



Commissioner Nick Fish
City of Portland

June 1, 2010

For Immediate Release

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Opportunities for Portlanders to grow their own fresh, healthy food just got a lot easier

Community gardening will take a leap forward as the Oregon Solutions Declaration of Cooperation, a partnership between 30 government agencies and non-profits to expand gardening opportunities in Portland, is signed this Wednesday, June 2

- What:** Oregon Solutions Declaration of Cooperation Signing Ceremony
Location: East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District Office
5211 N. Williams Avenue, Portland
When: **4 p.m., Wednesday, June 2**
4 p.m. Tour of East Multnomah SWCD facility
4:15 p.m. Welcome and remarks
Jean Fike, Director, EMSWCD
City Commissioner Nick Fish
4:45 p.m. Team Members Sign Declaration of Cooperation
(Hosted by Commissioner Fish)
5:15 p.m. Team photo and reception at Woodlawn Community Garden, NE 11th & Claremont
If raining, the reception will remain at EMSWCD
(catered by Firehouse Restaurant, 711 NE Dekum)

Walking or driving directions from East Multnomah SWCD to Woodlawn Community Garden: North on Williams Avenue, right on Killingsworth, left on Martin Luther King, Jr., right on Dekum, left on 11th to Claremont

(Portland, OR) – Strengthening partnerships between government agencies, schools, businesses, and non-profits is at the heart of an effort led by Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish to expand the opportunities for community gardening in the city.

"By building coalitions, empowering new leaders, coordinating initiatives, and communicating our collective vision, we *will* find a way to meet the increasing demand to grow food here in Portland," the Commissioner notes on his web page.

Oregon was recently ranked third in the nation in hunger. Today, over 50,000 Oregonians are facing hunger, and the number is rising. In Portland alone, nearly 1,000 people in Portland, alone, are on the waiting list for a plot in a community garden.

Fish first approached Governor Ted Kulongoski in July 2009 to recognize Portland Community Gardens as an Oregon Solutions Project, which seeks sustainable community projects and objectives, and the project received formal designation in August of last year. Team members have been meeting since then to create a collaborative vision for expanding opportunities for gardens throughout the city.

"Gardens not only provide fresh, healthy food, they also serve as important outdoor community centers; gardens can help older adults stay active while teaching younger children important lessons about self-sufficiency," adds Fish. "A garden might provide an opportunity for a recent immigrant to grow and share their cultural traditions, or it could serve as a platform for long-time residents to get to know each other and organize around an issue they care about. In many ways, gardens improve the environmental livability and social fabric of our communities."

Participating Organizations

Commissioner Nick Fish
Office of Mayor Sam Adams
Portland Parks & Recreation
Friends of Portland Community Gardens
Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Portland Bureau of Environmental Services
Portland Water Bureau
Multnomah County
OSU Extension
Terrafluxus
Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Land Trust
Oregon Food Bank
Oregon Department of Agriculture
MercyCorps/Grow Portland
Depave
Portland Public Schools
Growing Gardens
Village Gardens - Janus Youth Programs
Zenger Farm
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Vision into Action Coalition
East Multnomah Co Soil & Water Conservation District
West Multnomah Co Soil & Water Conservation District
Oregon Tilth
Independence Gardens LLC
Groundwork Portland
New Seasons Markets
Portland Multnomah Food Policy Council
Housing Authority of Portland
James Beard Public Market
Kaiser Permanente