There are five UW-Extension SEW Michigan approved gardens in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties that provide food to local food pantries. Of them, three (Harvest for the Hungry Garden, Ebba Vegetable Garden and St. James’ Fields of Hope and Field of Dreams) provided information about their harvest contributions for our newsletter. During this season of giving, it’s wonderful to know that MGVs provide food for their communities.

The Harvest for the Hungry Garden is located at Fire Fly Ridge Community Garden site in Wauwatosa. “We just completed our 17th season. The purpose of the garden is to plant, raise, harvest, clean and deliver all the vegetables to either Tosa Food Pantry or Hunger Task Force. We had seven MGVs participating over the season. This season we yielded 1,345 pounds of vegetables. The garden is located on the north side of Blumound Road in Brookfield. The newly expanded harvests provided copious amounts of fresh vegetables each year for the Waukesha Food Pantry. About eight master gardener volunteers regularly help in the gardens during the growing season. This year, they donated 1,526 pounds of various vegetables, including okra and tomatoes. Chair: Marie McGinnis.

The Fields of Hope & Dreams Community Gardens are located at St. James Church in Sussex.

St. James is one of six local churches with the Sussex/Hamilton School District that supports Sussex Outreach Services of which the Cooperating Churches of Sussex’s (CCOS) food pantry is part. St. James donates all produce to the CCOS food pantry.

“Of all the produce harvested from our gardens are washed, dried, bagged in Ziploc bags, labeled with ‘Field of Dreams’ labels and boxed before being delivered to the CCOS food pantry. We include some recipes when we can.

In 2014, 1,040 quarts and 2,072 pieces (of fruit and vegetables) were shared with food pantries.

The list of items literally ranges from A (Arugula) to Z (Zucchini).

Overall it was a good year. Many people were surprised to learn of the number of vegetables being produced by volunteer gardeners. Thank you for SEW Michigan’s support. We are encouraged to grow even more next year with the addition of our new (third) garden which is being named and will be ready for next spring’s planting.” Chair: Deb Schneider.