

# P-PATCH POST

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BUILDING GARDENS, GROWING COMMUNITIES

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## Eileen Long Retires from Gardening at Picardo Farm P-Patch; she started by helping a friend



By Susan and John Olson, Picardo Farm P-Patch

**D**id you know that one of Picardo Farm's beloved, long-time, hardworking gardeners has gardened at Picardo for 45+ years? That's almost as long as Picardo has been a community garden (established in 1973) and before any of us were gardeners at Picardo and before many of us were even born!

Eileen Long started gardening in the mid 1970s when a P-Patch friend of hers needed a helping hand in her plot. Eileen enjoyed this so much that she decided to have her own plot. This was before Site Council, Site Coordinators, block plans with block leaders and the "controversial statue". Quickly she got involved in organizing, leading and coordinating. The big question back then was what do gardeners want to have at Picardo? A grant was written to get the services of a landscape architect and a survey was sent out asking gardeners what they wanted. The top item for a number of years was an on-site toilet. Next on the list came a tool shed, herb garden, Children's Garden, and outdoor meeting place. It has taken many years, good leadership and many volunteers, but have you noticed we now have all of these?

I don't believe that there is any part of Picardo's transformation from just a lot of plots to a well working "community" that Eileen has not diligently worked on. Eileen has spent many volunteer years, helping to set up our current garden structure, coordinating garden activities, writing grants, getting permits, setting up and leading work parties, donating time to the food bank program while coordinating donations to Quest, participating on the Site Council and being great community liaison.

Quite possibly her most toughest and most challenging project was replacing the rented "port-a-potty" with an onsite com-



Eileen Long, Picardo P-Patch

postable toilet. Remember, this was the very first item on the Picardo "want" list. With her ever present smile, Eileen energetically tackled this project as she did everything she touched. She acquired numerous city permits from five city agencies and King County and state health departments and received grant funding. Eleven years later, we joined Eileen at the dedication of the "Picaloo", the first and only composting toilet at a P-Patch. All of us Picardo gardeners will be forever grateful for her patience and persistence.

For almost all of her years at Picardo, Eileen managed a 400 square foot plot. Two years ago, she gave up her larger plot and moved to one of our ADA accessible raised beds at Picardo's entrance where she created a lovely, welcoming garden. The last couple of seasons we have been greeted with

beautiful spring flowers followed by a garden full of annual and perennial flowers.

As she leaves Picardo, Eileen Long leaves behind a legacy that can hardly be matched by any of us. We all wish her lots of happiness in her "retirement" from Picardo. Yes, retirement from Picardo, but not from gardening. Eileen continues to enjoy gardening at her residence at the Ida Culver House in Ravenna where her crocus and snowdrops bloom in the spring and annuals and perennials follow in the summer and fall. This doesn't mean we will not see her at Picardo. She promises to visit us and is always welcome to pick a bouquet flowers from our flower cutting garden and from my plot, bringing them to her friends at the Ida Culver House.

Thank you Eileen for your friendship, your lovely smile and for all the wonderful years you spent guiding the Picardo Farm P-Patch to the wonderful community garden that it is today. Lucky us!

She started by helping a friend!



Photo submitted by: Janet Brown, Cascade Garden



Ballard gardeners sharing their voices and advocating for their P-Patch

## Helping P-Patches Thrive in Seattle

By Joyce Moty, GROW Vice President

**G**ROW is the non-profit advocate for the Seattle P-Patch Program. What does that mean?

For over 40 years, GROW and its previous identities (P-Patch Advisory Council, Friends of P-Patch and P-Patch Trust) have advocated for P-Patches in Seattle. Advocacy is an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions.

Why do we advocate? P-Patch gardening is a program of the City of Seattle. GROW functions as a third party that weighs in on various issues that arise with community gardens. The P-Patch staff work for the City and cannot advocate for themselves or the program, because that would be a conflict of interest. In recent years, GROW has asked gardeners and site leaders to join in advocacy especially with face to face meetings with city council members. With the new district system, it is imperative to include gardeners who are a constituent in the councilmember's district. An advocacy presentation consists of the ask (what do we want?) and includes benefits of P-Patches and recent data such as number of P-Patches and gardeners in a district, amount of produce donated and number of contributed volunteer hours.

Phone calls and emails to officials is important advocacy. If a gardener cannot at-

tend a meeting with a policy maker, making a phone call or sending an email or letter contributes clout; many voices can make a difference! One recent success is the reversal of UpGarden's removal from the Seattle Center. Gardeners voiced their concerns to the media and policy makers. They were heard and won reprieve for another six years. In 2017, gardeners' advocacy to councilmembers helped beat back a proposal to move P-Patch to a less supportive city department. Advocacy was less successful the same year in fighting a reduction of P-Patch staff.

Past GROW advocacy successes include increased staffing and two million dollars in the 2008 13 Parks and Green Spaces levy, which under efficient P-Patch staff management and enormous volunteer energy resulted in 24 new or expanded P-Patches for more than 800 families. One of the most important advocacy events in recent years was objecting to 'term limits', a 'sports model' proposal by a former parks superintendent to address the backlog of people waiting to get a plot. Under this proposal you could get a garden for three years, then out you go to the bottom of the waitlist. GROW helped make the argument that experienced gardeners are the mainstay of a P-Patch; they are the mentors and site leadership who build community and help reduce costs to the city.

Current advocacy centers on the development threat to Ballard and other P-Patches, the moratorium on new gardens and the staff needed to make them happen. At Ballard, gardeners have enlisted GROW's support and are making a big lift to raise two million dollars. The Ballard gardeners have adopted a catchy theme 'Give the Gnome a Home' and wear colorful hats when conducting their advocacy. Following up on last fall's supportive Seattle Times OpEd and City Council candidate responses to a P-Patch questionnaire, gardeners are contacting councilmembers advocating for proactive planning to prevent repetition of the Ballard and UpGarden experiences.

P-Patches cannot be taken for granted, especially in this hyper-development era in Seattle. Land is finite and competition for housing on the available open parcels is stiff. The case must be made for the value that P-Patches bring to a neighborhood in providing stewarded open space and building community beyond the gardeners who garden in those spaces.

If you want to be involved contact Joyce Moty, GROW Board Member, to check on efforts in your district, or invite your council member to a P-Patch event and help them understand that this beautiful community building program needs their help. <https://www.seattle.gov/council/meet-the-council/find-your-district-and-councilmembers>





Soil Digger next to One Person Sieve. Note that the sharp edges are covered with pool noodles or pipe insulators and covered with tape and wire.

# A “Radical” Proposal – Make Compost with 1/10 the Work

By Rick Grossman, Cascade P-Patch

**R**ick is the companion human to a plot in Cascade, as well as, a Master Composter, who has been experimenting with these new approaches in an underground lair.

The fastest way to clear a P-Patch of gardeners is to ask them to help move compost. It feels pointless and is hard work. Moving it does make it become compost more quickly, but if it took an extra month to be ready and saved dozens and dozens of labor hours, I think it's worth it.

My new mottos: Compost happens. Let compost be compost. Don't try to speed up nature. This is radical stuff. The perfect compost setup has three bins. Equal amounts of green and brown are carefully cut into pieces that will fit perfectly into the mouths of earthworms, kept moist to within grams per cubic foot, lovingly mixed daily to aerate, and moved from bin to bin so no signs are needed.

Politicians say, “Don't let perfect be the enemy of good.” Here are some ideas that will save lots of work, you just may need to wait a bit longer.

The keys are the mix of greens and browns, size of the particles, oxygen flow, and moisture. There is an easier way. I've been thinking outside the bin.

1. **Forget the 3-bin system.** Instead of filling a few bins at the same time, choose one bin at a time. It will be full faster. Then move on to the next. When you finish a bin, mark the date on it and have a sign that says “In,” that you move as needed. You will have a new bin ready every few weeks.
2. **Forget turning it.** To help it get air, consider a few inches of rock or use drainage pipe, or even some branches at the bottom. This will let air flow underneath. That air will seep up through the pile. Buy a digging bar (I suggest 6 feet long with a pencil point for about \$30). All you need to do is act like you are spear fishing in the compost. It will reach all the way down in one second. Move it around. You now have an air chimney. You can make nine vertical air columns in a bin in about two minutes. The air in the column will be heated by the soil and rise and air will siphon through. The bar can also be used like a crow bar and lift the soil faster than anything else. Instead of an hour turning it, spear it and walk away (you can turn heads if you act like you are aiming at a fish!)
3. **The final idea is to replace or add to our sieves with a new design I've adapted.** Our current ones take two to handle. It requires screwing the hardware cloth into large wood frames and takes a lot to keep them together. I took a plastic milk crate, made a few cuts in the hardware cloth and just pushed it inside. I put a pool noodle on top to protect people from the sharp edges. One person can now sift their own compost. Add a shovel full and try any dance move you like. It will fall through the bottom and sides. Instead of turning dirt, you can focus volunteer hours where you really need it.

## Ballard gnomes digging deep to create a P-Patch legacy

By Roxanne Kenison, Ballard P-Patch

“I think we're at an inflection point,” admonished gardener Shawn Mincer at the Ballard P-Patch membership meeting last January, where the gardeners ratified a Purchase and Sale Agreement to buy the land where their garden is sited. “This is an opportunity for creating a legacy.” The agreement establishes a purchase price of nearly \$2 million, and the gardeners have doubled down on their fundraising efforts.

Just a year ago, the gardeners learned that Our Redeemers Lutheran Church, their landlord, had decided to sell the half-acre of property to fund needed safety upgrades and renovations to their building. Concerned that the land could be developed into single-family homes, the gardeners began a fundraising campaign that has so far raised over \$100,000. With a nod to Ballard's Scandinavian roots, the slogan for their campaign is, “Give the gnome a home.”

With a Purchase and Sale Agreement in place, Ballard P-Patch is in a position to secure a short-term loan, closing on the purchase in July. The loan would hold the property until adequate funds can be obtained, possibly two years. Gifts can be made online at <https://www.mightycause.com/organization/Ballard-P-Patch>.

Upon purchase, the deed is expected to be held by GROW Northwest. The land would be placed into a permanent conservation easement, protecting it as a community garden in perpetuity.

Gardener Shawn Mincer sees these developments as a step in the pathway of the P-Patch program. “We think of ourselves as stewards, shepherding this space through time,” he told KIRO-7's Siemny Kim in a February interview.

# Sharing our Bountiful Produce

By Betty Lucas, Queen Anne P-Patch

**M**ore than 37,300 pounds (18+ tons) of food! That was the amount donated by the P-Patch gardens during the 2019 season. Definitely a job well done!

Nearly one-third of the total food donations last year came from individual P-Patch plots. In addition to individual gardener donations, many of our P-Patch gardens have designated space for food bank plots or Giving Gardens. Of the 90 P-Patch community gardens, 54 sites participated in the P-Patch Giving Garden program last season.

Food grown in Giving Garden plots are given to food banks and hot-meal programs, especially those serving senior citizens and low-income populations. These plots are stewarded by P-Patch garden volunteers who also arrange for the delivery of fresh produce over the growing season.

To understand how the P-Patch program facilitates and supports the Giving Gardens, go to the Share the Harvest page via [www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods](http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods). You will find tools and tips for making the Giving Gardens a success in your P-Patch, including suggestions for crops and when to plant, recording sheets, and more.

Seattle's Giving Garden Network (SGGN, <http://www.sggcn.org/>) provides significant support for P-Patch Giving Gardens. SGGN, an all-volunteer association, provides a network and connection point between gardens, sharing information, best gardening practices, resources, seeds and starts. In 2018, SGGN volunteers nurtured more than 17,000 plant starts that were shared with the Giving Gardens.

SGGN operates under a fiscal sponsorship agreement with GROW, a 501(c)(3) non-profit. To highlight a few of the gardens, and where their donations go:

Licton Springs near North Seattle Col-

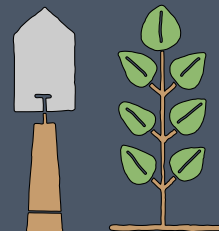
lege; 67 plots. The 530 pounds last year came from individual plots, and 920 pounds from designated giving spaces. Donations go to households that have requested help from the nearby St Matthew conference of St Vincent de Paul. As the season progresses, excess produce is donated to the North Helpline Food Bank.

Thistle and Maa nyei Lai ndeic (My mother's garden in Mien language), in the south end. These two gardens have a total of 187 plots, with many gardeners originally from Southeast Asia. They donated 650 pounds, all from individual plots. Their produce is donated to the Filipino Senior Center which serves Mien, Lao and Hmong seniors, and to the Beacon Hill Food Bank.

Magnuson is located in Magnuson Park on Sand Point Way in the north end, 128 plots. They have about 11 food bank plots, and last season they donated 3397 pounds to the local Magnuson Housing residents (operated by Solid Ground), and to the Lake City Food Bank. Besides getting starts and seeds from the SGGN, they also get starts from the nearby Nathan Hale High School horticulture program.

I garden at Queen Anne (77 plots), and last year we donated a total of 309 pounds from giving gardens and 707 pounds from individual plots (total of 1016 pounds, more than the year before). For years we donated to The Lord's Table, a feeding program for homeless people, but it is no longer operating. Now we donate to the FareStart training program, which provides culinary and life skills to those coming out of poverty, homelessness and hunger (<https://www.farestart.org/about>). We also donate flowers to Queen Anne Manor, a nearby assisted living and memory care facility, which is definitely "Food for the Soul", and very appreciated by the residents.

## Here are some options for you to help with Giving Gardens:



1. "Grow a Row" in your own garden, and designate the produce for the food bank
2. Volunteer to help with the Giving Garden in your own P-Patch – plant, weed, water, harvest, and organize distribution
3. Volunteer with the SGGN, there are lots of opportunities

As gardeners, these efforts to share our produce and improve access to healthy, organic produce, will help fight hunger in Seattle, create and support a sense of community, and be very satisfying. How about trying to increase the donations in your P-Patch in 2020?



Wallingford's Good Shepherd P-Patch has new public art: a large mosaic sign created and donated by gardener Walt Mason, who worked with the wonderful people at Seattle Mosaic Arts in Wallingford. The mosaic bursts with color and bloom, made up of thousands of glass pieces as well as fused glass elements.

# Working Together, P-Patches and Emergency Hubs Build Resilient Community

By: Linda Norlen, Hillman City P-Patch

## Why disaster preparedness and Hubs are vital

Of the many hazards facing our region, earthquake poses the highest risk to Seattle, according to city emergency managers. A major quake along either the Seattle fault (that runs east-west across the center of the city) or the Cascadia fault (off the coast) will likely be devastating. And it's not a matter of "if" we'll have a quake; it's simply a matter of "when," as we now know from the geological record.

We also know that after a major disaster, relief is unlikely to materialize for two weeks or even longer. For food and water, we will have to rely on what we've stored in our homes. For first aid and other assistance, we will have to rely on our immediate neighbors, while Fire and Police battle only the most severe emergencies.

Cell service and the internet probably won't function. A neighborhood Emergency Communications Hub with a radio link to the Emergency Operations Center could well be a lifeline for receiving critical bulletins and for reporting on conditions in our neighborhood to disaster personnel.

The Hubs were created so that every resident of Seattle would have a known, fixed place to go after a disaster, where neighbors could gather to exchange information and aid. Adding P-Patches to the map of potential Hubs was a logical move, since they are the only public space available in many neighborhoods.

While designating each P-Patch as a potential gathering spot was a good first step, more planning is needed to create Hubs that can function effectively after disaster. The best-prepared Hubs have gathered equipment, defined the roles of volunteers, discussed and practiced multiple scenarios, and participated in an annual drill.

## Why Hubs and P-Patches go together

When P-Patch gardeners received notice in 2017 that all our sites would become Emergency Hubs, there was mixed response to the news. Many gardeners did not view it as a core garden function; some thought it might be, but their gardens didn't have the capacity to deal with it.

Others immediately understood why putting the two together could be highly beneficial. Elaine Ike, site leader at Delridge P-Patch, was one of those who embraced the idea. Elaine had worked for FEMA as part of its Community Relations Group. She recognized that the citizen-led Hub groups in Seattle were important because they would be on the ground after a disaster before the City, State, or FEMA got there. Now, one of her main objectives is to teach gardeners what a Hub does. "We're not just a garden or a P-Patch. We're gardeners in a public place, part of a community" and need to address the needs of the surrounding community.

Because P-Patch gardens have already created a place-based community and Hubs are set up to do a similar thing, fundamentally both are working on something more similar than it would first appear. They both make our neighborhoods more cooperative and more resilient.

## Why P-Patches need assistance to become fully-functioning Hubs

Despite the enthusiasm of Elaine and a few other P-Patch leaders, many gardeners probably lean more toward the feelings of Mark Huston, site leader at Magnuson P-Patch.

Mark says that even with five pod leaders and volunteers, his large garden can barely keep up with maintenance and a few small improvements. "The Emergency Communications Hub makes sense," he says, "but it's a lower priority than P-Patch infrastructure maintenance."

Shawn Mincer, site leader at Ballard P-Patch, believes that each garden has to assess its interest and capacity to undertake the project of starting a Hub. For Ballard, this has been an evolving process. They fostered interest by planning the garden's own emergency response as a prelude to becoming a Hub. A year after the 2017 announcement, Ballard P-Patch presented a public slide show about emergency preparedness. They also addressed the topic at each of their monthly business meetings, to keep the issue active. They wrote a small grant to the Neighborhood Matching Fund to pay for their box of Hub supplies. One member of their leadership team had been attending citywide Hub meetings, going to workshops, and facilitating emergency preparedness events in the garden. This helped the Ballard P-Patch to network with a broader community that could offer guidance.

Not every P-Patch has yet achieved that level of capacity, however. Up until now, the main assistance P-Patches have gotten to help start their Hubs has been an equipment grant called "Hub in a Box." These grants were written by the Seattle Emergency Hubs network and funded by the Seattle City Council. As valuable as these were for giving P-Patches the basic Hub equipment, they still didn't address the need for guidance, training, and practice to become truly prepared.

## More resources to foster Hubs in P-Patches may be on their way

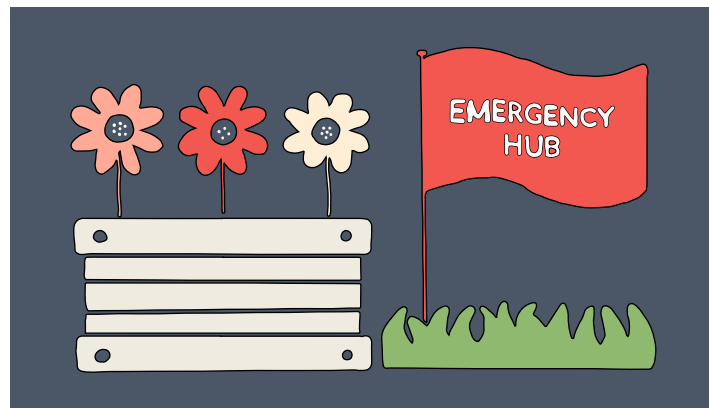
Recently the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), the P-Patch program, and the Seattle Emergency Hubs network have come together to offer more support to P-Patches that want to start a Hub.

At two upcoming P-Patch resource fairs, representatives from OEM and Seattle Emergency Hubs offered information and answer questions. Soon "Hub 101" training will be offered to both P-Patch staff and gardens that have indicated interest. Other workshops or training—such as Basic Preparedness and Disaster Skills—may also be offered. (Ask your P-Patch coordinator.)

Gardeners in P-Patches and volunteers creating Hubs are all helping to build resilience into our community. Research has shown that organized, resilient communities bounce back much more quickly after a disaster than places whose residents haven't collaborated previously. Let's work together to create a safer and stronger Seattle community.

## To learn more, visit:

- [seattle.gov/emergency-management--/prepare](https://seattle.gov/emergency-management--/prepare)
- [seattleemergencyhubs.org](https://seattleemergencyhubs.org)





# You can Support GROW

By Michael McNutt, GROW treasurer

**D**id you know that GROW is essentially an all-volunteer organization? We have a fantastic part-time accountant as our only paid staff, and the rest of our work is driven completely by volunteers!

What we don't have is someone who gets paid to help us raise money. GROW depends on people within and outside our organization to spread the word about the important work the organization does to help promote and sustain community gardening in the greater Seattle area. The great news is that you can help GROW succeed, and it may be easier than you think!

Do you work for a company or organization that will match your donations to worthy causes? Do you also know that they may match hours you donate to those same non-profits? You'd be surprised at the number of people with P-Patch plots who don't fill out their company's form to collect the minimum of eight hours that they donate to their P-Patch each year! At \$15 - \$35 per hour, that's \$120 - \$240 or more that you could direct your employer to donate on your behalf to GROW, all for filing out a form and sending GROW a short email (to [info@grownorthwest.org](mailto:info@grownorthwest.org)) telling us how many hours you submitted and the name of your employer. Imagine how powerful it would be if even 50 percent of our approximately 3,000 gardeners took the time to record their hours with their employer! Please take the time to include us in your contributions each year!

There are many other ways for you to help, as well. Direct donations can be made through our website at [www.grownorthwest.org](http://www.grownorthwest.org). A large DONATE button on the home page will take you to the Network For Good. And please check out our relationship with DynamicPay, which enables a portion of what you spend at major retailers to be donated to GROW. You can get started by going to: <https://bit.ly/38X7uw0>

Finally, did you know that some companies will direct your donation dollars from what you spend with each time you buy from them? Examples include Amazon (via AmazonSmile.com), eBay, Bartell Drugs and Fred Meyer. These and many other businesses have programs in which a portion of the money you spend with them each month is donated to the charity of your choice. Please make that choice GROW!

Through the mechanism of your choice, please consider giving generously to GROW! We count on gardeners to contribute so we can continue our mission to build healthy and diverse communities by:

- Advocating for, managing and funding organic community gardens, orchards, urban farms and green spaces
- Providing educational opportunities for growing, sharing and preparing food
- Acquiring and holding land for organic community gardens, urban farms and green spaces.

## Company Matching



Here are some of companies that match the dollars and/or time donated to GROW, which is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation:

Nordstrom  
Slalom Consulting  
Verizon  
Adobe  
Starbucks  
Microsoft  
Boeing  
Amgen  
Pyramid Communications  
Meridith Corporation  
Sound Physical Therapy  
Russell Investments  
Chase Bank  
Regence  
Bank of America  
Washington Post  
Gates Foundation

**YES!** I want to help GROW acquire and advocate for community gardens, and preserve and protect our existing community gardens.

Here my contribution as a:

**FRIEND: \$25-\$34** (pays the fiscal agency fee for one garden for one month.)  
**GARDEN HELPER: \$35-\$49** (pays the plots rental fee for one low-income gardener)  
**SUPPORTER: \$50-\$99** (pays one year of liability insurance for one garden)  
**CONTRIBUTOR: \$100-\$249** (funds a GROW tool grant for one garden)  
**BENEFACTOR: \$250-\$499** (pays a portion of the property taxes on GROW's gardens)  
**PATRON: \$500-\$999** (pays a significant percentage of the annual support for Lettuce Link)  
**GARDENING ANGEL: \$1000 or more** (pays for printing one edition of the P-Patch Post)

You may be able to multiply your contribution through your employer's matching gift program. Please check with your Human Resources Department for information and the necessary form. Adobe, Amgen, Bank of America, Boeing, Microsoft, Starbucks, and Chase Bank are among the major local employers that match contributions to non-profit organizations.

☐ Please check here if you would like to have a paper copy of your contribution acknowledgment mailed to you rather than receiving an emailed version.

My contribution is \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check here if you want to remain anonymous.

Make your check or money order payable to: "GROW" and mail it to P.O. Box 19748, Seattle, WA 98109.

You can also use a credit card (VISA or MasterCard) to make a contribution via our secure website: [www.GROWnorthwest.org](http://www.GROWnorthwest.org)



**Thank you! For more information, contact us at [info@GROWnorthwest.org](mailto:info@GROWnorthwest.org) or call 425.329.1601**

GROW is a nonprofit, 501 (c) organization and donations are tax deductible to the full amount allowed by law. Our federal tax identification number is 91-1091819.

# Composting Upgrades at Picardo Farms P-Patch

By Alexandria Soleil DeLong, Picardo Farm P-Patch

## Picardo Farm, the P in P-Patch

Picardo Farm was a family farm during the 20th century that produced for Pike Place Market. In the mid 1970s, local activists acquired 2.5 acres for community gardening. Wholesome veggies and fruit have always been a building block of the neighborhood. Now we host some 300 plot holders, donate almost 3000 lbs of produce per year to local food banks, and over 90 other community gardens are part of the P-Patch program.

## The Soil Health Education Center - SHEC

*Building soil in community.*

Gardeners, Master Composter/Sustainability Stewards and community came together in 2019 to create an educational program to focus on building healthy soil. We host workshops February through November to manage our compost bins, learn the benefits of healthy soil, trouble shoot at-home compost systems, promote biodiversity, and steward the land. Workshops at the SHEC are led by volunteer Master Composter/Sustainability Stewards and open to the public.

## Why we compost on site

Composting is nature's form of recycling! A diverse web of decomposers breakdown organic matter into particles small enough to be beneficial to our plants, and therefore, to us. We maintain our natural resources on site so that we can return nutrients gathered by plants from our soil, right back into our soil. We sustain a lower carbon footprint by keeping "waste" -weeds, rotten vegetables, leaves, and stems - in the garden, instead of using fuel to haul it to commercial compost facilities.

Composted organic material in our soil sinks carbon, retains water, and makes nutrients available to veggies and fruits. The goal is to increase nutrients in our soil to make wholesome veggies, while simultaneously recycling material from the P-Patch.

## Compost at Picardo - Organic & Locally Sourced

Sending food and yard waste to commercial composting facilities in our residential green bins is an important way that Seattle keeps organic matter out of landfills, where it would decompose slowly and emit greenhouse gases. Unfortunately, however, various forms of contamination make their way into the commercial compost. Whether through carelessness or improper sorting, the introduction of pathogens, plastics and harmful chemicals is unavoidable on such a large scale, so the commercial composting facilities are required to heat the compost up to temperatures that kill harmful pathogens, but also beneficial bacteria. Metal and glass are fairly easily sorted out, but plastics remain in finished compost. Some folks apply pes-



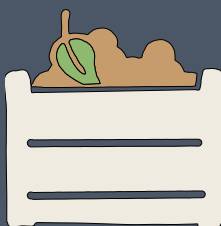
Photo submitted by: Jordanna Warneck, Courtland Place P-Patch

ticides to their lawns or gardens, those harmful chemicals remain in commercial compost. And then we buy this potentially contaminated, ineffective compost in plastic bags which are in turn sent to the landfill.

The compost we make at Picardo is pesticide free and uses hyper-local sources. It contains beneficial bacteria that make nutrients accessible to our plants. Healthier plants are more resistant to disease and provide more nutritious food for us.

## Where does it go? Gardeners' Sorting Guide

By Alexandria Soleil DeLong



Picardo gardeners can put almost everything in the general intake bins. Gardeners are encouraged to shake soil off in their plots seeing as soil slows decomposition of organic matter and makes the compost heavier to move.

**Woody debris** - like raspberry canes, tough brassica stems, sunflower stalks, etc- are stockpiled until we use a chipper/shredder to chop it into manageable bits that will decompose faster or serve us as mulch.

**Quack grass**, a very difficult to remove grass since it reproduces through both seeds and roots, goes in designated bins where we're experimenting with two methods of recycling it.

**Horsetails & buttercups**, two plants undesired in our veggie beds that also spread easily, are piled with their live companions along the south border where their blooms can be enjoyed by passerby without crowding our veggies.

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**Grange Insurance Association**  
[www.grange.com](http://www.grange.com)



GIVE BIG for Seattle P-Patches this year! Support GROW and Seattle P-Patches by visiting [www.GiveBigWA.org](http://www.GiveBigWA.org) on **May 6th**. Your generous financial contribution is tax deductible and will go towards supporting urban green spaces.



## P-Patch Gardeners' 2020 Discount Coupon

**This coupon is good for 10% off  
at the following participating merchants**

*Only on purchases related to your P-Patch or other community garden: plants, seed and soil amendments, lumber*  
*Be sure to present your coupon BEFORE the cashier rings up the sale*

**City People's Garden Store: 2939 East Madison; 324-0737**

*\*applies to regularly priced merchandise only*

**Indoor Sun Shoppe: 160 Canal St; 634-3727**

**Maple Leaf ACE Hardware: 9000 Roosevelt Way NE; 522-3324**

**Sky Nursery: 18528 Aurora Ave N; 546-4851**

**Stewart Lumber: 1761 Rainier Ave S; 425 454-2828**

**Swansons Nursery: 9701 15th Ave NW; 782-2543**

**Urban Earth: 1051 N 35th St; 632-1760**

**Walt's Organic Fertilizer: 2209 West Elm Street; 297-9092**

*\*valid for plants and seeds only*

*These discounts are arranged as a service to  
P-Patch gardeners by GROW, the non-profit  
advocacy organization for community gardening*

