

## **OL 304 Assignment One Discussion**

### **Vegetable Garden Care and Maintenance for Family Gardens and Community Gardens.**

<https://csd-i.org/vegetable-garden-care-family-gardens-community-gardens/>

Good morning and welcome back.

By now the food gardens that your community members planted in OL 303 are 4 to 6 weeks old. Seeds have sprouted and it is time to begin looking at the care and maintenance of the beds.

This week we will begin addressing proper watering, weeding -- and fertilizing with locally available manures and compost. We will also discuss fencing, stakes and plant supports.

This information can be conveyed to your community either in a short workshop setting at the demonstration garden that you planted, or during your follow-up meetings during the course of a week at the homes of individual community members.

One of the main purposes for this assignment is for you to reconnect with the community in case you haven't seen them for a few weeks, and to encourage them for the efforts that they have made in their gardens. This is also an opportunity for you to begin a follow-up program. Each of these classes in this course can be the introduction to good follow-up exercises.

In week five of this course we will be looking at special problems that may have to do with terrain, soil, or water. In your visits this week with your community members begin the process of listening to concerns that they may voice - and also look carefully around at their garden site to see if you spot any special problems in preparation for week five.

Even if they don't have any special challenges, we need to be careful in using resources efficiently. Water shouldn't be wasted, and expensive chemical fertilizers and insecticides should be avoided unless absolutely necessary. They may strain your constituents' budget, and without proper training and equipment for handling harsh chemicals they can impact the health of community members.

If you find that the community is experiencing challenges that you feel chemical fertilizers and insecticides could solve -- contact an agricultural extension agent for their advice -- they may have alternate solutions that you didn't know about - or as they might be able to provide training in the proper handling of insecticides if required.

In week four we will look at different ways of making compost -- so this week will be more of an awareness building week about the importance of using compost and locally available manure. But you can request of the community members to begin collecting compostable materials and manure in preparation for the week four compost in class.

Please move ahead to the week one homework assignment.

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