



Seed-to-Seed

A partnership with Greenwich Community Gardens

March 2018

Our new Seed-to-Seed native plant initiative is pleased to have its first community partner - Greenwich Community Gardens (GCG). After launching the Seed-to-Seed initiative earlier this year, the Land Trust sought out community partners with a common interest in plants and protecting our local environment, and GCG is proving



to be a perfect fit. Founded in 2009, GCG is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating sustainable community gardens that provide access to organic produce while promoting health and community connections.

Several times a week, GCG joins Land Trust staff at the Louise Mueller Preserve Greenhouse. Together they propagate and care for a variety of native plants and vegetable starts. Seed-to-Seed gardener volunteers are trained in sophisticated growing techniques and can spend the doldrums of winter in the light and warmth of the greenhouse.

Their volunteer efforts have already produced hundreds of native seedlings that will be used this spring to restore Greenwich Land Trust nature preserves. Vegetable transplants are grown to supply the GLT Youth Corps vegetable garden, GCG, Neighbor to Neighbor, and local school gardens.

Emily Curry serves as the GCG's coordinator for the Seed-to-Seed partnership. Emily was excited about expanding the scope of the GCG role to include native plants through the Seed-to-Seed partnership. She sees an important connection between the health of the broader environment and the gardens.

"Our focus is on growing healthy food for many members of the community but working with native plants teaches us about the role of healthy ecosystems that are a prerequisite for the success of our vegetable gardens. Even though our gardeners grow in individual plots, the health of the surrounding environment profoundly affects the success of our efforts," Emily explains. She also sees the value of fostering community connections through Seed-



to-Seed. "I see this partnership having far reaching implications for the community because we are interacting with many people and groups, and our plants are benefiting families, schools, and organizations all throughout town."

Growing plants in the GLT greenhouse provides an opportunity for avid gardeners and novices alike to expand their knowledge and skills throughout the year. GCG volunteer Jenny Heffer shared how she has benefited from this partnership.



"I believe wholeheartedly in the benefits of immersing myself in nature. Working in a garden gives me the opportunity to slow down and be mindful," she explained. "I saw the Seed-to-Seed partnership as the perfect way to learn more in-depth techniques and to be involved in work that benefits our community and protects our green spaces. This process of taking care of a garden from seed to blooming requires great patience and care, experiences I welcome for myself as well as for my young children."

Our partnership with GCG is a perfect example of community building around native plants Seed-to-Seed strives to achieve. We look forward to continuing this partnership and starting others, creating a strong community focused on restoring native plants to the landscape.

