

The Gravy Infusion

News, activities, and doings from the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center



Photograph by Heather Dent

Main Sharing

Gardening in the midst of a Pandemic



People are realizing the importance of gardening more than ever, as they seek to ensure their own health and food security in the midst of the pandemic. Organizations like [Grow Appalachia](#) and [Berea Urban Farm](#) are doing incredible work to help support and encourage Appalachian families in this endeavor.

Grow Appalachia provides funding and gardening resources to over 6,000 families across Appalachia. This year in particular they've emphasized educating young children by teaming up with Berea Community Elementary to provide multiple families with garden kits, instructions, and activities.

The Berea Urban Farm responded to the pandemic by providing planter tubs, composted soil, and seeds to over 175 families in Madison County Kentucky as a gesture of good will.

Because of organizations like Grow Appalachia and Berea Urban Farm, gardens are popping up all over the place and kids are learning the importance of growing their own food.



I always like summer
best
you can eat fresh corn,
from daddy's garden
and okra
and greens
and cabbage

* * * * *

and go to the mountains with
your grandmother
and go barefooted
and be warm

~From "Knoxville,
Tennessee"
by [Nikki Giovanni](#)



How Does Your Garden Grow?

No really! We want to know. We are collecting garden pictures to feature in a our Appalachian Gardens collage, which we share on with the next Gravy Infusion and on facebook. Send us your best garden pics with your name, city, and state, and we will include it in our collage. You can send them to denth@berea.edu or in a message to our [Facebook Page](#) . We can't wait to see all your beautiful flowers, delicious vegetables, and creative garden structures!

A Note from the Appalachian Curator

This diminutive bit of wood and leather may be simple, but if you've got a lot of corn to shuck, you'll want one. This corn shucker was used in East Tennessee during the 1800s. Its hickory point splits open husks saving cuts to your fingers. Its leather loop keeps it attached your hand, so you can use all your fingers to pull the husk. In the past, Appalachian gardeners more often need their gardens to supply enough food to last through the winter. They often grew and processed much larger quantities than today's gardeners. That meant *a lot* of shucking when the corn came in.



Last fall our staff had a pumpkin decorating competition. We let some of the pumpkins decompose in our garden bed and now it is overflowing with these lovely sprawling pumpkin vines.