

Seeding Galveston

Grant Type: **Dollar support**

Dollar Amount: **\$20,000**

Foundation Name: **Harris and Eliza Kempner Fund**

What was your objective with the grant or initiative?

Seeding Galveston had two objectives: (1) to develop urban farms and gardens in previously unused vacant lots in the greater Galveston, TX, community and establish collaborations with community organizations to educate citizens about the value of nutritious food grown without chemicals or pesticides, as well as encourage and help citizens grow their own food; and (2) to enhance the safety of neighborhoods by eradicating trash-strewn empty lots, address “food deserts,” foster a sense of community within neighborhoods sometimes referred to as at risk, and harness the skills and enthusiasm of dozens of volunteers who range from members of school and church groups to interested, committed individuals.

What were the results of this grant or initiative?

In 2 years, this effort saw growth from one garden to three gardens with more than 5 acres under cultivation. Of the produce harvested, 25% goes directly to the community through established food kitchens or direct donations. In addition, Seeding Galveston secured other funding from three new funders. Also, a successful community-supported agriculture program grew from income of \$480 per month to \$2,200 per month, thus providing a basic level of sustainability.

Why would you say this grant or initiative had outsized impact?

Community organizations have increased land under cultivation by 2700% and the number of volunteer groups—from 2 to 12—that grow food for others. Rental plots are at capacity and have a waitlist. Increased collaborations for infrastructure are evidenced by compost materials donated by the University of Texas Medical Branch to the garden and donations of landscape timbers and greenhouse materials by a local lumber yard. With 80% of land in production, donations to nonprofits and food kitchens have increased, as have onsite sales of nutritious, fresh food to residents living in a food desert. Classes are being taught at the medical school and the community college culinary program about the nutrition benefits of locally grown food.



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