

## Quotes about the Community Teaching Garden from 2007 participants

This garden, simply put, changed our family's lives. We learned so much, about proper growing techniques, organic solutions to pest problems, nutrition, and how to prepare and store food. The fact that we were able to successfully grow all of our own produce for many months still amazes me, and it provides a foundation on which to speak to almost anyone – at work, at the store, within our families, to our neighbors, across political lines – once it becomes known that we garden, lively conversation ensues, tips are exchanged, veggies are traded, and communities are enriched.

*Erin Brackenridge, 1<sup>st</sup> Year Student, Burlington*

I found that the ability to plant a wide variety of vegetables, flowers, and herbs was most beneficial. It allowed me to try my hand at a number of types of plants, giving me a better idea of how different plants need to be cared for, and how planting methods and growing conditions vary. It also allowed me to try new vegetables and new ways of preparing foods, many of which I was able to freeze for the winter. This was a great opportunity to learn about something that I have always been interested in, and I will definitely take with me everything that I learned from this summer and use that as I garden in the future!

*Amber Gaster, 1<sup>st</sup> year student, Burlington*

I really looked forward to the gardening class: I liked the sense of community that came from seeing the same people twice a week, and this was also a perfect pace at which to watch my garden steadily progress. Early in the season, when I was biking more often, the regular gardening class also provided a great motivation/excuse for me to leave work earlier than I would normally and get some exercise. I also liked that there was some solid structure to the class (as far as having seeds, seedlings, and instruction readily available for growing in our garden) but also a lot of flexibility and leeway as to what we could grow. It was fun to see what extra stuff everyone else decided to grow, and to compare the variety and similarities.

*Carrie Wager,, 1<sup>st</sup> year student, South Burlington*

I think the class was successful in its goals. I am more confident about my gardening abilities. What I learned that there are good ideas (e.g. watering, seed planting depths, plant/row spacing). But they are not hard and fast rules. The way to learn what is successful gardening techniques is very much trial and error. If you want to try something new, give it a shot and see the results.

*-- Nick Teff, 1<sup>st</sup> year student, Burlington*

This is an amazing program and I am so thankful that I was able to participate this past summer. Not only did I gain so much knowledge about gardening and had the opportunity to plant things that I never would have grown but I was also able to be a member of a great community. This is one of the best parts of the class – the community that is created around the garden through the potlucks (which are great!) and over the course of the summer.

-- *Jill Rotondo,, 1<sup>st</sup> year student, Burlington*

The most beneficial part about the garden program to me was just having a chance to get outside and work with the earth. Since moving from PA to VT & starting to work full-time, I've had very little opportunity to just be outside, breathing fresh air, and observing. That's something I feel like I need to be healthy, and I wasn't getting it before I found the garden.

-- *Pat Burke, 1<sup>st</sup> year student, Burlington*

I appreciated the fact that the class combined valuable instruction that will be passed on in the community, wonderful produce, a great community in which to learn, and other really fun elements like the stone table.

-- *Rita Bevacco, 1<sup>st</sup> year student, Burlington*

This was my first experience with gardening, so I loved getting advice on bed preparation, planting, and harvesting. I walked away with a strong sense of what each vegetable needs to thrive, and also some great cooking ideas. Beyond the educational component, the sense of community was just phenomenal. I met so many wonderful people through this program.

-- *Sarah Shepherd, 1<sup>st</sup> year student, Burlington*

I learned a great deal and was very motivated to learn more as time progressed. I read a book about local gardening and have shifted many of my habits to ensure I am eating better foods. In doing so, I have met many new people and have sparked many conversations with friends, family and peers highlighting the knowledge I've gained from this program.

-- *Shawn Brackenridge, 1<sup>st</sup> year student, Burlington*

Thanks Friends of Burlington Gardens for offering this wonderful opportunity and letting me be part and sharing the experience with my fiancé and great friends. Thanks for inspiring me and teaching me that growing organically and environmentally consciously is possible.

*Noelia Baez-Rodriguez, 2<sup>nd</sup> year student, Burlington*