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MMF COMMUNITY

# Garden Initiative

- Program Description -  
**2026 Growing Season**



**Energy,  
Infrastructure &  
Resource Management**

*Funded under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial territorial-initiative*

# INTRODUCTION

This information package provides an overview of the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) *Community Garden Initiative*, including program details, eligibility requirements, and the application process for MMF Locals interested in participating.

The *Community Garden Initiative* is designed to support MMF Locals in establishing and maintaining community gardens that increase access to nutritious, culturally relevant food while strengthening connections between Citizens, land, and community. These gardens are intended to serve as welcoming, inclusive spaces where knowledge can be shared across generations, and where traditional practices related to planting, harvesting, and preservation can be revitalized and sustained.

Through this initiative, the MMF aims to contribute to improved food security and advance food sovereignty for Red River Métis Citizens. By supporting locally driven garden projects, the program prioritizes community leadership, capacity-building, and the use of local knowledge systems. Each garden will reflect the unique needs, strengths, and vision of the Local implementing it.

Participating Locals will receive support from the MMF in the form of garden infrastructure and materials, guidance, and educational resources to assist with garden planning, establishment, and early operation. However, community gardens are expected to be led, maintained, and sustained by the Local and its Citizens. This program is intended to empower Locals to build long-term, self-sustaining initiatives rather than rely on ongoing external management.

Applicants are encouraged to carefully review all sections of this information package, including program requirements and expectations, prior to submitting an application. Only proposals that demonstrate readiness, feasibility, and strong community involvement will be considered for support.

For questions or to submit a completed *Application Form*, please contact:

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# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The MMF is inviting interested Locals to apply for support to establish and maintain community gardens as part of the *Community Garden Initiative*.

## ***What is a community garden?***

Community gardens are shared spaces where individuals come together to grow food, build relationships, and strengthen connections to land and culture. These spaces can transform underutilized land into productive, vibrant areas that promote well-being, knowledge sharing, and community resilience. In Red River Métis community gardens, these sites also serve as important spaces for the revitalization and transmission of traditional and land-based knowledge, including food growing, harvesting, and preservation practices.

## ***What is the goal of the Community Garden Initiative?***

Through the *Community Garden Initiative*, the MMF aims to:

- ∞ Increase access to fresh, nutritious, and culturally relevant food for Red River Métis Citizens
- ∞ Support community-led approaches to food security and food sovereignty
- ∞ Foster intergenerational knowledge sharing and skill development
- ∞ Strengthen community connections and local capacity

## ***How can the MMF support the establishment of community gardens?***

The MMF is looking to partner with selected Locals to provide support during the planning and establishment phases of community gardens. This support is intended to reduce initial barriers and help Locals build a strong foundation for long-term success.

Support from the program can include:

- 1) Garden infrastructure and materials, such as:
  - ∞ Raised garden beds (up to 12 beds, approximately 8' x 2' x 3')
  - ∞ Soil and growing media
  - ∞ Seeds and/or seedlings
  - ∞ Basic landscaping materials
  - ∞ Food storage supplies
- 2) Technical and administrative support, including:
  - ∞ Guidance on site selection and garden planning
  - ∞ Assistance navigating land access or land-use agreements
  - ∞ Ongoing communication and check-ins throughout the growing season
- 3) Educational opportunities, which may include workshops or resources on topics such as:
  - ∞ Companion planting and garden design
  - ∞ Soil health and crop selection
  - ∞ Pollinator-friendly practices
  - ∞ Food harvesting, preservation, and storage

# LOCAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Community gardens supported through this program are community-led initiatives. While the MMF provides initial support, it is the Local that is responsible for the ongoing implementation and maintenance of the garden.

## The MMF **does not**:

- ∞ Construct or maintain gardens on behalf of Locals
- ∞ Provide ongoing, full-service operational support

Instead, participating Locals are expected to:

- ∞ Lead the establishment and day-to-day operations of the garden
- ∞ Organize community participation and volunteer involvement
- ∞ Maintain the garden throughout the growing season
- ∞ Plan for the distribution and use of harvested food

This approach ensures that each community garden reflects the priorities and capacity of the Local, while supporting long-term sustainability beyond the initial program support period.

# PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for and maintain support through the MMF *Community Garden Initiative*, MMF Locals must meet the following requirements.

## **Eligibility:**

- ∞ Applicants must be formally affiliated with an active MMF Local.
- ∞ Each Local must designate a Community Garden Coordinator (also serving as the Application Representative), who will be responsible for:
  - Overseeing garden implementation and operations
  - Acting as the primary contact with MMF staff
  - Ensuring reporting requirements are met
  - Supporting coordination of volunteers and activities throughout the growing season
- ∞ The garden must operate as a community-focused initiative, benefiting Red River Métis Citizens within the Local.
- ∞ Program support is provided for the 2026 and 2027 growing seasons, with reporting requirements extending through subsequent growing seasons in the community garden.

## **Community Garden Operations:**

- ∞ Each Local must ensure that:
  - The community garden is located on land with appropriate permissions or agreements in place (e.g., private, municipal, or Local-owned land)
  - The community garden complies with any relevant local regulations or land-use requirements
- ∞ Locals must establish clear processes for:
  - Participation (e.g., volunteer schedules, access to plots or shared spaces)
  - Harvest distribution (e.g., how produce is shared or allocated)
  - Site access and security (e.g., open access vs. restricted hours)

- ∞ Locals must demonstrate the capacity to physically establish and maintain the garden throughout the growing season (e.g., planting, watering, weeding, harvesting), or provide a clear plan outlining how this will be achieved.
- ∞ The garden site must be actively maintained and kept in a clean and safe condition.
- ∞ Garden waste must be properly managed and removed on a regular basis.
- ∞ Neglected or unmaintained sites may result in reassessment of program support.

**Resources:**

- ∞ Locals are expected to work toward long-term sustainability and self-sufficiency of the community garden.
  - This includes leveraging local knowledge, skills, and community participation.
- ∞ Locals must have the ability to source or acquire basic gardening tools (e.g., hand tools such as shovels, rakes, watering cans).
- ∞ MMF-provided supports (materials, training, and resources) are intended for community benefit only and must not be used for personal or commercial purposes.

**Reporting:**

- ∞ Locals are required to:
  - Submit brief monthly updates during the growing season
  - Complete an end-of-season report summarizing outcomes, challenges, and successes
  - Track key information such as participation, production, and distribution of produce
- ∞ Photo documentation is strongly encouraged to support reporting and program evaluation.
- ∞ Reporting will be an ongoing requirement to ensure transparency, success, and a unified network of food security.

Failure to meet these requirements may result in application denial, withdrawal of support, or removal from the program.

# PROGRAM APPLICATION

## ***How to Apply:***

MMF Locals interested in participating in the *Community Garden Initiative* are invited to submit a proposal using the application form.

Applications should be completed to the best of your ability and may be submitted in paragraph or point form. Strong applications will clearly demonstrate the Local's interest, readiness, and a feasible plan for establishing and maintaining a community garden.

## ***Submission Details:***

- ∞ **Deadline:** Applications will be accepted until April 1, 2027
- ∞ **Submission Method:** Email completed applications to [foodsecurity@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:foodsecurity@mmf.mb.ca)
- ∞ **Subject Line:** Community Garden Initiative Application – [Local Name]

## ***Application Review Process:***

The *Community Garden Initiative* is a competitive program. Applications will be evaluated based on:

- ∞ Feasibility of the proposed garden plan
- ∞ Demonstrated community interest and participation
- ∞ Readiness to implement and maintain the garden
- ∞ Alignment with program objectives
- ∞ The acknowledgement of and commitment to duties and responsibilities of the Local Chair and one other authorized representative from the Local on the application form

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, and funding will be allocated on a **first come, first served basis**, subject to program capacity.

Applicants will be notified of the status of their application following review. Only successful applicants will receive additional information regarding next steps and program participation.





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