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Mid-year Report

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Unlike most Sow It Forward grantees, the Dunbar Community Garden is now dormant. Growing season in Florida is from October to May. The summer months are too hot (burning seedlings) and punctuated by almost daily torrential rainfalls. During this time, we have been meeting with our local University of Florida Extension Service Agent who has been advising us about the location, necessary materials, and best types of plants for a SW Florida Garden. Starting on August 1, our lumber will be delivered for our raised garden, and I (with my students and ohter volunteers) will start prepping for an early October planting. (I was fortunate to reason a second cash grant for $1500 from COABE. This will provide most of the materials for building our garden.)

I'm about to order my seed starting kits, some supports for tomatoes, and a shade netting or two from Gardener's Supply Company, so my students and I can start our seedlings in late August or early September. We will then transplant them into our prepared raised beds as soon as we see the end of the summer rains.

It's been frustrating to me that I can't plant in Florida during the summer, (I'm a native New Englander), but the Dunbar Community Garden is a learning experience for all of us. I hope that my students will take the knowledge (and seeds) back to their homes so they can grow fresh vegetables at home. My students are anxious to find ways to economize in their new country. Teaching them to grow and share their own vegetables and fruits will be highly beneficial to them and their community.

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