



The Importance of Self-Sufficiency: Victory Gardens

Looking Back:

Although they began in World War I, Victory Gardens gained popularity during World War II as a way for Americans to supplement their food supply amidst national rationing. People built gardens in their backyards, in window boxes, and at their schools. By the end of the war, approximately 40 percent of the nation's fresh vegetables were being produced in Victory Gardens. The Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C. still has a Victory Garden today that grows heirloom vegetables from World War II!

ONLINE RESOURCES:

“The Classroom Victory Garden Project” from the National World War II Museum in New Orleans

<https://classroomvictorygarden.org/classroom-facts.html#>

“Gardening for the Common Good” from the Smithsonian Institution

<https://library.si.edu/exhibition/cultivating-americas-gardens/gardening-for-the-common-good>

“Victory Gardens” from the National World War II Museum in New Orleans

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTjwK3Ldrzg>

Creating a garden from fruit and vegetable seeds <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jARH5kKAAQM>

Living the Legacy:

Largely in history books up until now, Victory Gardens are making a comeback during the COVID-19 pandemic. As people are social distancing and attempting to avoid grocery stores, they are turning to building their own gardens to supplement their food supply. How can you take part in this movement?

- What types of vegetables were grown in Victory Gardens? Why are kohlrabi and Swiss chard now a regular part of our cooking?
- The US government produced cookbooks during WWII describing how to prepare home grown vegetables to make nutritional and tasty meals. Create an original dish—a salad, baked good, main dish, appetizer, or dessert—you can make with what is in your home right now. Either write your recipe down or make a YouTube cooking video and share it with us.
- Create a mini-Victory Garden for your house in a pot using seeds you have or can harvest from fruits or vegetables in your home. Consider creating a YouTube video of this process and sharing with us.



To learn more about The Michigan WWII Legacy Memorial, visit our Website at www.michiganww2memorial.org or “like” us on Facebook.