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For more information on Small Farms, visit our website at: http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu or contact your local County Extension Agent.

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Budgeting for Your Community Garden
Budgeting for the Community Garden

• Cost varies greatly
  – Size
  – Design

• Start Up Cost: between $1500 and $4000 initially

• Maintenance Cost: $100’s per year

• It is possible to build a small community garden for much less if you are a bit creative

• Annual up-keep can be augmented from produce sales at the farmers market.
The initial budget should include:

- Raised bed frames
- Soil/medium for the beds
- Mulch
- Path materials (optional)
- Water connection/irrigation
- Fencing (optional)
- Tools/Materials
- Fertilizers and pest control items
- Seeds and young plants
- Instruction
Raised Bed Frames

• Choice of materials
  – Concrete blocks
  – Treated lumber
  – Recycled materials
Raised Bed Frames

• Concrete (4’ x 8’ x 16”)

• LOWE’s (10/26/2009)
  – Estimated Cost (each): $1.17
  – Cost of Bed (64 blocks): $74.88
  – Reinforcing Bars: $65.50

• Total: $140.38
Raised Bed Frames

• Treated Lumber

• Lowe’s 10/26/2009
  – Cost of Bed (2-2”x12”x16’): $47.94
  – Cost of Bed (1-2”x12”x12’): $17.97
  – Cost of Bed (1-2”x4”x12’): $4.97
  – Screws: $7.97

• Total: $78.85
Raised Bed Frames

- Recycled Material
- F&M Tool and Plastics, Inc. “Smart Timbers”
  - Estimated Cost (each): $49.99
  - Cost of Bed (10 timbers): $499.99
  - Reinforcing Bars: $25.00
- Total: $524.99
Soils/Medium for the Beds

- Potting Mix
- Make your own
- Municipal Compost
Soils/Medium for the Beds

- Potting Mix
- $7-8 a bag (2 cu.ft.)
- 4’ x8’ x12” raised bed is 32 cu.ft.
- $240 per bed
Soils/Medium for the Beds

• Make your own
  – 1/3 peat
    ($13.39/4 cu.ft.)
  – 1/3 vermiculite
    ($15.71 / 4 cu.ft.)
  – 1/3 compost
    $120 / 10 cu.ft.

• $178.20 for 32 cu.ft.
Soils/Medium for the Beds

- Municipal Compost
  - Usually free but you must haul it
Mulch

- Controls weeds
- Moderates soil temperature
- Improves soil structure (organic mulches)

Materials

- Inorganic
  - $$, rarely replaced
- Organic
  - Inexpensive
  - Replaced/renewed every season
Mulch

- Inorganic
  - Gravel
  - Rock
  - Rubber
- Organic
  - Pine bark
  - Pine needles
  - Utility mulch
  - Red mulch
Water Connection and Irrigation

• **Meter**
• **Tap from system close by**
• **Distribution**
  – Hoses
  – Soaker Hose
  – Drip irrigation
  – Low volume
  – Automation

• $3,000 – $7,000
Fencing

- Security
- Reduce vandalism
- Keep out wildlife
- Pre-fabricated
  - Wooden
  - Metal
    - Chain link
    - Aluminum
    - Iron

- $100’s
Tools/Materials

- Tools
  - Shovels
  - Rakes
  - Hoes
  - Pruners
- Compost unit
- Bench/table
- Trash receptacle
- Etc., etc., etc.
- ($100’s)
Fertilizers and Pest Control

- **Nutrients**
  - Organic (~$1 per pound)
  - Inorganic (~ .70 per pound)

- **Pest Control**
  - Organic ($$, used frequently)
  - Synthetic ($$, high residual)
  - Purchased after pest is identified
Seeds and Transplants

• Seed
  – Can be costly depending on source
  – Save seeds to reduce cost

• Transplants
  – Limited selection
  – $3+ per plant
  – Grow your own
Instruction

- Cooperative Extension Service
  - Free to modest cost for materials
  - Unbiased, research based information
- Local Garden Clubs/Botanical Gardens
  - Discounted rates possible
Summary

- Raised bed frames
- Soil/medium for the beds
- Mulch
- Path materials (optional)
- Water connection/irrigation
- Fencing (optional)
- Tools/Materials
- Fertilizers and pest control items
- Seeds and young plants
- Instruction

$78 - $524 each
Free - $240 each
Free - $ depending on material
Free - $ depending on material
$3,000 - $7,000
$--$$ depending on material
$$ depending on need
$$ depending on need
A few $$ to many $$
Free to a few $$

$5,000 - $12,000