

Environmentally Friendly Community Garden Feeds Local Charities During Covid-19 Crisis

Members of the Vanguard Community Garden, which was built by the Los Angeles County Public Works in 2015, are donating fresh produce grown on-site to food banks and elderly neighbors in need during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Located at the Vanguard Learning Center Middle School in unincorporated Willowbrook, Public Works envisioned the community garden to be an opportunity for residents to grow their own food in an underserved area with few sources of fresh produce. With over 150 plots, members grow ethnic staples and other crops and easily practice social distancing on the three-acre site.

The site also features many sustainable attributes. A walking path made of recycled tires loops around the garden, where students jog for daily exercise. Bioswales capture storm run-off and a demonstration drought-tolerant landscape is showcased near the classrooms.

A separate raised-bed garden near the classrooms is dedicated for school use. An outdoor classroom within the garden is used for County smart gardening workshops on composting, water-wise gardening, grasscycling, and other practices.

The garden provides the means for diverting organic waste by: composting plant waste onsite; using donated mulch from tree trimmers and the Los Angeles Sanitation Bureau's green bin system; using donated horse manure as soil amendment; and using waste cardboard from supermarkets as weed barrier.

The community garden is thriving, and volunteer members have been donating crates of food to local food banks, such as Alma Backyard Farms in Compton and Social Justice Learning Institute in Inglewood. They also donate extra produce to the elderly and other neighbors in need.

For additional information, please email smartgardening@pw.lacounty.gov.



