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Creating a Community Garden by Sheet Mulching

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The Nadaka Garden project is an ambitious grass-roots community effort to create a community garden in a low income diverse neighborhood where many people do not have their own yard. The garden will offer over 50 vegetable plots to families and social service groups and will have perennial berry shrubs for all to enjoy. So far we have orchestrated two large volunteer events to sheet mulch the 12,000 SF garden area. Over 300 volunteer hours have been logged in by neighbors, students, Army reservists and peer court youth so far to build the garden.

Sheet mulching is a process we used that is designed to convert the grass field into rich soil for the garden. The process involves shallow tilling of the field to break up the lawn, spreading high nitrogen cottonseed meal to activate microorganisms, laying down sheets of cardboard and topping with a foot depth of fall leaves and bark mulch. The cardboard will kill and compost the grasses and the leaves and bark will also compost to add organic matter to the soil below.

The KGI grant has helped us by supplying garden spading forks to do this work and the forks will supply the tool shed in the future community garden. This grant also provided us with 4 hoses for the garden. Our next steps will be to install the water lines and faucets, layout the plots and paths and build the tool shed.

Thank You Kitchen Gardeners International! We've got a great start and look forward to having a garden full of growing food and community by next spring!

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