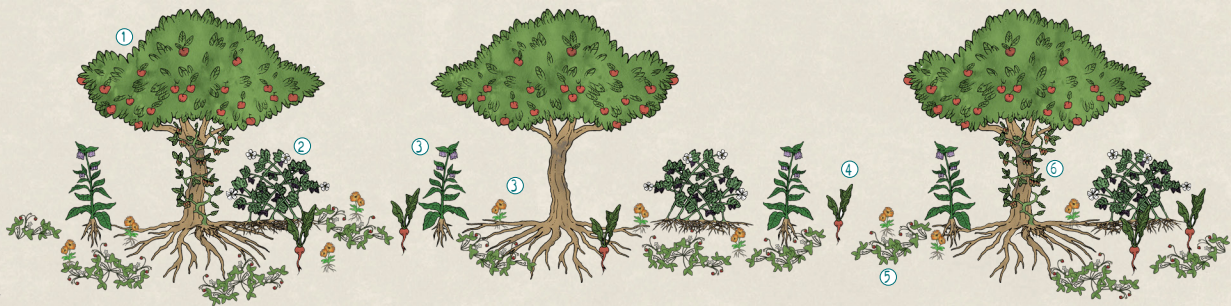


Welcome - Bienvenidos - 歡迎

to the  
Community Food Forest at Leslie Park



Community Food Forest

2021 Growing Season Report

# Community Food Forest - 2021 Growing Season Report

We've had a very successful and meaningful first full growing season at the Community Food Forest at Leslie Park this year! Thank you so much for helping us get this far. In our following report we will update you on the many things that are measurable from the season, but want to acknowledge the many small, quiet daily ways that the community expresses support or simply benefits from the Food Forest. New relationships develop with the extended community every single time we are out there and we get many reports of people harvesting or simply being in the beauty when we are not around (as is evidenced by some of the letters of support you have already received this year).

## Community Relations Building with Various Organizations

### WCCD School & Community Habitat Grant

Washtenaw County Conservation District awarded the Community Food Forest their School & Community Habitat Grant, designed to assist Washtenaw County Schools and Community organizations in restoring wildlife habitat and natural ecosystems. The CFF received a \$420 award in the form of native Michigan plants at wholesale cost. We have already received and planted many of these plants, with the remainder to be distributed Spring 2022. Doug Reith, the coordinator of this grant program, sent a letter to the Commission with further information about the grant program and their interactions with the Community Food Forest.

### Ann Arbor BSA Troop #7 Service Project

The #7 Ann Arbor Boy Scout Troop partnered with the CFF for an educational workday and service project, listed below in the season's events. Feedback was very positive, and the troop looks forward to continued partnership with the Community Food Forest.

### Elizabeth Dean Trust Fund - Fruit Tree Corridor Collaboration

The Elizabeth Dean Fund Committee collaborated with several Food Forest Coalition members on the planting of 8 fruit trees in a corridor of Leslie Park adjoining the Food Forest. This project is completely independent from the Food Forest itself, with the approval, funding, and maintenance of these trees all going through the Elizabeth Dean Fund. It is, rather, an example of the regenerative and community resilience spirit of the Food Forest spreading out into the community, with many committee members expressing enthusiasm for the project and a desire to see more regenerative food plantings in Ann Arbor city parks.

## Public Community Engagement and Education

- We have been maintaining an informative web page that both updates people on upcoming events and offers in depth information on what the project is. We also worked very hard to create [this three minute educational video](#).
- Hosted Public Educational Events, Work Days and Family-Friendly Seasonal Festivals, all of which employed Covid safety practices in line with the current CDC recommendations.





# Spring Planting Festival

We began our growing season with a fabulous Family Friendly Planting Festival in May. We gave a tour of the site and shared about the food forest model and the importance of regenerative systems. Participants learned how to make and plant seed balls in a hands-on activity that gave them skills they could take back to their own gardening endeavors. We also planted the medicinal/edible calendula circle at the center of the garden (which is still going strong now).





# Summer Sheet Mulching Workshop and Workday

In June we gathered for an educational workday teaching participants about sheet mulching, a regenerative and cost effective way to build up rich and fertile soil. The volunteers worked together to actually prepare a substantial area of the site for autumn/spring planting.

## August Summer Work and Harvest Days

Because August is a very busy time for harvest (even in a young food forest) we held two workdays to clean up the space and harvest food and medicine. These quieter work days are a great way for people involved in the project to get to know each other.





# October Boy Scout Educational Work Day

On October 3rd, the Ann Arbor BSA Troop #7 joined Food Forest Coalition members for an educational workday and service project. The scouts got hands-on education on the hows and whys of building healthy and vibrant topsoil, and were very excited to prepare the space for our Rainbow Children's Garden next year. Scouts, troop leaders, and parents all had very positive feedback, and are excited for a continued partnership with the Community Food Forest.



## Autumn Harvest Festival

We'd also love to invite you to attend our autumn [Harvest Festival this coming Saturday, October 16th, from 1:00-3:00 PM](#) and hope that you will join us. Lots of great things will be happening throughout the day. RSVPs are requested so that we can keep an eye on headcount and plan for community safety.

The day will feature:

- Food Forest Tour
- Herbal Medicine Walk and Medicine Making Demo (weather permitting)
- Harvest and Recipe Sharing
- Seed Saving
- Natural Plant Dyeing Demonstration
- Community Celebration!

And special guest, and dear friend, Joe Reilly will bless us with his music!





## Site Development

- Continued our considerable efforts with soil building and improvement
- Continued to improve our system of paths throughout the site
- Planted many new plants including: herbaceous perennials and reseeding annuals that serve stacking functions of pollinator benefit, and food and medicine, many more berry bushes, and native plants throughout.
- Created a beautiful welcome sign with essential copy in three languages that makes it easier for all passerby to understand what's happening at the CFF.
- We have also implemented a consistent maintenance workday. (We hope to have two weekly maintenance work shifts on the calendar for next year).

Thank you!  
- The Community Food Forest Coalition

