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# Advantages of Growing Your Own Food

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## Advantages of Urban Gardening:

Food is fresher, cheaper, healthier, 'greener', enhances soil quality, enhances urban air quality, reduces lawn care pollution, strengthens local economies, strengthens environmental stability and species diversity, and protects against food shortages that may result from natural disasters or economic downturns.

As more food is grown by individuals, it proportionately lowers prices in stores because of increased supply and reduced demand.

To significantly conserve energy and the vitality of food, it makes sense to grow more food closer to where people live. The more food that is grown locally, there is significantly less pollution and resource depletion because food is not having to be transported, preserved, refrigerated, etc. over long distances and for long periods of time.

## Advantages of Organic Gardening:

Organic food is free of pesticides, herbicides, preservatives, carcinogens, allergens, irradiation, chemicals, artificial coloring, and processing which is often high in saturated and Trans fats, salt, and sugars.

Locally grown organic food has much higher vitamin, mineral, enzyme and other nutrient value, since it is non-toxic, not altered by processing, and not stored over long periods of time and/or transported from far away.

## Advantages of Community Gardening:

Community gardens provide gardening space for those who want to garden, but may not have residential land with enough sun exposure.

Community gardens increases bonding and local cooperation between individuals, families, organizations, businesses, and neighborhoods.

Community gardens provide a reliable, safe food source that puts downward pressure on food prices in stores, more money in your pocket, and fewer health care expenses.

Community gardens provide an opportunity for homeless and low income people to grow much of their own food.

Community volunteers and those who provide resources for gardening can relieve socio-economic pressures in communities by generating free or low-cost, fresh, high quality food for low income, elderly, or handicapped people.

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## Food not Lawns Gardens not Grass

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**Growing a garden is an excellent form of exercise; it can be relaxing, fun, de-stressing, educational, money-saving, a great way to reconnect with nature and a co-operative activity which is the ultimate act of economic relocation.** Permaculture is a method of maximizing *sustainable* agricultural output that can be creatively applied to any size garden.

Americans spend 30 million dollars per year to maintain 23 million acres of lawn. **Lawns consume 270 billion gallons of water per week and use 10 times as many chemicals per acre as industrial farmland.** Runoff from lawn fertilizer, pesticides, and weed control contribute greatly to water pollution. **The pollution emitted from power mowers (noise not included) in just one hour is equal to the amount a car would emit in 350 miles.**

Lawns are not only a **highly inefficient use of soil, space, water, money, and time;** they are a significant contributor to the degradation of our natural environment. If all existing lawns were converted to gardens, they could on the average produce enough vegetables to feed a family of six.