

# Top 10 Things to Consider When Implementing a Worksite Garden



1. **Budget:** Decide how much the company is willing to pay to create this garden, and if employees will need to pay a small fee for a plot. Having participants bring/donate their own gardening tools, as well as seeing if local gardening stores can donate seeds are some of the many ways to keep a low budget.
2. **Garden Committee:** Select a few employees to ensure the garden's success by overseeing installation and maintenance of the garden. Have at least one or two individuals who are experienced gardeners who can advise or assist with any problems such as pests, fungus, etc.
3. **Employee Interest:** Make sure this is a project that employees are interested in doing and that they will dedicate the time necessary for it to succeed.

The simplest way to determine interest is to send a companywide e-mail explaining what the garden is, why the worksite would like to have one, and what the needed commitment and time would be for employees. For employees who don't have e-mail access, a simple yes or no survey can be added as a payroll stuffer.

4. **Space:** Find a location that will provide enough sunlight, has a source of water, and is in a convenient spot for all employees to access during breaks. Make sure the soil is fit for gardening. If the ground around the office building is not fit for gardening, consider container/raised bed gardening.
5. **Liability:** While it doesn't happen often, it is important to decide who will be responsible if someone gets hurt working in the garden. Creating a waiver for participants is recommended.

*Freshen up your plate!*



## Get fresh at the KNUJ Farmers Market in New Ulm!

**Program Partners:** Growing Green at Putting Green, Inc. • Guldán Family Farm • KNUJ Radio  
New Ulm Medical Center • University of Minnesota • University of Minnesota Extension

6. **Volunteer Responsibility:** What will participants' roles be? Can they have their own plot or share with co-workers? You can also split participants into teams that take care of specific plants. From there, decide when employees will be allowed to tend to the garden and pick plants. Will they need to use break time or work on the garden before and after work? Can they work on the garden on company time? Make sure to clearly communicate the time allowed for gardening in order to avoid any confusion.

7. **Design and Installation:** Figure out if the garden will be organic to help establish the types of plants to include and how the company will prep the area. When putting in the garden, make sure to create big enough paths between the rows so people can walk around and not worry about getting too dirty.

8. **Harvest:** Decide whether the company will donate some or all of the crops to a local food shelf. If donating, have employees take turns bringing crops to the food shelf. If you keep some of the crops, have a day where employees can share and learn recipes that include crops from the garden.

Also, have a farmers market where employees can sell some of the plants to their co-workers who were unable to participate.

9. **Out of Season:** To ensure garden sustainability, there will be some maintenance before and after the growing season. Work out how the garden will be maintained and who will be in charge.

10. **Evaluation:** Determine how you will measure the garden's success – this helps the committee decide how to improve this project for the next season.

One way is to see if employees increased the number of fruits and vegetables they ate. A simple survey will accomplish this goal. Think of what you want to know about the garden and ask. For example, besides eating more fruits and vegetables, did employees find the time and effort it took to work in and maintain the garden worthwhile?

*Freshen up your plate!*



**Get fresh** at the KNUJ Farmers Market in New Ulm!

**Program Partners:** Growing Green at Putting Green, Inc. • Guldán Family Farm • KNUJ Radio  
New Ulm Medical Center • University of Minnesota • University of Minnesota Extension