**Guide to Developing Family Gardens**

**FAMILY GARDENS VISIONING WORKSHEET**

This worksheet is designed as a guide to help the CAB plan and develop Family Gardens in your community. If your team does not yet have a CAB, see the Create your Community Advisory Board section. Filling out the spaces below will help the CAB and community partners think through what Family Gardens could look like.

Let’s get started by filling in your information below:

**Your Organization**

**Your Community Name**

**Today’s Date**

**Names of Individuals/**

**Organizations Preparing This Plan**

**Family Garden Goals**

What are your team’s goals in developing Family Gardens? Some questions to consider when coming up with these goals include: What will Family Gardens provide for the community? Why would your team like to support families to have gardens? Some of your goals may conflict with each other, and you may want to list the goals in order of importance to determine which goals are most valuable. As an example, the goals of the White Mountain Apache Family Garden program were:

*Goal 1: Serve as a resource for community members interested in developing their own gardens*

*Goal 2: Provide a garden model for communities and families*

*Goal 3: Provide technical assistance to existing family gardens*

*Goal 4: Reach as many communities as possible through the reservation*

Your community’s goals may be different. Write your team’s goals for the Family Gardens below:

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

Goal 4:

Goal 5:

Goal 6:

Goal 7:

Goal 8:

Goal 9:

Goal 10:

**Describe the Family Gardens**

Next, write a description of the Family Gardens that your team would like to see, including the goals that you’ve listed above. An example is included below:

*Our family garden program support families in communities throughout our reservation to create and maintain family gardens. We will provide technical assistance to families that already have gardens, and be a resource for community members who are interested in developing their own family gardens. We will also provide a garden model for communities and families to help them understand what a family garden is, and how to garden productively.*

Write your team’s description of Family Gardens in your community below:

**IDENTIFY LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

**Identify a Lead Organization**

Identify a lead organization and a Family Gardens Coordinator to take responsibility to advertise the program, coordinate support for family gardens, and evaluate the program. Make sure this organization and coordinator have the skills needed to coordinate Family Gardens, such as:

* Familiarity with traditional agriculture in the region,
* Positive relationships with the farmers and elders in the region,
* Experience gardening or a willingness to learn,
* Connections to external agencies willing to provide support or expertise in grant writing,
* Passion and commitment to support Family Gardens,
* Patience,
* Willingness to partner and involve volunteers, and
* A large enough team to manage all necessary tasks.

Examples of lead organizations include tribal agricultural departments, natural resource departments, local nurseries, and health and wellness programs. The lead organization may already be committed to hosting Family Gardens because they are in line with their organizational mission. Decide on what the lead organization will do in their role as a leader. This organization may already be a part of the CAB that guides the Feast for the Future programs.

**Lead Organization Contact Information:**

Organization Name:

Family Gardens Coordinator:

Address:

Telephone #:

Email:

Website:

**Describe the Role of the Lead Organization**

In collaboration with the agency, the CAB, and key stakeholders, decide on the role of the lead organization. An example is included below:

*The lead organization for Family Gardens will be responsible for advertising the program and recruiting families to participate. The lead organization will also recruit, train, and coordinate staff members and volunteers who will provide support for individual families. The lead organization will be responsible for funding the program through connections to other organizations, or through grant writing and asking for donations. The lead organization will oversee the evaluation of the program and maintain a financial log to make sure all purchases are within budget. The lead organization will also coordinate with all partners, and coordinate regular meetings with the Family Gardens leadership team, the CAB, community partners, and other key stakeholders.*

Write a description of the responsibilities for the Family Gardens lead organization in your community below:

**Identify the Leadership Team of Community Partners**

A team of individuals, each with unique contributions, will help make the Family Gardens a success. Involving individuals and agencies from a variety of backgrounds can help make your team strong. Make sure to work with tribal agencies to receive needed commitments and approvals for the Family Gardens, which may involve a signed and approved letter from tribal leadership. Consider involving tribal government, tribal members, youth and youth groups, schools and colleges, farmers, the state’s cooperative extension services/programs, master gardeners, FoodCorps, community volunteers, and staff of health programs. Consider partnering with a local college to offer credit for volunteering with the Family Garden program. Consider partnering with similar initiatives, such as with those coordinating the Farmer’s Workshops or Edible School Garden programs, to help support the gardens and to have a broad reach when advertising the Family Gardens.

Determine who will coordinate different aspects of the Family Gardens to ensure that the program will continue to benefit the community. An example of potential roles and responsibilities is included below:

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| ***Name*** | ***Role*** | ***Responsibilities*** |
| *Diane* | *Family Garden Coordinator* | *Serves as the point person for the Family Gardens program. Oversees the development of each garden. Works with all the other individuals listed below. Reports back to the CAB.* |
| *Ralph* | *Evaluation Manager* | *Leads the development of the evaluation; keeps track of what is working well and what could be improved about the Family Gardens, and shares that information with the team.* |
| *Toby* | *Community Outreach Coordinator* | *Coordinates with local families, farmers, elders, youth, and other community members to participate in the Family Gardens program* |
| *Linda* | *Fundraising Coordinator* | *Will seek out, and actively pursue, funding opportunities to purchase the supplies for the Family Garden program. These opportunities may include writing grants, asking for donations from hardware stores, nurseries, greenhouses, and farms.* |

Your Family Garden leadership team may have different roles and responsibilities than in the example. Fill in the following table with your leadership team, their roles, and their responsibilities:

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| **Name** | **Role** | **Responsibilities** |
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If some individuals can no longer fulfill their role on the Family Garden team, transition another individual into that role to ensure sustainability.

**PREPARING FOR THE FAMILY GARDENS**

**Develop a process for community members to apply to have a family garden**

When families are interested in becoming part of the program, think through how they would let your team know about their interest. Consider creating an application form (Click here to see the application form developed by the White Mountain Apache Tribe). Once an application form is drafted, decide how the application will be made available to the community, and how it will be returned to the lead agency. An example is below:

*Application forms will be available at the community’s Farmer’s Market, handed out to young people at the Traditional Foodways Education Program and the Edible School Garden program, posted at the grocery store, and handed out individually by members of the Family Gardens leadership team. The application form can be mailed by community members to the lead agency, dropped off at the front desk of the lead agency, or delivered to the lead agency by any member of the Family Garden leadership team.*

Your team may have a different process for how the application forms will be distributed to the community and returned to the lead agency. Write a description of your team’s plans below:

Identify who will collect the forms at the lead agency, and how they will be processed. An example is below.

*All application forms will be given to Diane, the Family Gardens Coordinator, who will keep track of each family that applies, including when they begin participating in the program, or if they are on a waitlist awaiting additional resources. Diane will also approve each application on a rolling basis, if it is complete and there are resources available. If the application is incomplete, Diane will contact the family. If there are limited resources available and several applications received at about the same time, she will identify higher priority applications. Once an application is approved, it will be referred to Toby, Family Gardens staff member, who will coordinate a team member to visit the family and begin assisting with their family garden.*

Write down who will collect the forms at your team’s lead agency:

Decide which applications will take priority if there are limited resources. An example is below.

*If there are more application forms than resources, higher priority will be given to applicants that have limited additional income, are elders, and have young children. If there are several high priority applications, the Community Advisory Board will decide which of the high priority applications will receive funding.*

Write down what kind of Family Garden applications will receive higher priority in your community:

**Develop a Gardening 101 Packet**

Consider creating a packet to provide to each family that participates in the Family Garden program. This packet could include handouts and/or materials about:

* Helpful bugs
* Pest control
* How to improve soil quality
* Cover crops
* How to build a lasagna bed and/or double dug
* Extending the season
* Seed saving

The information provided in each of these materials will vary on the local land and climate conditions. Click here for an example Gardening 101 Packet. What kind of information would be useful for people in your community to know to have a successful garden? Write a list below:

**Create a Family Garden Initial Visit Form**

Think about creating a form that your team can use at their first visit to a family who has been selected to be part of the Family Garden program. This form should include space to write down the materials the family already has, their location, what type of garden they would like (i.e., raised lasagna bed, double dug, etc.), and their water source. Click here to see the Family Garden Initial Visit Form developed and used by the White Mountain Apache Tribe for their Family Garden program.

**Create a Family Contact Log**

Consider creating a form that your team can use with each family to help keep track of visits to each family, and to monitor the garden’s progress. Click here to see the Family Contact Log developed and used by the White Mountain Apache Tribe for their Family Garden program.

**Develop an Evaluation Plan**

Decide how your team will figure out what is going well, and what needs to be improved about the Family Garden. What are your goals for the Family Garden and how will they be measured? Look back at the Visioning Worksheet to see if those goals can be included. This plan should be completed before starting the first Family Garden.

Below are some examples of Family Garden goals and an evaluation plan to help determine how those goals will be measured:

*Goal 1: Serve as a resource for community members interested in developing their own gardens*

*Goal 2: Provide a garden model for communities and families*

*Goal 3: Provide technical assistance to existing family gardens*

*Goal 4: Reach as many communities as possible throughout the reservation*

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| ***Family Garden Goal*** | ***How The Goal Will Be Measured and Evaluated*** |
| *Serve as a resource for community members interested in developing their own gardens* | *The Evaluation Coordinator will track how many individuals have made contact with the Family Gardens project team looking for information on how to start their own gardens. The Evaluation Coordinator will keep a log of this information in an excel spreadsheet. The Evaluation Coordinator will share how many people/families have contacted the project team during each month, at the spring, summer, and fall CAB meetings.* |
| *Provide a garden model for communities and families* | *The Family Garden Coordinator will develop a description of what a garden model is, then oversee the development of that model. The Family Garden Coordinator will report back on progress towards the model to the CAB during the spring, summer, and fall meetings.* |

Your community may have different goals for your Family Gardens, and different ways to evaluate those goals. Fill out the table below with your goals for the Family Gardens and how your team will evaluate those goals.

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| **Family Garden Goal** | **How The Goal Will Be Measured and Evaluated** |
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**Approval for evaluation activities**

Many communities and tribes require that evaluation plans are reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board or other entity. Find out what, if any, approvals are needed for your team’s evaluation plan, potentially by contacting a local researcher who works in your community.

**Develop a Family Garden Advertising Plan**

Reach out through the connections of the lead agency, CAB, and Family Garden coordinator to talk with local farmers, organizations, and community members who may be interested in being a part of the Family Garden program. Connecting with people individually can be a great way to encourage families to participate. Also, think about making and printing flyers to put up in places that people will see, such as at the grocery store, clinic, or gas station. Write down your team’s plan for advertising the Family Garden program. An example is included below:

| **Advertising Method** | **Plan** | **Person/People Responsible, and their Roles** | **Why this method?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Flyers | Posted at area stores that sell produce | Vivian will make the flyers, Christina will put the flyers in stores | To let the general community know about the program |
| Word-of-mouth | Call people who might be particularly interested, such as farmers, elders, gardeners, coordinators of other Feast for the Future programs, and people involved in local agriculture | Each person on the CAB, leadership organization, and Family Garden team will reach out to people they know | To make sure that people who the program is designed for know about it |
| Social Media – Tribal Facebook pages/ Twitter accounts | Create a Facebook page for the Family Gardens Program, and invite community members to the first event | Julian | To reach community members who use social media, particularly younger people |

Your team’s advertising plan might be different. Write yours down in the field below:

| **Advertising Method** | **Plan** | **Person/People Responsible, and their Roles** | **Why this method?** |
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**GETTING STARTED**

**Finalizing Plans**

What remain to be done before working with families to start their Family Gardens? Consider:

🞏 Worked with tribal leadership to ensure the program is approved by the tribe

🞏 Developed a Gardening 101 packet

🞏 Developed an application form

🞏 Developed a Family Garden Initial Visit form

🞏 Developed a Family Contact Log

🞏 Have a process for advertising the program

🞏 Have a process for receiving application forms, including which applications will take priority

🞏 Have secured funding for needed materials

Use the following table to write down any remaining things your team needs to do before the Family Gardens Program begins, who will take the lead on each task, and when each task will be completed:

| **Task** | **Deadline** | **Lead** |
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**Publicize the Family Garden Program**

Once everything is ready, it’s time to get started! Follow your Family Garden Advertising Plan to publicize the program and start collecting applications.

**Select Applicants**

Follow the process for community members to apply to have a family garden.If there are more applications than your team has the resources for, follow the procedures your team outlined for prioritizing Family Garden applications. It is highly recommended to limit first year participants to a manageable number of family gardens, dependent on funding and staff availability within your organization. For example, the team in Whiteriver found that 10 families was a manageable number for their team.

**Contact Selected Applicants**

Once applicants have been selected to participate in the program, notify those selected to verify that they are still interested. Coordinate the timing of an orientation meeting with the families that will participate in the program.

**Facilitate an Orientation Meeting**

At the meeting, discuss topics including the garden locations, supplies, what types of support your organization will provide, the selected families’ role, etc. Also:

* Provide each family with the gardening 101 package, recipes, and local resources (i.e., information about local farmers workshops, cooking classes, etc.).
* Have families fill out a “Family Garden Initial Visit Form” that will be used for a home visit.
* Schedule an appointment with each family for a home visit to determine their needs.

**Visit Each Selected Applicant**

During the home visit develop a plan using the “Family Garden Initial Visit” form (click here for the form used by the White Mountain Apache Tribe) for each family garden. This plan should include the supply list, location for the garden, type of garden, and water source. Also, identify potential barriers or problems that may need to be addressed. Depending on the knowledge level of the participant they may need education on gardening techniques, plant environments, water and soil. The individual family garden plans will vary depending on the family’s plant preferences, climate, growing zone, available space, supplies, and soil amendments. It will also depend on the current season. Some individual families may also have special needs such as an elder who is not as mobile.

**Purchase Needed Supplies and Deliver to Each Family**

Once the supplies needed has been identified with each family, purchase those supplies and deliver them to each garden location. It will be helpful to identify a central nursery or greenhouse that can provide start plants, seeds, and other supplies. Developing a strong relationship with this establishment is encouraged, as they may be able to provide additional resources such as classes and bulk rates for supplies.

**PLANNING FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS AND SUSTAINABILITY**

The Community Advisory Board (CAB) and a strong team will help keep the Family Garden program a success. Consult with the CAB at ongoing meetings to plan for success by setting short-term and long-term goals. Items to consider for long-term sustainability:

**Provide On-Going Assistance**

Provide on-going assistance to the selected families, according to each family’s needs and plans

For those who are beginner gardeners, you may need to provide assistance during the construction of the garden bed (and/or fence) and planting. It will also be important to provide education on plant care including watering, pest control, and soil amendments (i.e., manure, bone meal, worm castings).

Provide on-going support to each family through phone and/or home visits to assess how their gardens are doing. Identify potential problems that need to be addressed. Before the growing season it will be important to visit the families to check in with their preparation for their gardens. This will be an important time to see if they need any technical assistance or materials (i.e., seeds, fencing, soil). During the initial growing season it is recommended to follow up with each family at least once a month. Provide families with healthy recipes that they use with their produce. Consider keeping track of family visits through a ‘Family Contact Log’ (click here for the Family Contact Log developed by the Family Garden program of the White Mountain Apache Tribe).

**Ongoing Evaluation**

Continue to think through what’s working well, and what could be improved about the Family Garden program. Re-visit the project team’s goals, and update the list of goals to see if there might be new ones as the program continues. For each goal, develop a plan to assess progress towards that goal. Evaluation such as this can also provide insight into how families, and communities, have been impacted by the Family Garden program.

**Build Family Capacity to Manage Their Own Gardens**

Maintaining contact with the families can strengthen their knowledge and confidence around gardening, and build their capacity to manage their garden independently. Providing opportunities such as funding for the families to attend farmer’s workshops can also develop family capacity.

**Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

By helping families build a sturdy garden that is equipped with good soil, a water source, and fencing, they should be able to use their garden for many years. Using organic gardening methods that will not damage the land is important to ensuring garden longevity, and environmental sustainability.

**Communication**

To ensure that the Family Gardens continue, maintain communication with the community about the program, including reporting to tribal leaders, parents/guardians, and the CAB about the program. Also continue to listen to the community about what’s working and could be improved about the program. Consider also documenting and sharing information about the program through photos, newsletters, social media, etc.

**Funding**

As the Family Gardens continue, their style may grow or change to better serve your community. Additional funding may be needed, for things such as hiring additional staff, purchasing supplies, or renting equipment. To ensure that these needs are met, designate an individual on the leadership team to identify and pursue funding opportunities. In looking for funding, consider organizations that offer grants, such as the First Nations Development Institute. See this list of additional resources compiled by the White Mountain Apache Tribe Family Garden program for reference.

**Moving Forward**

As the Family Gardens program continues, consider working to set up regular Community Advisory Board/community partner meetings to provide a forum for discussion and planning



**Congratulations on starting Family Gardens in your community!**