



## The Good Food Project Sow it Forward Update

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The Food Bank of Central Louisiana serves eleven parishes across the midsection of Louisiana. As a program of the Food Bank, the Good Food Project has established yearly goals to expand its services to more of these parishes. With the help of the "Sow it Forward Grant", the GFP has provided garden tools for community gardens in two rural parishes: LaSalle and Catahoula. Each of these garden projects began as grass roots initiatives in their respective cities and has been dependent on volunteer funding and support. When asked what they could use the most, each indicated that tools were their biggest need. With the grant funds, the GFP purchased bedding/mulching forks, garden rakes, wood-handled spading forks and garden hoes.

The city of Jena, in LaSalle Parish has established a large, community garden known as Jena's Vision Community Garden. Mayor Murphy McMillen has championed this garden and delights in telling others how the garden will be open to all residents of Jena who want to volunteer to maintain the one-acre site or who simply want to harvest nutritious seasonal vegetables to supplement their diets. Any remaining produce will be sold at a newly established Farmer's Market in downtown Jena, and the proceeds will be turned back into the garden. The Good Food Project has partnered with them from inception in January 2014.

The Eat Local Catahoula Initiative, in conjunction with the Catahoula Healthy Initiatives, broke ground May 23, 2014 on their first community garden in the city of Jonesville. The Good Food Project joined forces with these two groups to help provide opportunities for community volunteers to learn about sustainable gardening, the benefits of gardening, and about consuming fresh, local produce. One of those volunteers, Sarah LaPrarie, of the Catahoula Senior Center, says what she loves about the project is that it is "bringing together people that I wouldn't necessarily get to meet or work with, and then to see the local seniors and kids working together is exciting. This is so good for our community!" The Good Food Project is excited as well to be involved with two very worthwhile community garden projects.

Image (optional):

