

Pr

32-4402

G 16/2

(2)

# The 1943 Victory Garden Program

No. 1 a

United States Department of Agriculture,  
Committee on Victory Gardens

H. W. HOCHBAUM, Chairman

*(S3) on page 9*  
AMERICA NEEDS MILLIONS of Victory Gardens in 1943. It must have at least 6 million farm gardens and 12 million city, town, and suburban gardens. Vegetables and fruits from these gardens will make a real contribution to the total civilian food supply, especially of those vital elements—the vitamins and minerals needed for sustained well-being.

Here are the facts of the situation. One-fourth of our total food production in 1943 will be needed for our armed forces and to help supply our fighting allies and the workers who make their weapons. The size of our armed forces and the length of our battle lines grow daily. That means more food immediately and more for future use. Planning for military campaigns requires that the accumulation of food stores be started many months in advance so that there will be no uncertainty about food supplies when the fighting starts.

Stock piles of food must be accumulated to follow up the United Nations' armies of invasion. The Axis strategy is to use starvation to beat conquered peoples into submission. The United Nation's food strategy is to build, with food, new power to throw against the Axis. Hitler stripped North Africa of its food supplies. Food from America is helping French soldiers to take their place beside our own soldiers and against the Germans. Food from America made the combined American and British campaign in Africa possible.

The demands of war on metal supplies make it impossible to meet military and Lend-Lease needs for canned foods and still supply normal amounts to civilians. Thirty-five percent of the 1942 pack of the most important canned vegetables was set aside for Army and Lend-Lease needs. Over one-half of the 1943 commercial pack of vegetables will be purchased by the Government. This means that civilians will have to depend more and more upon fresh supplies through home-garden production.

Furthermore, because of the military and Lend-Lease needs for canned supplies, it will be important for gardeners to plan to store and preserve for winter use as much as possible of the products of the gardens.

The wartime burden on the Nation's transportation system will make it impossible to ship over long distances the normal amounts of fresh vegetables and fruits, especially the more bulky vegetables. This will require production of more of the civilian supplies close to consuming areas.

Victory gardeners can help in many ways to meet the wartime food production problem. Home food production will contribute to the war effort both on the fighting front and on the home front. It will reduce the demand on commercial supplies and thereby make more available for military and Lend-Lease needs and for the needs of those who are unable to have gardens. Home production of fruits and vegetables will reduce the demand on strategic materials for canning. It will help to relieve the food transportation and distributing problem, for the Victory gardener can have his vegetables and fruits right at his doorstep, and on his pantry shelves and in his cellar. Thereby, he and his family will find it easier to maintain good food habits so essential to health. The Department of Agriculture considers that good food habits require eating from four to seven servings of vegetables and fruits daily. The Victory Garden program is aimed at making this possible.

## THE PROGRAM

1. Every farm, where climate and water supplies permit, should grow all the vegetables needed for the family's entire year's supply in fresh and processed form.

2. All town and suburban home owners who have sufficient open, sunny space and fertile ground should likewise produce as much as possible of the family's yearly vegetable supply, especially green and leafy vegetables, tomatoes, and yellow vegetables. The larger the home lot the better for this purpose. Though every bit of vegetable produce grown at home will help, the earnest gardeners, especially

those who tried their wings last year, will not be content with too small a plot.

3. In order to have larger garden plots than the home yard can provide, many Victory gardeners will seek garden space in a Victory community or allotment garden accessible by bus, street car, or bicycle, where on individual plots 30 by 50, or 50 by 100 feet or larger they can grow more of the needed vegetables.

4. Community gardeners likewise make it possible for many people living in densely populated metropolitan areas to have real gardens and to produce fairly large supplies of vegetables.

5. On farms and on many suburban homesteads people should plant strawberries, bush fruits, grapes, and certain tree fruits so that they may have more adequate supplies of these desirable foods.

6. In many town and rural schools, the school-garden effort should be directed specifically to growing large supplies of vegetables for school lunch purposes.

7. Not one bit of garden produce should be allowed to go to waste. All surpluses from home gardens, or where available, local market surpluses of good-quality vegetables and fruits, should be canned or otherwise preserved for use in homes, school lunches, or for welfare purposes.

More specifically the following standards for various types of gardens should receive first consideration by all who are promoting Victory Gardens and helping in the educational phases of the work, and by all gardeners:

### Farm Gardens

Whether the vegetables are grown in a distinct garden plot or in field rows, the plans should provide for producing enough garden stuff for the family's entire yearly needs—vegetables to be eaten fresh out of the garden, and vegetables to be canned, dried, brined, or otherwise processed, as well as vegetables to be stored in the cellar or in a pit for fall and winter use. This implies managing the garden so that by means of successive sowings and plantings, by means of companion cropping, and by planting late-maturing vegetables like endive, Chinese cabbage, collards, kale, late cabbage, and certain root crops, the garden effort will produce vegetables from early spring until winter. Certainly farms in the South or in favored areas in Arizona and in the Pacific coast should not be without a fairly large winter garden.

Moreover, every farm where climate and water supplies permit should plant enough small fruits,

grapes, and tree fruits to provide within a few years a full supply of fresh, dried, and canned or otherwise preserved fruits for family use. The care that fruit plants and trees require is not so great as to bar the average farm family longer from enjoying these much-needed foods.

Directions for the farm vegetable garden should not lay too much emphasis on a large number of kinds of vegetables, and thereby discourage the farm family not now producing much garden stuff for home use. The labor situation on the average farm is such, too, that the garden plan must be a relatively simple one. Long, straight rows, spaced far enough apart to allow for horse cultivation, are most desirable.

Every effort should be made to have more than a spring and early-summer garden. Summer dry spells often raise havoc in a garden and may prevent seeding and planting late summer and fall vegetables. The garden should be located in the most favored spot on the farm with respect to moisture. Supplementary irrigation from a spring, creek, or windmill may well be developed to insure against drought. A system of tiles for subirrigating the garden is also successful in some areas. Pit or frame gardens have shown in areas of limited rainfall that a family can grow some of the early "green stuff" needed.

The following vegetables make a suggested list from which a collection of 10 to 15 kinds can be recommended to meet some of the foregoing specifications:

#### LEAFY VEGETABLES

*(Lend themselves to fall and winter gardens, especially in the South)*

Lettuce	Turnip greens	Collards
Cabbage	Chard	Spinach
Kale		

#### ROOT VEGETABLES

*(May be stored easily)*

Turnips	Beets	Rutabaga
Parsnips	Carrots	

#### MISCELLANEOUS

Tomatoes	Radishes
Bush and pole beans	Cucumbers
Lima beans	Squash, Hubbard and yellow summer
Peas	
Onions	Sweet corn

In addition to growing large supplies of some of these vegetables the farm should grow enough white

potatoes or sweetpotatoes for the year's needs, and also dry beans and peas.

A cool cellar is a great asset on the farm. Here many vegetables and some fruit may be stored for winter use. In the absence of cellars, outdoor storage pits or barrels sunk in the earth with suitable protective coverings provide good storage.

In addition to the vegetables and fruits supplied by the garden every day during the growing season, a well-managed garden will produce enough vegetables and fruits so that from 100 to 125 quarts for every member of the family can be put up. Moreover, the kraut barrel and the pickle keg are old stand-bys in increasing the winter food supply. Many, many farm families are also drying quantities of home-grown vegetables and fruits for the same purpose.

### *Town and Suburban Gardens*

About the same principles and directions as for farm gardens may be observed for town and suburban gardens insofar as space permits. To be sure, the more limited space will prohibit growing potatoes, or much sweet corn. A garden 30 by 50 or 50 by 100 feet should be the goal for these Victory gardeners. An average of an hour a day in such a plot will do wonders in the way of supplying vegetables, both fresh and preserved, for the family. If the home backyard cannot yield about this amount of open, sunny space in fertile ground without destroying lawn and shrub plantings, then the earnest Victory gardener should seek a nearby community or allotment garden.

Many suburbanites and dwellers in small towns have the advantage of large residence lots or small acreage plots, and in addition to large, thrifty vegetable gardens also enjoy fruit from their vine and fig trees. Even small plantings of small fruits and vines yield so much in pleasure and taste-delighting and needed food that many more people similarly situated ought not longer to deny themselves these same pleasures. Fresh and preserved fruits are all too rare on the tables of many families. We should plant more for home use.

### *Allotment Gardens*

In some metropolitan areas, Victory gardeners have produced wonderful yields of vegetables on large community plots made available through the effort of local Victory Garden committees. In

Chicago last year, there were 547 community gardens, in which 8,105 families participated. Already 162 additional areas have been set aside there for 1943 and are now being plowed. This example, and similar examples in other cities, may well be followed more generally. Vacant ground around industrial plants, or vacant real estate development tracts accessible by bus or streetcar, or on bicycles by the real enthusiasts, lie ready for development in many areas, awaiting the effort of local OCD garden committees, garden clubs, the AWVS, or other agencies.

As soon as possible the free use of such areas should be obtained, the land cleared, plowed, and fitted; plots should be staked off, and assignments made in accordance with certain prescribed rules and regulations. The help of the county agricultural agent, or experienced local gardeners should be sought to determine the suitability of such tracts, with special reference to the fertility of the soil and the treatment needed to bring the area in shape for gardening. If conveyance is at all possible, water should be brought to the area. The cooperation of the city council may be desirable in passing ordinances to protect allotment gardeners from vandals or thievery. Temporary tool shacks may be erected at least on the larger tracts. Mimeographed instructions with reference to rules of conduct, hours of work, maintenance, obtaining help, and other things governing the use of the tract need to be made. Examples of desirable garden plans and circulars of instruction on gardening, obtainable from the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the State Extension Service should be made available. Instructions and demonstrations on the ground by competent gardeners are always especially helpful.

Garden contests for allotment as well as home gardeners, sponsored by garden clubs, are good spur to continuous and successful garden effort and may be organized in some of our metropolitan districts.

### *School Lunch Gardens*

In addition to the small, individual garden plots for young children which have increased so much in some cities, there is a decided need for school vegetable-growing plots where older children will grow supplies of vegetables to be used fresh or processed in school luncheons. Here the plots must be large enough and the crops grown as in a market garden to yield not only the maximum of much needed vegetables, but greater educational value. Hotbeds and coldframes will be necessary adjuncts to such gardens. Class work and garden cultivation and care

must be well organized, with delegation and acceptance of individual and class responsibility. Summer care and cultivation must also be provided by hiring boys and other help, under the watchful supervision of the instructor or a gardener. Provision must be made also, with the aid of some pupils and instructors or a local committee of interested parents, to harvest the vegetables when ready and process them for school-lunch use. The opportunities here for consolidated rural schools, or the schools of towns and smaller cities, are very good.

### **Home Food Preservation**

In the country and nonfarm rural areas, the local home demonstration clubs or groups, 4-H club members, and Farm Security workers are planning to make 1943 the biggest home food-preservation year ever. Their long experience and unusually good results make this promise attainable. However, because of the shortage of pressure cookers, there probably is opportunity in many rural areas to organize community canning bees, and even community canning centers. At such centers, steam retorts as well as other equipment for preparing and processing fruits and vegetables are much needed. Pressure cookers make the canning process easier and, above all, safe. Without them, the kinds of vegetables that may be canned safely are largely restricted to the acid vegetables. Such bees or centers have been most useful too in canning surpluses from home gardens or local markets for school-lunch and welfare purposes. Opportunities for extending this type of effort are almost boundless and should be seized wherever possible. The need for saving food is great, and provision for facilitating this may well be

planned to accompany the Victory Garden effort in town, home, and allotment gardens.

The informed gardener is most likely to be the successful gardener. There are many circulars and bulletins on gardening that are helpful. The U. S. Department of Agriculture has published the following circulars and bulletins that give valuable information to the Victory gardener (Copies may be obtained from the State Agricultural Extension Service):

1. Victory Gardens. Miscellaneous Publication 483 (Revised 1943).
2. The City Home Garden. Farmers' Bulletin 1044 (1919).
3. The Farm Garden. Farmers' Bulletin 1673 (1931).
4. Diseases and Insects of Garden Vegetables. Farmers' Bulletin 1371 (1924).
5. Disease-Resistant Varieties of Vegetables for the Home Garden. Leaflet 203 (1940).
6. Hotbeds and Coldframes. Farmers' Bulletin 1743 (1935).
7. The Home Fruit Garden. Leaflet 218 (1942).
8. Home Canning of Fruits and Vegetables and Meats.
9. Home Storage of Vegetables.
10. Drying Foods for Victory Meals.
11. Homemade Pickles and Relishes.
12. Making Ferment Pickles.

Every State Extension Service, likewise, has published circulars and bulletins on gardening that are freely available. These many helps should be taken advantage of. We cannot afford to waste time, labor, seeds, and fertilizer because of ignorance and careless methods.



*Reprinted by the U. S. OFFICE OF CIVILIAN DEFENSE, WASHINGTON, D. C., MARCH 1943*