

2022

Seedleaf



**ANNUAL
REPORT**

**Nourishing Communities by
Growing and Sharing Food.**

A Brief History

Seedleaf begun in Lexington's East End neighborhood in 2007 as an organization dedicated to strengthening the bonds of community through growing healthy food and cultivating beauty through the creation of community garden space. London Ferrell Community garden was Seedleaf's first garden that was made possible through the generosity of Christ Church Cathedral, owners of the property and the adjacent Old Episcopal Burying Grounds. Over the ensuing 15 years, Seedleaf has cultivated deep relationships with neighbors and has subsequently grown throughout North Lexington to its current size of 10 growing spaces throughout the East End and North Lexington.

Along the way we have developed annual programming and initiatives that demonstrates our commitment to growing growers and and creating a city filled with gardens and gardeners within all of Lexington's neighborhoods. In the following pages you will see an overview of what we accomplished in 2022 and a preview for upcoming projects.

Thank you for supporting us! Please visit our website at www.seedleaf.org or follow us on social media for Facebook and Instagram @seedleaflex.

Best Wishes,

Christine Smith
Executive Director



Seedleaf Youth Programs and Schools

In 2022 Seedleaf supported 11 school garden programs in Fayette County

In 2022 Seedleaf Increased the number of school partners in order to install and sustain outdoor and/or indoor grow spaces throughout Fayette County and to ensure that children enrolled in K-12 institutions received a garden based outdoor education as part of their curriculum. With school partners, Seedleaf was able to work with garden clubs 1-2 times a month, helping maintain gardening efforts. We supplied schools with gardening material such as compost, tools, seeds, and raised beds. Education Outreach Coordinator Monet Proctor worked diligently to embolden students with knowledge on how to successfully grow a garden both outside and within themselves.

Additionally, Seedleaf developed a close relationship with George Washington Carver Preparatory (GWCP) school by installing a garden classroom for students to visit weekly. GWCP is an all boys STEM Academy located in the heart of downtown Lexington. Seedleaf met with roughly 70 students between kindergarten and 3rd grade twice a week to learn about traditional gardening practices, hydroponics and food literacy. This year we hope to expand on our efforts by growing enough food to supply the schools first in house farmers market.



Schools Served

- Southern Elementary
- Carter G. Woodson Preparatory Academy (now George Washington Carver Preprapatory Academy)
- Arlington Elementary
- William Wells Brown
- Growing Together Preschool
- Lexington Traditional Magnet School
- RISE Academy
- Yates Elementary
- Russell Cave Elementary
- Julius Marks Elementary

Special Program

Partnerships

- Camp Carnegie (Summer)
- Common Good Club Time (Fall, Spring Summer)





Mr. Muhammad
Mrs. Carney

CARLE G PREP GARDEN PLAN

"The Astro Garden" Start Indoors

SPRING 2023	PIZZA GARDEN	Tomatoes 60-70 days	March
		hot peppers 65-95 days	March
		bell peppers 65-80 days	March
Fall 2022	Supplies	basil 25-30 days	
Sweet potatoes	Soil	arugula 25-30 days	
garlic	Soil	onions 100-120 days	
Onions	Soil		
	Seed		
	Stakes		

THE GGP GARDEN



SEEDS

Service, Education, and Entrepreneurship in Downtown Spaces

The Seedleaf SEEDS program is Seedleaf's premier youth program that works with Middle School Students during the Summer Months of June and July. For four hours a week, participants learn how to start and maintain a garden, how to compost and engage in basic cooking classes. In addition to garden tasks, students take field trips to visit farmers and agriculturally relevant sites in central Kentucky. At the end of the program and based on their participation, students receive a stipend to use. 2022 was the 13th year that Seedleaf made this opportunity available for Lexington youth!



The Seedleaf Team



**Christine Smith,
Executive
Director**



**Lindsey Funke,
Farm Manager**



**Monet Proctor,
Education and
Outreach
Coordinator**



**Megan Pillsbury,
Farm Assistant**



**Erin Ruhl, Board
President**

The Seedleaf Community Farm At -a- Glance

**1,162 lbs. of greens
and veggies donated**

**50+ farm
volunteers**

**Farm Growers
include 7 Market
Gardeners and 4
families**

**The Market Garden
Program provides 8 weeks
of direct farm experience, 10
workshops, 3 farm visits,
and a 24 week market
season at The Lexington
Farmers' Market**

**The Seedleaf
Community Farm is
2-acres of
undeveloped land
within New Circle
Road at 150
Northland Drive**

The Seedleaf Community Farm

This year four families and 7 individuals, and Seedleaf staff grew at the Seedleaf Community Farm. The space includes a large market garden and a Seedleaf community garden as well. Growers worked with the land from spring to fall and harvested several thousand pounds of produce and hundreds of flowers destined to markets, families, and community partners across Lexington.

Silvi, Gaston, and Innocence of Empucate returned, a Lexington group working to empower and educate Lexington's Congolese population and other immigrant and refugee populations. Other Community partners growing at the farm included Andrew and Reva of North Farm, and Nayna and Lewis George.

Staff and volunteers increased pollinator habitat by sowing several plots of flowers and thanks to a donation of medicinal herb seedlings from Taproot Nursery at Oakland Farm Trees. We also nestled dozens of new perennials into beds at the farm and Seedleaf gardens around town.



The Seedleaf Community Farm Cont.d

The farm like all other Seedleaf spaces is created by and for the community. Throughout the season, more than 50 community members volunteered over 190 hours of time to help clear brush in the hedgerows, prepare new areas for cultivation, harvest, and much more. Volunteers included individual gardeners, students from UK and Kentucky State, our partners at Whole Foods Lexington, and more. Thank you all for making 2022 a flourishing season. Our gratitude also goes to wonderful local growers including UKCSA, Stonehedge Farm Produce, and Dreamtime Market Gardens for their generous support in plants and expertise this season following the blight and plague of hundreds of seedlings in late spring.

Growers received on farm support and connection to local market outlets for selling their produce. Thanks to support from everyone who contributed to the GoodGivingChallenge and our partners at the Lexington Farmers Market (LFM), we were able to offer a fully supported market booth for growers to sell their produce from and build their networks of buyers for a 24 week season. Our market booth at LFM supported 8 small businesses and one Seedleaf staff member and included all the tables, chairs, tents, veggie transport, point of sales systems and more to make sales possible.

In the spring and summer months, Seedleaf's booth was located at the Saturday market downtown on Main Street. For later summer and early fall, Seedleaf sold at the Sunday Southland Market, giving growers a chance to experience two bustling Lexington markets, in addition to connection to our partners at Woodhill International, Castlewood Community Market, FoodChain and more. Thank you to Megan Pillsbury, Market Gardener turned Farm and Market Assistant for making this market season successful and smooth for fellow growers!

Community Care

Our farm staff increased Seedleaf's own vegetable production, sending over 1,162 pounds of greens and veggies into the community via donation to FoodChain, Share Center, Glean Kentucky and distribution at The Garden Festival. Production increases also allowed Seedleaf staff and market gardeners to sell and donate produce to our partners at Woodhill International Market, Castlewood Community Market and the Share Center on several occasions.

The Market Garden Program

The Seedleaf Market Garden Program is a year long training program for Lexington residents interested in farming as a part-time occupation or a full time job. Program participants, often having no previous experience, learn how to grow food at market scale. Participants are paid a stipend to participate in hands on farm training, attend business and marketing workshops and go on field trips to working farm operations. After the completion of training, participants receive a plot of land at the Seedleaf Community farm to grow on and 24 weeks of market support at the Lexington Farmers' Market.

This year market gardeners included returning growers Sharon Stone of Two Suns Farm, Monet Proctor of Grow with Mo (Monet is also the Seedleaf Education Outreach Coordinator), and Natasha of Bitter Melon Farms. The new cohort included Crystal of Elly Bay Farms, Jeanie Smith of RowsnBeds Farm, Heather of Rogue Rooster, and Megan Pillsbury, the Kentucky Dyer. The program also provided market support to Ella Wilson of Great Eggspectations Chicken Run (Ella is also a proud Seedleaf Board member).

On the farm, growers had access to land, tools, water, cold vegetable storage, pack and wash shed and more for their use during the growing season. Staff worked hard to ensure an earlier start and a later finish to the season, extending growing and market opportunities to participants by over 2 months. Thanks to our partners at the Whole Cities Foundation, we installed a new Pack and Wash shed to prepare goods for market, and over 300 harvests made their way through the new shed this season.

Seedleaf coordinated visits for growers to FoodChain, Rough Draft Farmstead and Dreamtime Market Gardens as well! Thank you to each and every facilitator for sharing their experience and knowledge in strengthening our local food systems.



Market Gardeners Pictured, L-R: Natasha Henley, Crystal Merrill, Jeanie Smith, Heather Lewis, Megan Jean Pillsbury, Monet Proctor, Sharon Stone and Olivia Wang



Seedleaf Community Gardens



- Seedleaf Managed 10 pick community gardens spaces in 2022.
- There are 7 hours weekly of community volunteer time at 5 garden locations. March-October
- gardens are open 24/7 for the public.
- There is no requirement to work or pay for produce.





The Great Seed Giveaway

For the third year, Seedleaf in Partnership with the Lexington Public Library System made seeds available free of charge for all patrons while supplies lasted.

Seedleaf grows growers by growing and sharing food together but also by sharing the resources necessary so that everyone can get started wherever they may live.



The Garden Festival

In 2022 Seedleaf was an Artist in Residence at the Lexington Loudoun House. Our residency resulted in 'The Garden Festival,' a celebration of the artistic and creative experimentation inherent in the act of gardening. Seedleaf enlisted friends at Sisohpromatem Art Foundation, The Lexington Philharmonic and the Loudoun House as co-sponsors and event organizers. School children from Arlington Elementary created a special performance piece called 'Our Garden' for that they performed for the festival audience on the Loudoun House Porch!

La fiesta del jardin

✳ presentado por Lexington Art League y Seedleaf ✳

Con:

Sisohpromatem Art Foundation, Inc.
The Lexington Philharmonic
SeedLeaf

Actuación especial de
"Nuestro jardin" por
estudiantes de: Academia
preparatoria Carter G.
Woodson, primaria Arlington
y primaria William Wells
Brown

Sept. 24

1-5 PM

La Casa Loudoun
209 Castlewood Drive







Lexington Park Equity Accelerator

The Lexington Park Equity Accelerator is a new, collaborative project designed to increase access to public space and greenspace in Lexington through public policy.

The program has three main goals:

1. Address disparities in access to public space and greenspace in Lexington.
2. Help residents most impacted by these inequities understand how greenspace policy gets created.
3. Build new ways to bring these residents into the decision-making process of this policy.

The project is being led by LFUCG's Divisions of Parks & Recreation and Planning, CivicLex, and Seedleaf. It is supported by the national non-profit Trust for Public Land (TPL) as one of the six 10- Minute Walk Accelerator programs in the United States.

In 2022 Seedleaf and Civiclex completed Phase I of this project that focused on hearing from the Lexington Community. To do this we partnered with The Share Center, The Woodhill Community Center, Open Door Church, Casa de la Cultura, the West End Community Empowerment Project, the Lexington-Fayette Health Department and Trees Lexington! to hold focus groups and listening sessions. We also worked with high school youth at Carter G. Woodson Academy.

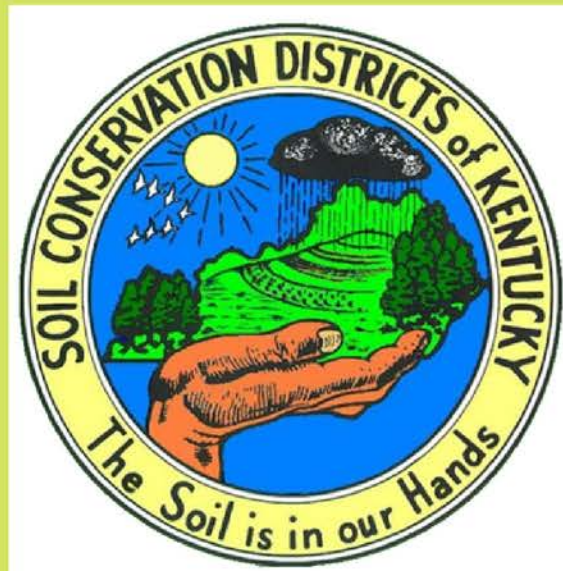
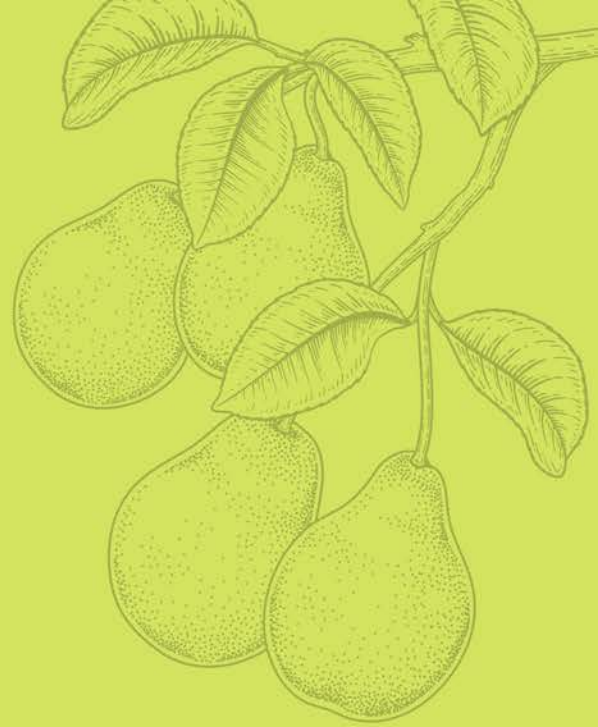




Fruit Tree Giveaway!

Thanks to generous funding from the Soil Conservation district, Seedleaf held two fruit Tree giveaways for Lexington Residents giving away over 50 trees including figs, pecans, Chinese and American chestnuts. Trees were purchased from Kentucky nurseries Peaceful Heritage and Oakland Farm Trees.

To help recipients understand how to care for trees Extentsion Fruit and Vegetable specialist John Strang helped to provide instruction.



New Beginnings

In Spring of 2022 Seedleaf met with Chad Walker and began the process of leasing 30 acres of land in North Fayette County for a new farm location. Over the next 10 years, the expanded acreage will allow Seedleaf to address the issue of land access for new and beginning growers by allowing our organization to provide 1-2 acres to individuals who complete the Seedleaf Market Garden Program.



Thank You!

This work is made possible due to volunteers, community partner organizations and Seedleaf donors! Thank You!

Whole Cities Foundation
Sisohpromatem Art Foundation
Lexington Philharmonic
Civiclex
First Presbyterian Church
Plowshares Church
Seedleaf Perennial Club
The Fayette County Farm Bureau
The University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service
FoodChain
The Lexington Public Library
The Carnegie Center
Christ Church Cathedral
Temple Adath Israel
The Share Center
Common Good
The Woodhill International Market
The Fayette County Soil Conservation District
The Lexington Fayette Urban County Government
The Family of Chad and Jill Walker

And so many more. With sincere gratitude, thank you!

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Seedleaf

