



Cultivating Inclusion News

Jul-Dec 2024



As we look back at 2024, let us focus on what went well. There are so many things that we are grateful for especially the funding from the City of Murrieta's Community Development Block Grant and the Riverside County Third District Community Improvement Designation Funds. We are also especially thankful for the monthly monetary support from the Vines Christian Fellowship in Temecula. These funds along with supply donations from several business companies (see page 2) have allowed us to reorganize the garden area with additional sheds, shelves and raised beds. As a nonprofit organization, Cultivating Inclusion has undergone reorganization as well. We have a new Board of Directors and has formed a core volunteer collective to help with planning and strategy. As usual, we rely on dedicated volunteers to help our farm grow. Although we have been blessed with wonderful volunteers so far, we will need more next year. If you are interested in helping, please fill out a volunteer form on our website.



Aerial View of Cultivating Inclusion (Photo credit: Charles Berman)

Winter Planting

Lettuce, cabbage, red potatoes and Brussel sprouts are among the crops that are doing well this winter. Our volunteers continue to experiment & learn from experience each year what grows well and what not, and how to resolve unexpected challenges that may come up along the way.



9,262 pounds of produce donated in 2024!!



A new galvanized raise bed and trellis among supplies donated



Lettuce



Cabbage

History: Cultivation Inclusion Farm is the brainchild of four dedicated women with special needs children. With a vision of helping young adults with special needs develop practical skills in a garden setting, they started this project in Fall 2014 with the support of the City of Murrieta. The garden became a 501 (c) (3) non-profit with public charity status in June of 2018.

Mission: To enhance the quality of life of special needs individuals by providing a garden space where they can connect with nature, gain agricultural experience through farming and gardening activities, and contribute to the local community by producing fresh fruits and vegetables to donate to food banks.

Orchard Update

In October, Cultivating Inclusion formed an orchard committee and began recruiting volunteers to become 'Guardians of the Grove'. Master Gardener Thurman Howard from UCANR Cooperative Extension provided a class on how to care for citrus trees and will be leading a pruning workshop in early January. We are still looking for volunteers if you are interested.



Food Safety Project

Supervisor Chuck Washington recommended our grant proposal to increase food safety awareness and practice to be funded by the County Board of Supervisors. The funds allow us to purchase two portable handwashing stations and put in other food safety measures. Regular discussions about food safety at the farm reminds our volunteers to be more mindful about this important topic.

Thank you, volunteers!

The number of volunteers each month varies from 22-60 with a total of at least 1,866 volunteer hours. The average number of participants (special needs clients/students, job coaches and teachers) was about 78 people/week in 2024. Cultivating Inclusion remains active and looks forward to improving even more next year. Thank you ALL for your support!!!

Many thanks to our generous sponsors!

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Cultivating Inclusion farm is open weekdays from 9-11 a.m. 39775 Alta Murrieta Dr, Murrieta. For a tour or to volunteer, call Mary Ann Tams (951) 296-7756.