



Tracking Your Harvest

Dear Community Gardener,

Congratulations on deciding to weigh and record your garden's harvest! Forsyth Community Gardening encourages all garden groups to keep track of this valuable information for their own use. Harvest totals and yield records can help you to:

- Learn from successful (and not-so-successful) plantings, and plan for future years
- Communicate your garden's impact on availability of fresh produce
- Advocate for programs that provide horticultural assistance to community gardens.

On the following page, you will find suggestions on how to track your harvest totals (useful for understanding your garden's impact on the availability of fresh produce) *and* yields per unit area (useful for gauging the quality of horticultural practices). Although Forsyth Community Gardening is not conducting a comprehensive survey of harvest records at this time, you are welcome to share your garden's information with us by emailing the Community Gardening Coordinator (gregormm@forsyth.cc). We would love to know if you feel that our educational programs have helped you achieve increased harvest totals and/or yields!

Don't hesitate to let me know if you have questions or need assistance tracking your garden's harvest.

Happy Harvesting (and produce-weighing),

Megan Gregory

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Tracking Your Harvest: Instructions

1. Obtain harvest tracking sheets and information.

These are available online at <http://tinyurl.com/FCGHarvestInfo>, or in hard copy from the Community Gardening Coordinator at the Forsyth County Cooperative Extension office (1450 Fairchild Rd., Winston-Salem NC 27105).

2. For each crop, measure and record the square footage planted.

Record this on the Harvest Tracking Sheet. Square footage is the **length x width** of each planting. For example:

- If you planted one 8' x 4' bed to okra: $8 \times 4 = 32$ square feet.
- If you planted *half* of a 12' x 4' bed to mustard greens: $12 \times 4 = 48 / 2 = 24$ square feet

3. Indicate whether you will weigh or count produce.

Circle your method of choice on the Harvest Tracking Sheet. Weighing is preferred because it is more accurate. If you need a scale, please contact the Community Gardening Coordinator.

4. Determine appropriate units of measurement for each crop using the Vegetable Measurement Guide.

This Guide is available at <http://tinyurl.com/FCGHarvestInfo>, or from the Community Gardening Coordinator. Those weighing produce will record pounds for heavier crops and ounces for herbs and lighter crops. Those counting produce will use numbers.

5. Harvest, Weigh, & Record!

As you harvest produce and herbs, record the date at the top of the Harvest Tracking Sheet, and the harvest amount for each crop in the column below the date and in the row corresponding to that crop. When you fill a sheet, add up the total amount harvested for each crop and put this number in the 'total' column. Start a new sheet and continue recording your harvest.

6. Analyze your Data, Learn for Next Year, and Share your Success!

At the end of the growing season, summarize your harvest totals and yields for each crop. If available, compare with past years. Ask your group: Which crops and varieties did well? Perhaps you will continue planting those! Which crops and varieties didn't do well? Perhaps you will choose different varieties, or perhaps you need to review your planting dates and horticultural practices to see if there is room for improvement. Finally, be sure to communicate your success to your garden members and supporters through a newsletter, pictures, and/or display at an end-of season harvest party.