

# The Daily Gleaner

## Green Matters for the Daily Gleaner, May 9, 2011

By Valerie Hillier

### From your Garden to your Plate – Local Options

Is the cost of fresh food getting you down? Want to buy local produce but can't get to the Farmers' Market on Saturday mornings? There is another option – get your hands dirty this summer and grow your own!

In part due to rising fuel prices, affecting both the cost of growing food and transporting it, the price of fresh produce has been steadily increasing. Thankfully, all is not bleak – in addition to supporting shops who stock produce from local growers, you can also grow your own fresh organic food in season.

Here in our own backyard the Fredericton Organic Garden has been operating a wonderful community garden space since 2003 when they first opened at 150 Kimble Road. Now with over 40 plots, they are in high demand and often carry a waiting list each year.

Fortunately this local demand has translated into something exciting – a new organic community garden! Since conceiving the idea in February 2010, the New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens (NBCHG) has acquired land for their first community garden in Fredericton at St. Mary's Anglican Church on McEvoy Street.

For a low annual fee you can have your own garden plot. If you have never gardened before, the great thing about a community garden is that you aren't alone - it is very much a group effort. The NBCHG also offers its members workshops and educational programs throughout the season related to food production and preparation.

As a fledgling organization, NB Community Harvest Gardens isn't just seeking new members but also gardening items to help them off to a strong start. So this Saturday, May 14th, volunteers will be at the Market conducting their first Garden Tool Drive. The group is asking for donations of used garden tools, books and supplies that will be shared jointly by member gardeners, many of whom will be growing their own food and flowers for the first time. At the sale, you can also speak with organization representatives if you are looking for more information on becoming a member.

Another way you can grow your own produce, particularly if you have limited space, is container gardening. This is my chosen option as I don't have a fence to keep all the critters out. I have also seen neighbours work together to share small plots of land. If you are now wondering what to plant and where to get it, there are plenty of consumer choices available in our city at this time of year, most notably the Market on Saturday mornings.

In just a few weeks the Fredericton Botanic Garden Association will be holding their annual Plant Sale at the Market on Sunday, May 29 starting at noon; and this popular event has many

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knowledgeable gardeners on-hand to answer questions. But make sure you get there early to get the best pick of the crop!

As a gardener myself I'm glad to know there are options for everyone in our city to build their own garden and enjoy home grown flowers and produce. Here are some websites to help get you started:

Fredericton Organic Garden: [www.frederictonorganicgarden.ca](http://www.frederictonorganicgarden.ca)

New Brunswick Community Harvest Gardens: [www.nbchg.org](http://www.nbchg.org)

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