



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County

For Immediate Release

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Planting Begins at Community Garden to Support Watertown Urban Mission's Food Pantry

Community Garden Developed in Collaboration between Watertown Urban Mission, Chapin Living Waters, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County

WATERTOWN (May 30, 2017) – In an exciting collaboration between Chapin Living Waters, the Watertown Urban Mission, and the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County, next week marks the beginning of planting in the newly constructed community garden located behind the Chapin Living Waters Office at 364 N. Colorado Ave in Watertown, NY.

In most community gardens, participants purchase plots that they plant and harvest for their personal use. What makes this community garden different is that all vegetables harvested will directly benefit the Food Pantry of the Watertown Urban Mission, which serves an average of 450 local households a month. Individual and community agency volunteers are lending their time and skill to help plant, maintain, and harvest the garden.

The project began with Doug Carlson, executive director of Chapin Living Waters, approaching the Watertown Urban Mission with the prospect of turning the empty plot of land located behind the Chapin Living Waters Facility, into a community garden. Soon after the Mission was on board for the project, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County (CCE Jefferson) was asked to join the collaboration for their expertise in gardening. “We have experience with community gardens, including facilitation of the Zenda Community Garden, so it came naturally that we wanted to put the land to a good purpose,” said Doug Carlson. “Plus, Cornell Corporative Extension is a tremendous asset with their master gardeners.”

In April, Sue Gwise, Horticulture Educator at CCE Jefferson, conducted a training session for the community garden volunteers lending their gardening expertise. CCE Jefferson also provided a grant funding opportunity that covered the expense of the equipment needed for the garden.

“When Doug approached us with this project, we were immediately excited for the possibilities of the garden to benefit those who seek services from our Food Pantry,” said Joanna Loomis, executive director of Watertown Urban Mission. “Providing healthy food for those served in our pantry is something really important to us, so being able to provide a new source of fresh vegetables to locals in need will be greatly appreciated.”

A groundbreaking ceremony will be held on June 8th at 11:00 at the community garden located at 364 N. Colorado Ave in Watertown, NY.