

Volunteers come together to grow community garden

By Kate Kelley Apr 15, 2019 Updated Dec 12, 2022



Good things are growing in Arma, Kansas.

There, residents are partnering with Live Well Crawford County to make progress on a community garden.

While the group has a \$3,000 head start with a grant from the Community Foundation, it needs your help to get this community garden off the ground.

"We're just gonna go 10 feet over."

Volunteers stake out the ground for Arma's first community garden, excited to put down roots, their hope to help people feed their families healthy foods, something mother's like Lisa King struggle to do.

"It really comes down to cost, especially when you're on a fixed, or limited, income like I am, like a lot of people in this area are. You basically have to weigh what's better for, not necessarily healthwise, but better for your family. A bag of chicken pieces for \$10, or a bag of salad essentials for \$10, which one's gonna go bad first," asked King.

It's hard for people here to find fresh produce. The town's only grocery store closed a few years back, but, armed with a grant, [Live Well Crawford County](#) and citizens met at the library where a food pantry will be started with what's grown.

"This garden is going to bring thousands of pounds of fresh food to Arma. Food for Arma, grown by Arma. It's really a neat project," said Matt O'Malley, Community Liason for Live Well Crawford County.

The garden will be filled with rows of fresh fruits and vegetables, something otherwise in short supply.

"A lot of people have to pay for transport, especially some of our elderly residents, to go to Pittsburg," said King.

"I feel like we should try and meet the needs of the community and having a community garden will do that," said Brenda Banks, Director of Arma's City Library.

That's why the city donated the land, public works will run a water line and hydrant with the city paying the water bill.

"This is only gonna be as successful as the community is willing to put into it," said Travis Wood, a member of Arma's city council.

Setting a how-to precedent for other towns, something tough that King compares to getting going on a healthy diet.

"The start is always, 'Woohoo!' but the hard work and dedication it takes to do it day after day and year after year is really what it takes...and they are more than willing to help out because that's what people in Arma do, they help each other."

The group aims to raise a total of \$9,000 for the project, with funds going towards supporting Arma's existing food pantry at its high school, as well as creating a food pantry at the town's library.