hours. Plots are awarded by a lottery system.

The garden is expected to open on April 14th, and remain open through October.

"Gardening is a pastime that anyone with a little time and patience can participate in, no matter your age, income or health," added County Commissioner Marilyn Brown. "Gardens help fight obesity by providing flavorful, nutritious food, and they support your health by providing you with great exercise and fresh air. Garden tasks, like hoeing and weeding can provide you with as much exercise as a workout at the gym, and the food you gather couldn't get any fresher."

In addition to the investment at the Gantz Road Community Garden, the County is offering grant awards of up to \$4,000 each - totaling \$20,000 in all - for local non-profit groups who agree to manage and maintain a community garden within qualifying areas of Franklin County.

"For the last several years, Central Ohio has been a leader in the growing community garden movement," said County Commissioner John O'Grady. "Our partnership with the City of Columbus and the Columbus Foundation to fund these grants - along with private support from Fifth Third Bank and the Scotts Miracle-Gro Company - has given even more families an opportunity to grow good things together in our community gardens."

The community garden grants can be used for supplies or contractual services to grow vegetables, fruits, herbs or flowers. The online application for the grants - including a map showing eligible funding areas - can be found through the Columbus Foundation's website at www.columbusfoundation.org.

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Addition information on the Franklin County Gantz Road Community Garden can be found online at www.FranklinCountyOhio.gov/Commissioners/Community-Gardens