



Henderson County Master Gardeners Weekly News Article October 07, 2018

HCMGA to Break Ground on Harvest Garden

By Yvonne Sparks

Please join Henderson County Master Gardener Association (HCMGA) at the groundbreaking ceremony for our newest project, the Harvest Garden, Tuesday, October 16, 11:00 a.m., at Henderson County Regional Fairpark Complex, 3356 Hwy 31 E, Athens, Texas.



Since his arrival in 2017, Spencer Perkins, Texas AgriLife Extension Agent, has seen a need to demonstrate how vegetables and fruits can be easily grown in East Texas. Questions about growing fruits and vegetables are the most-asked inquiries he receives at his office and in the community.

Perkins consulted with the Master Gardener Executive Board, the Henderson County Fairpark Board and Master Gardeners about starting an edible demonstration, research and education garden. A planning committee was formed and a plan developed. The plan was presented to the HCMGA membership at its August meeting.

As the plan evolved, land at the Henderson County Regional Fairpark Complex was designated, volunteers recruited and a grant application was submitted. Through the spring and early summer months, plans were finalized along with a draft of the layout of the garden. Assisting Perkins in the process were Lydia Holley, Lynn Stroud and John Maloch.

The Harvest Garden will have: a variety of grapes to make wine, jams and jellies; many kinds of vegetables for both spring and fall gardens; herbs; a rainwater catchment system; several varieties of fruit trees; berries; and a hoop house. Each of these designated areas will have a Master Gardener volunteer responsible for its planting, maintenance and harvesting.

The initial funding for the garden was provided by Sara and Rik Drummond. This grant will provide for fencing, drip irrigation, repairs to the small storage building on the property, soil, raised beds, and a shaded pavilion for educational purposes. Additional expenses will be covered through donations and the general operating funds of HCMGA as needed.

Perkins stated this garden will enhance HCMGA's goal of providing horticultural information to the community. Currently, HCMGA maintains the Dream Garden at the East Texas Arboretum and manages the Greenhouse on the TVCC campus in Athens. The Harvest Garden will provide numerous educational opportunities for the public. Programs will be planned with hands-on experiences for the participants. Additionally, school children will be able to visit and learn that tomatoes don't "magically appear at Brookshire's". Any excess produce will be donated to the Food Bank.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email hendersonCMGA@gmail.com, or visit txmg.org/hendersonmg.