



Center for
Urban Responses
to Environmental
Stressors



Gardening

FACT SHEET

Community Resource

Is Your Soil Safe?

Lead found in Detroit soil likely comes from outside paint.

If your home was built before 1978 and you have a child under the age of 6 living there, you may qualify for a grant to remove lead from your home. Contact CLEARCorps at **313-924-4000** for resources on home lead testing and repairs.



To learn more about CURES, contact Rochelle Chapman at 313-577-5045 or RochelleChapman@wayne.edu

Why Garden? Dr. Robbins Digs In on the Benefits of Gardening

Physical: Physical activity can lower risk of heart disease, cancer, stroke and other diseases. Gardening is a low impact physical activity that anyone can do.

Mental: Gardening can be emotionally and spiritually satisfying, and encourages positive thinking and a sense of pride. Stressed? Go play in the dirt!

Social: Gardening promotes relationships with family members, friends and neighbors through a shared activity everyone can enjoy. Community gardens can improve the look and safety of the area, impacting the whole neighborhood



“Research shows that gardening can improve your health.”

– Jess Robbins, PhD
Anthropologist, WSU

Thinking about starting a garden?

Keep Growing Detroit has a Garden Resource Program that supports over 1500 backyard and community gardens in Detroit, Hamtramck and Highland Park. It provides seeds, plantings, soil testing, training and much more to its members. To sign up for the Garden Resource Program visit Keep Growing Detroit’s website <http://detroitagriculture.net/> or call 313-757-2635.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GROW

Most soil in Detroit is safe to grow fruits and vegetables, but some soil has lead in it. Lead can harm your health, so be sure to test your soil for lead before you start gardening. Contact **Keep Growing Detroit** at **313-757-2635** for info on testing.

Soil tests can be taken at any time, but are best in early spring or late fall



Make sure soil is dry when testing

Testing Tips



Test across the entire garden area

Growing tips on back



Community Spotlight: Huda Clinic & Urban Garden



Babar A. Qadri (center kneeling right) shows volunteers how to plant at Huda Garden. *photo by Julian Esaw*

The Huda Clinic is a free health clinic that serves Detroiters. Its treatment model is different: they “prescribe” fruits and vegetables grown in their garden to their patients. “If we’re going to tell our patients to take bad foods off of their table, we have to give them healthy options to replace them,” says Babar A. Qadri, a physician’s assistant at the clinic. Qadri also co-directs the garden program. The Huda Urban Garden is set up by disease (for example, diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure) and patients can pick food from the garden that will help improve their health. Any food that doesn’t go to their patients is given to the community. Find out more about the Huda Clinic and Urban Garden at www.hudaclinic.org and www.hudaurbangarden.org.



Community Questions



Q. How do I stop animals from eating my garden?

A. Place chicken wire around your plants to block small animals. Depending on the animal, certain plants repel them naturally. Aromatic herbs such as mint, rosemary, dill and oregano are great for keeping rabbits away. For more information visit: <http://homeguides.sfgate.com/flowers-det-animals-43937.html>



Q. How can I control weeds?

A. Weeds are good for your health! Instead of thinking of weeds as a bad thing, think of them as a way to get you moving. The act of gardening and pulling weeds is a good way to stay active. The more we move, the better our health!

Q. Can I garden if I don’t have a backyard or I live in an apartment?

A. Yes! Some neighborhoods have community gardens where you can rent space for a fee or by volunteering time. Also, many herbs like rosemary, lemon balm, parsley and mint can be grown in small pots indoors or on your porch.

Soil tests are good for three years. **Keep Growing Detroit** recommends “Good Gardening Practices” to keep your soil strong like:



Use raised beds if soil is bad



Cover bare soil with mulch or vegetation



Add organic materials like manure, leaves, straw or grass