

Bay Street Community Garden – Monthly Report

Lancaster, PA | August 2025

As the summer starts to come to an end, the Bay Street Community Garden continues to grow, not just in produce, but in purpose, connection, and community. August was a lively month, filled with both nourishment and neighborliness, as the garden reached more community members and it started to grow more into it's purpose.

Harvest and Impact

This month, the garden yielded a generous **356.5 pounds of fresh, organic produce**, cultivated and harvested with care by our dedicated volunteer team. The fruits of the volunteer's labor fed not only them, but also their neighbors and other community members. **Seventy- six individuals and families** received produce.

Distribution reflected the spirit of reciprocity that defines Bay Street. Recipients included:

- Our hardworking **volunteers**
- Local **seniors**
- **Neighbors of volunteers**
- **Community members in need**, identified through personal connections

What's Growing

August brought a beautiful diversity to our harvest, including:

- **Beets**
- **Chard**
- **Tomatoes**
- **Carrots & Cucumbers**
- **Korean Melon & Watermelon**
- **Tomatillo**
- **Banana Peppers & Hot Peppers**
- **Japanese Eggplant**

These fresh fruits and vegetables made their way to tables throughout the neighborhood, reinforcing food security and cultural connection—particularly with crops like Korean melon and Japanese eggplant that reflect the heritage of some of our families.

A variety of strawberry plants were planted at the beginning of the growing season and have been taken care of to allow their roots to fully establish. They are now at a point where their flowers

can be let alone and fruits can start to grow. While the main strawberry season is in June, a few of the varieties are still putting out flowers, and a few straggling strawberries are starting to come off the vine.

Engagement and Education

Our **Kids in the Garden** program concluded this month with **27 youth over the 6 week** program. Most attended regularly, gaining hands-on experience with gardening while learning about plant science, food systems, and the joy of growing your own food. These young gardeners brought their families closer to the space, helping to weave the next generation into our community fabric.

We also hosted **community work days**, welcoming neighbors to get their hands in the soil and contribute to the upkeep and care of our shared green space.

This month also saw our first **Garden Party**. This event brought out neighbors who were coming the garden for the first time. Neighbors got to have a tour of the garden, assist with harvesting, and an opportunity to connect with new people. Other volunteers brought food to share that was made with produce from the garden. There were several tasty salsas, marinara sauce (accompanied by sourdough focaccia), home made pizza, and hot sauce! The big draw though was cutting into the garden's large watermelon. Attendees got to guess it's weight, with the top 3 closest won prizes. The watermelon ended up being exactly 39 pounds, and our youngest guesser was the closest with a guess of 42 pounds.



Volunteer Power

The garden's success continues to rest on the shoulders of those who show up. **26 volunteers contributed a total of 40 hours** this month, planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting. There were 5 new faces that started to come to the garden to lend their talents to the greater effort.

Looking Ahead

As we move into September, we anticipate new harvests, new faces, and continued growth. The plants are already starting to show a slowing down of producing vegetables as the seasons begin to change. However we are preparing the ground to put in one last round of new veggies. In September we will have more leafy greens from kale and arugula to peas. We are especially grateful to have a space to be able connect people with not just each other, but to where their food comes from. When you have a hand in growing something, and see what all goes into it appearing on your plate, one gains a deeper understanding and appreciation for what makes society turn.

The Bay Street Community Garden is more than a place—it is a living example of what happens when a community comes together to care for one another.

With gratitude,

-The Bay Street Garden Team