

FALL HARVEST EDITION



Feed Fannin News

Feed Fannin, Inc.

One Community, One Spirit

Fall 2018

Feed Fannin to celebrate 10th Anniversary in January

Happy 10th birthday to Feed Fannin! This coming January, Feed Fannin will celebrate a full decade of commitment to providing food for those in need and education about growing one's own food.

"Feed Fannin was founded 10 years ago when Barbara Ferrer saw a problem and offered a solution," said John Sugg, chair of Feed Fannin. "The problem was hunger that impacted the lives of many citizens in Fannin County. The solution was to grow a community garden and contribute the harvest to the Family Connections Food Pantry.

"Those early gardens were an awesome start, and the community responded with volunteers and donations. Soon, supermarkets began contributing food, and foundations provided financial support. Feed Fannin entered into a partnership with Fannin County Schools, and our home and community gardens moved to school-owned land.

"The growth continues beyond the 16,000 of our fellow citizens who are clients of the food pantry. We have an aggressive education program. We are building a new website to bring our message to the community and create an ongoing dialogue in Fannin County on issues that affect low-income



Feed Fannin volunteers standing in the sweet potato patch at the Ada Street Community Garden

families, as well as promoting local, sustainable agriculture. We welcome all residents to join us on January 10 for our annual planning meeting – and our 10th Anniversary Celebration." 🌻

Another year of hard work at the Ada Street Garden

Summer has come to an end, and we have harvested most of our produce. It's time to put the garden to bed for the winter. Recently we harvested 3,025 pounds of sweet potatoes. That brings our year-to-date total for produce delivered to the food pantry to 6,525 pounds.

Planning and preparation are sometimes underrated, but to me, they are two very necessary tools. My family would probably tell you my use of these tools is a curse to live with at times...but also that it can be invaluable.

Crop rotation, soil testing, soil amending, and garden layout involve time and planning, but are necessary to the success of the garden. The planning that went into putting a new fence up in the spring helped us combat the groundhogs that plagued our sweet potatoes last year.

We lost good soil in areas of the Ada Street Garden during the construction of a water line. Rich soil had to be added at Ada Street as well as the Forge Mill Garden to improve the nutrients. Adding soil and soil amendments to both gardens has helped



Our Forge Mill partners' red potato harvest

increase the yields.

Kudos to those who tend the Forge Mill Garden for growing almost 500 pounds of red potatoes (their largest harvest) and to the Ada Street garden for producing 814 ears of corn, along with other produce.

As always, thanks to the core group of garden volunteers who have faithfully shown up to harvest and maintain the garden and facility this summer, both at Ada Street and the Forge Mill Garden.

Garden activities are still underway as we prepare to put the garden to rest for the winter. Spent plant areas have been tilled, and we plan to test and amend the soil accordingly.

Here's another example of our plan-

ning ahead: Last fall, the City of Blue Ridge deposited leaves at the farm that workers had collected from around town. The leaves have been decomposing over the past year, and we will add them to the soil before we plant winter rye, a process that helps maintain and add nutrients to the soil for the winter. The extra work and planning will also benefit the gardens next spring.

Continued on next page

Come play in the dirt with us!

Ada Street Garden

We will plan next year's garden layout using crop rotation for the best results. Also, we are planning on adding a few additional raised beds inside the fenced area.

The frost-free spigot that was planned earlier in the year was installed in July and has been used recently to water cabbage in the 10 allotment garden beds where Feed Fannin now has cabbage planted.

The gravel on the entrance drive that was lost during construction was recently replaced.

The local firemen have kept our water tank filled for the community raised beds.

The garden crew has been preparing the barn for sweet potato storage after harvest by cleaning up inside and repairing the barn door to keep critters out of the potatoes while they are curing before being taken to the food pantry. We are also cleaning up storage sheds on property, preparing for storage of equipment during winter. After all harvesting is complete and final mowing has been done, we will prepare our equipment for winter by cleaning it and emptying gas tanks so that equipment will run better next spring.

Feed Fannin received an anonymous donation for farm equipment that has allowed us to purchase some rechargeable battery-operated equipment that will help us better maintain the garden as well as the rest of the property we lease. We have also been trimming around buildings and the entrance to keep the farm looking beautiful and preparing areas that need more sunlight. More cleanup work and preparation will be done during the winter months.

It has been a busy summer at the farm with some noteworthy accomplishments for the garden and our facility. I am very thankful and appreciative to the Feed Fannin garden volunteers for their hard work, support, cooperation and their heart for helping our farm be successful as well as beautiful. A very special word of appreciation to our community friends and partners who have helped us solve some operational issues at the farm this summer: the Fannin County Board of Education Maintenance Department, Young Farmers, Future Farmers of America, the City of Blue Ridge Maintenance Department, and the Fannin County Fire Department. Thank you for helping us to make our plans a reality!

✿ Kathy Beck, Garden/Farm Coordinator

Feed Fannin dedicates new research and demonstration garden

The "Feed Fannin/Barbara Ferer Research & Demonstration Garden" opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and the unveiling of a sign on Aug. 8 next to the Fannin County Family Connection Food Pantry in Blue Ridge.

The Research & Demonstration Garden was made possible through a grant from The George Link Jr. Charitable Trust. As its inaugural project, the garden incorporated the "Mittleider method," which produces higher yields with less water in a smaller space than the standard garden.

In 2009, Feed Fannin founder Barbara Ferer led the creation of the Feed Fannin Community Garden, now located on Ada Street in Blue Ridge, on land made possible through a partnership with the Fannin County Board of Education. That garden supplies the Food Pantry with thousands of pounds of fresh, nutritious produce each year, thanks to the tireless efforts of dedicated Feed Fannin volunteers.

"Once the main garden was well established and successful in its mission, I began thinking of developing new and progressive methods of raising food in small home gardens," Ferer said. Her

most recent effort to promote more sustainable gardens led her and Feed Fannin volunteers Ken Banwart and Chuck Haines to research and pursue the Mittleider method as their first experimental project in the new Research & Demonstration Garden.

A committee of several Feed Fannin members will be exploring other alternative gardening methods. "Demonstration garden spaces using a variety of progressive, environmentally-sound and economically-practical methods will be started," said Feed Fannin Chair John Sugg. Members of the community will be invited to observe and encouraged to learn about the different methods to determine which approach would best suit their terrain, level of interest and their budgets.

"We also welcome new ideas from the community to identify small-space gardening methods to test in the Research & Demonstration Garden," added Sugg.

There will be workshops about growing food, many in partnership with schools, related organizations and agencies, hosted in the Family Connection conference room. In addition, Feed Fannin will hold building and planting demonstrations, and workdays focused on small-space gardening to engage members of the community in fun and practical ways to "grow your own garden" in the beautiful mountains of North Georgia.

As is the case with the primary garden on Ada Street, all the produce grown by Feed Fannin volunteers in the new gardens will be donated to the Food Pantry. The long-time support of the Fannin County Family Connection is a major factor in the success of the joint effort with Feed Fannin to operate the Food Pantry housed in their building, which serves thousands of families and individuals in need each year in our area.

"We are grateful to The George Link, Jr. Charitable Trust for their support of Feed Fannin's efforts to provide nutritious food and fresh produce to those in need in our community and to share knowledge about sustainable gardening methods suitable for our area," said Sugg. ✿



The Mittleider research garden at Fannin County Family Connection

SAVE THE DATE

- Oct. 13-14, 2018: **Feed Fannin tent at the Fall Arts in the Park**
- Nov. 25, 2018: **Feed Fannin manages Photos with Santa during Light Up Blue Ridge**
- Jan. 10, 2019: **Feed Fannin Annual Meeting**
- April 27, 2019: **Feed Fannin's Bowls of Hope at Willow Creek Falls**
- May 25-26, 2019: **Feed Fannin tent at the Spring Arts in the Park**

Feed Fannin is an example of that old fashioned country virtue of neighbors helping neighbors in time of need.



Four adult education classes set for 2019

One of Feed Fannin's purposes is to provide information, education and training to those who want to become more self-sufficient in growing, preserving and preparing their own food. To that end, Feed Fannin started offering education classes several years ago. The classes are free to all who want to attend. All we ask is that you bring a donation of five dollars' worth of canned goods for the Family Connection Food Pantry.

Following this year's successful series of education classes, Feed Fannin's Education Committee met in September with representatives of the North Georgia Master Gardeners (MG) and the Fannin County Young Farmers Association (YFA) to evaluate their collaboration launched in 2018. All three organizations agreed that they should continue working together to help educate the public.

The Education Committee decided to offer four classes in 2019, the first two of which will be the sole responsibility of Feed Fannin. The third class will be conducted by YFA, and the fourth by MG.

Here is the schedule of 2019 classes as it stands now:

- March 2, 10 am: Quinn's Nursery: the basics of starting seeds for the garden
- June 20, 6 pm: Square-Foot Gardens
- July 18, 6 pm: Pollinators/Native Plants
- September, TBD: Invasive Species



Aspiring gardeners learning to start seeds at a Feed Fannin class

Classes will be advertised in the local papers and posted on the Feed Fannin website at FeedFannin.com. Come and learn with us! 🌱

Feed Fannin supports gardening education in our schools

Feed Fannin supports both in-school and after school education programs at the three elementary schools in Fannin County.

Through our in-school programs, we partner with the schools in the district to provide specialized instruction in garden-based learning by connecting teachers with community 'experts' in gardening. These individuals are from two local organizations, Feed Fannin and the North Georgia Master Gardeners.

Through our support services, we also help the schools and other organizations build new educational gardens and sustain existing gardens with supplies, training and consultation. We provide seeds, starts, soil, gardening tools and supplies, garden education and design consultation. 🌱



BRES Students learning about gardening



In September, Feed Fannin Chair John Sugg (third from left) paid the organization's annual lease of \$1.00 for the Ada Street property to Fannin County School Superintendent Michael Gwatney (second from left). Accompanying Sugg were former FF Chair Connie Galloway and FF Farm/Garden Coordinator Kathy Beck (third and second from right).

Feed Fannin feeds the hungry

Almost 100% of the Family Connection Food Pantry's food needs are paid for or reimbursed by Feed Fannin (amounting to more than \$57,000). This amount covers the purchase of milk, eggs, bulk orders from Food Lion, and staple items from the Chattanooga Food Bank and Atlanta Food Bank.



Help us to help others by volunteering to assist in one of our programs or by making a contribution to Feed Fannin



Feed Fannin's leadership saluted Kathy Beck in September for her selfless dedication to successfully managing the organization's community gardens. She received a Feed Fannin t-shirt (pictured to the left) with the total yield of produce from the 2017 harvest.

OUR MISSION

Working together to educate and encourage our community towards self-sufficiency while providing food for those in need.

OUR PROGRAMS

Ada Street Farm – We grow food at our Ada Street Farm and elsewhere to feed the hungry in Fannin County.

Community Garden – We manage a community garden at the Ada Street Farm that provides space for local residents to grow fruits and vegetables.

Food Pantry – We support the Family Connection Food Pantry with volunteer workers, food, and money to mitigate the costs of feeding the hungry.

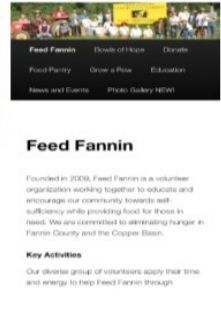
Adult Education Classes – We provide information, education, and training to those who want to learn to be more self-sufficient in growing, preserving, and preparing their own food.

Youth Education – We support and help fund gardening programs in the Fannin County elementary schools.

Two Great Ways to Keep Up With Feed Fannin

Facebook

Our Website



You can also help by donating to Feed Fannin



Feed Fannin Gift Form

Your name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Would you like to be added to our email list to receive information about Feed Fannin? Y_____ N_____

Amount of gift donation: \$ _____

Need a tax receipt? Y_____ N_____

Please make checks payable to:
Feed Fannin, Inc

Mail form and donation to:
Feed Fannin
P O Box 1085
Blue Ridge, GA 30513

YOUR GIFT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!



Remember Feed Fannin in Your Future Plans

You can help Feed Fannin when you make a bequest of assets in a will or trust, which could be a specific amount of money or assets, a percentage of the money or assets, or the residual money or assets of the estate. Ask us about it by emailing us at feedfannin@gmail.com or calling us at (706) 946-1001 and leaving a message.



The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just on the body, but the soul.

~ Alfred Austin



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