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Community Gardening
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Studio 5 contributor Courtney Orton learned it doesn't have to be impossible because of community gardens.

Community gardens are becoming so popular that people will wait years and years to get a plot in one. A community garden is a piece of land that's gardened by a collective group of people. They offer the perfect solution for someone who can't garden in their own yard.

Like, Forest Jordan who waited for a plot in the Grateful Tomato Garden on 600 East and 800 South in Salt Lake City for 3 years.

He now has a coveted 4 by 40 foot plot in this downtown community garden. "Once a gardener gets a plot, they kind of hold onto it," says Wasatch Community Gardens Brit Merrill. "We have gardeners within this garden who have been here for twenty years. They're not giving up their plot any time soon."

Wasatch Community Gardens is a non-profit organization that oversees 5 community gardens along the Wasatch Front. Each garden has about 25 plots, and combined Merrill says there are more than 180 gardeners.

"We have an 89-year-old gardener named Sheila who is an amazing gardener. She's a great teacher for some of the younger gardeners," says Merrill.

That's one of the things that Jordan says is so great about community gardening. "The community aspect of the community garden is probably the best reason to get involved. You get to know your neighbors, you get to learn a lot more about the process of gardening and what it does for you, and at the end of the year, it's amazing how much produce you actually get out of a small garden if you spend the time."

Fellow gardener Wayne Geary agrees. He's had a plot in this garden for 7 years. Today, he and his daughter Greta are getting their plot ready for the season.

"We've been turning over the soil, and letting it air out and dry," explains Greta.

Geary says anyone can learn how to garden, "It's good exercise. It's nice to be outside. It's a great thing to do."

Cost

It depends on the garden, but the plot rental fee averages \$40 a year for a Wasatch Community Garden. That pays for access to water, gardening tools, helpful information about gardening, and of course the space to grow fresh produce.

Waiting List

On average, it takes 3 to 5 years to get a plot in a Wasatch Community Garden. The non-profit organization only looks at applications in February.

Plot Application Form:

<http://wasatchgardens.org/civicrm/profile/create?reset=1&gid=4>

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