Fruits and vegetables are critical for a healthy diet. According to a Feeding America survey (2014), the #1 type of food desired by Iowa food pantry participants that is not widely available at pantries is fresh fruits and vegetables. Growing Together is working to change that.

(Citation: Feeding America, Hunger in America, 2014)

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Growing Together promotes healthy food access for families with low income through a partnership between ISU’s SNAP-Ed program, Master Gardener volunteers, ISU Research Farms and Iowa food pantries. In 2016, twenty-six Master Gardener volunteer teams worked with food pantries in their communities to provide them with fresh produce throughout the growing season.

90 Master Gardener volunteers committed over 860 hours of time to support healthy food access in their communities.

47 food pantries and meal sites received donations through Growing Together.

Master Gardener volunteer teams engaged over twenty partners to enhance their work.

Master Gardener teams leveraged more than $14,500 in local community funding.

ISU Research Farms hosted seven model donation gardens which were used for community education, awareness building and produce donation.

328 Master Gardeners learned strategies for effective donation gardening through continuing education opportunities.

Growing Together donated more than 67,000 pounds (201,000 servings or 33 tons) of produce to food pantries across Iowa.

This program is funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known in Iowa as Food Assistance, provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more visit www.yesfood.iowa.gov.

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