

# DIG iN

SPRING 2024  
NEWSLETTER



FRIENDS OF  
**THE GARDENS**  
ON SPRING CREEK



# UPCOMING CALENDAR

If a class is sold out, make sure to join the waitlist!  
Spots often open up, email [GardensEducation@fcgov.com](mailto:GardensEducation@fcgov.com).

## April

- 9** Exclusive Corporate, Contributing, Sustaining and Leadership Member early access to Live at The Gardens Summer Concert Series tickets
- 10** Member early access to Live at The Gardens Summer Concert tickets
- 13** Backyard Ponds Series #3: Pond & Stream Chemical Characteristics
- 13** Watercolor Journaling Series: Tropical Flora
- 13** Beekeeping: Installing Packages
- 20** Hidden Garden Concertina Journal
- 20** Converting your Irrigation System: Spray to Drip
- 20** Forest Bathing
- 20** Waterwise Landscaping
- 27** Just Drip It!
- 27** Guess Who Came to Dinner – Recognizing Signs & Symptoms  
Plant Feeding Insects Leave Behind

## April

- 27** Backyard Ponds Series #4: Pond & Stream Biological Characteristics
- 29** Exclusive Contributing, Sustaining and Leadership Member early access to Plant Sale reservations
- 30** Member early access to Plant Sale reservations
- + *Read and Seed*
- + *Tai Chi in The Gardens*

## May

- 8** Gardens 20th Birthday Bash
- 11** Gardening For Insects—or Not
- 11** Rotate to Rotary
- 11** Composting 101
- 11** Embodied Climate Action Workshop: An Awakening to Climate Grief
- 18-19** Spring Plant Sale
- 25** Forest Bathing
- 30** ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN  
Member preview
- + *Read and Seed*
- + *Tai Chi in The Gardens*

## June

- 1** ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN  
Public Grand Opening
- 8** Notable Tree Bike Tour
- 8** Beekeeping: Post-Installation Hive Check-up
- 8** Waterwise and Native Plant Gardening
- 8** Watercolor Journaling Series: Cacti
- 15** Trees of the Gardens Tour
- 15** Embodied Climate Action Workshop: With Earth's Support
- 22** Exploring the Seasons with Yoga & Breathwork: Summer Solstice Workshop
- + *Read and Seed*
- + *Tai Chi in The Gardens*
- 23** Save the Date! Garden a'Fare

## August

- 23** Save the Date! Garden a'Fare



Friends of The Gardens on Spring Creek is the nonprofit partner of The Gardens on Spring Creek, a City of Fort Collins cultural services facility.





# OUR HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

## 2024 IS A YEAR FOR CELEBRATION WE ARE TURNING 20!

As a Member, you play a vital role in The Gardens' development, and we are forever grateful to the thousands of you who have been Members over the years for helping us get here. To celebrate, Friends of The Gardens is co-hosting two fun events in the month of May that you won't want to miss.

First, come celebrate with us on May 8 as we host a 20th Birthday Bash at The Gardens. There will be music, pizza, fun memories, special membership offers, and cake! This fun evening event will run from 5-7:30 p.m. and will be open to anyone in our community free of charge. Did I mention there will be cake???

Then, on May 30, join us from 5:30-8 p.m. for a very special Member Preview of ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN. ORIGAMI IN THE



GARDEN is a nationally-known traveling art exhibition based on the Japanese art of paper folding by Sante Fe artists Jennifer and Kevin Box. It will run at The Gardens from June 1 to November 3, and Members get to see it before anyone else!

Read on for more information on both events as well as information about the Member pre-sale for Live at The Gardens and early registration for the Spring Plant Sale. Plus, there's more great information on the new season of Member Mornings and what's happening in horticulture.

It's going to be a celebratory summer of fun in the sun at The Gardens and we look forward to seeing you there!

*Friends of The Gardens  
Board President*

**MARY ATCHISON**



THANK YOU TO OUR PROPAGATION PARTNERS





## WHY I GIVE

Khursheed Mama's journey with The Gardens on Spring Creek began during its inception, as part of the dedicated team that brought this oasis to life under the leadership of Jim Clark. "Those early days were marked by a small group of passionate gardeners," Khursheed said, "and the 'grand opening' felt like a hometown celebration."

Khursheed's motivation to contribute to The Gardens is rooted in her upbringing. Her mother, a devoted gardener, instilled in her a love of nature and gardens. Recognizing that natural spaces offer benefits beyond their beauty, Khursheed appreciates The Gardens' role in enhancing well-being.

"Having grown up in a country where educational opportunities were unavailable to many and food insecurity was broadly evident," Khursheed said, "I believe it is added value that The Gardens on Spring Creek helps in our local community to address both these issues."

Khursheed enjoys the ever-changing seasons at The Gardens: the diverse plants, the captivating vignettes they create, and the transformation that unfolds throughout the year. Early spring holds a special place in her heart, and she enjoys watching the Rock Garden green up while other areas awaken from their winter slumber.

Over the years, The Gardens has provided Khursheed with cherished experiences. She has delighted in showing the garden to visitors and sharing special moments with her husband and friends. Walking past the memory stones on the patio evokes nostalgia. Teaching and participating in classes or seeking cheer in the Butterfly House on a chilly winter day remain experiences close to her heart. The annual Plant Sale and reconnecting with friends at the Master Gardener booth during the event are also happy memories.

Khursheed looks forward to the years ahead at The Gardens on Spring Creek. "The gardens have evolved to be relevant and continue to meet the growing needs of our community while staying true to the vision of creating a regional botanical space," Khursheed said.

With a new director at the helm of The Gardens, Khursheed anticipates more incredible developments that will honor the legacy of those who have poured their hearts into this botanical wonderland. The Gardens on Spring Creek is not merely a garden; it's a place where nature, community, and memories converge. Khursheed gives to The Gardens because she believes in the vision it represents and the positive impact it has on the community. Join her in supporting this remarkable space where we cultivate not only beautiful gardens but also a stronger, more connected community.



## MEMBER MORNINGS

Member Mornings return this summer with a fresh set of behind-the-scenes looks at our gardens and horticultural initiatives. All Members are invited to join us from 8-10 a.m. in the cool and calm of the morning before guests and the heat arrive. Simply show proof of membership to enter.

Remember to renew your membership, download your digital card(s) if you haven't already, and...

### SAVE THE DATE!

#### **Thursday, June 20**

Andrew Scott and Ross Shrigley  
(Director of Plant Select):  
Plant Select Garden

#### **Friday, July 12**

Jess Clarke: Foothills Garden

#### **Friday, August 16**

Chelsea Mclean: Children's Garden

#### **Friday, September 13**

Bryan Fischer and Mitchell White: Site  
Inventory and APGA Accreditation Effort

# BOARD NEWS

## BOARD RESTRUCTURES & JOIN THE BOARD

Over the last year, Friends of The Gardens has restructured. Grant Calhoun was named our new Vice President; Peter Boyle, who also oversees board recruitment, took over as Secretary; and Deann Hite moved from the Fundraising Committee to Deputy Treasurer. We are also in the process of adding 3-4 new board members in 2024 and are actively planning orderly transitions for anticipated departures. Anyone with interest in joining Friends of The Gardens should send an email to [friendsgosc@gmail.com](mailto:friendsgosc@gmail.com).

## SAVE-THE-DATE FOR GARDEN A'FARE

Garden a'Fare will return on Friday, August 23! Join us for another memorable evening of music and food, a live art auction, complimentary beverages, and fun with your friends. Be on the lookout for further information including how you can vote to name this year's signature cocktail! Tickets are \$95 and Members receive 10% off. All proceeds benefit Friends of The Gardens on Spring Creek. P.S. we promise to try and avoid the remnants of a Pacific hurricane this year!

## ANNUAL APPEAL THANKS

Thank you to everyone who supported our annual appeal in 2023! With your generosity, we were able to raise more than \$50,000 that will be invested in Gardens' operations this coming year. Funds raised through our annual appeal support everything from horticultural and Gardens for All. Your support has a tremendous impact on everything we do. To learn more, visit [friendsgosc.org/donate](http://friendsgosc.org/donate).

## MANY GIFTING OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE

Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek is a registered 501c3 non-profit organization and can accept many different kinds of gifts like IRA disbursements, Donor Advised Funds, bequests in a will or estate plan, appreciated stock and securities, life insurance policies, and retirement accounts among others. If you want to learn more about how you can make a gift like this to The Gardens or The Friends, contact The Gardens' Development Officer, Michael Coleman, at [mcoleman@fcgov.com](mailto:mcoleman@fcgov.com).

# WHY I VOLUNTEER

Sonja Niva began volunteering at The Gardens on Spring Creek in the Summer of 2022, soon after she moved to Fort Collins from Northwest Indiana.

She first learned of The Gardens when her daughter Elena mentioned the Butterfly House. Given her history, Sonja knew she'd be an ideal fit for the team. Back in Michigan City, IN, she'd been a volunteer with The Friendship Gardens and had also run live monarch butterfly life cycle science projects as a bilingual educator with Dunebrook, Child Abuse Prevention.

Sonja volunteers at The Gardens for two main reasons. First, living in a condominium means she lacks space for her own large native flower garden. The Gardens serves as her "happy place," allowing her to enjoy the beauty of colorful blooms throughout the seasons. Second, she adores being a volunteer tour guide in the Butterfly House. This role not only enables her to continue learning but also gives her the opportunity to educate visitors about the diverse and fascinating array of butterflies housed there.

One of Sonja's most unique and memorable Gardens' volunteer experiences actually happened off the premise. While hiking in Wyoming, she unexpectedly crossed paths with another hiker whom she had guided through the Butterfly House on a less crowded day. This chance encounter led to a heartwarming exchange where the woman expressed how profoundly meaningful the visit had been, particularly for her visiting niece. As an educator, Sonja found immense satisfaction in knowing that this positive encounter had left a lasting impact on the woman and her niece.

Sonja acknowledges the magic of the The Gardens and the Butterfly House and appreciates the efforts of the dedicated staff and volunteers.





# SOMETHING EXCITING IS UNFOLDING AT THE GARDENS

JUNE 1 - NOVEMBER 3, 2024



*Hero's Horse*

# ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN

This summer, you're invited to explore an origami adventure at The Gardens on Spring Creek. From the humble beginnings of a single sheet of paper to 13 extraordinary large-scale metal sculptures, ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN will take you on an incredible visual journey and invite you to consider—what can you become?

ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN will be included with your free member admission. A dial-in-from-your-phone descriptive audio tour will also be available to visitors.

The ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN art exhibition is created by Santa Fe artists Jennifer and Kevin Box in collaboration with origami artists Tim Armijo, Te Jui Fu, Beth Johnson, Michael G. LaFosse and Robert J. Lang.



*White Bison*



*Rising Cranes*



## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Jennifer and Kevin Box created ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN in 2013. The first exhibition opened at the Santa Fe Botanical Garden in 2014, and the exhibition has been experienced by over 3 million visitors in gardens and museums throughout the United States ever since.

Kevin Box graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. In 2004 he was the youngest member elected to the National Sculptors' Guild and Southwest Art Magazine recognized Kevin as one of the top 21 artists under 31. Over the years he has perfected his unique approach and applied it to complex design collaborations with world-renowned origami masters.

Jennifer Box received her bachelor's and master's degrees from New York University in Dance

Education and Nonprofit Administration. During her years as a dancer in New York City she performed, choreographed, and directed multiple performing arts shows. Today Jennifer translates such experiences to co-direct with Kevin in the production of this traveling fine art show.

## YOUR MEMBER SNEAK PEEK!

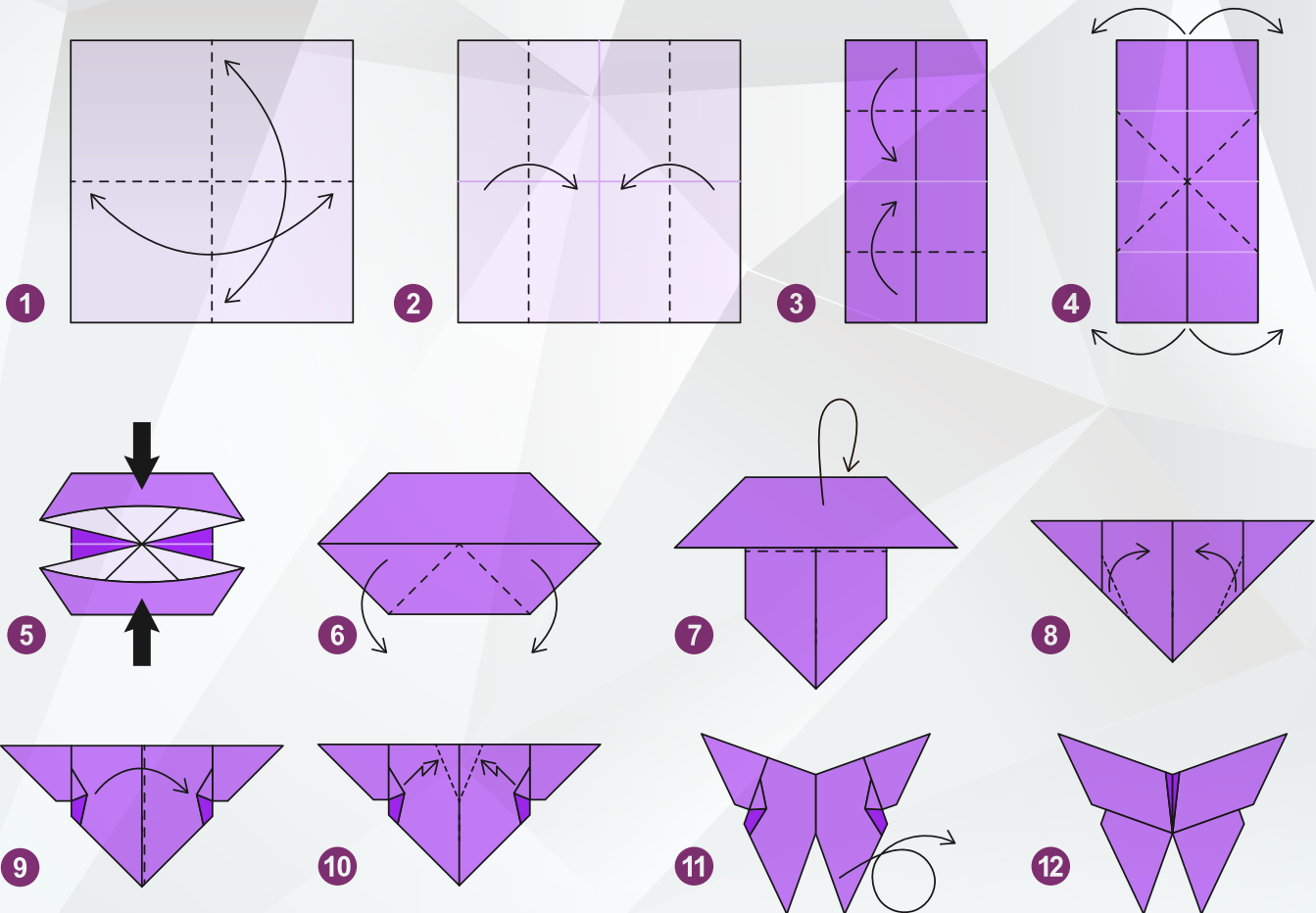
Members see it first! We can't wait for you to be inspired as you stroll through the grounds and discover the intricacies of this stunning exhibition. Jennifer and Kevin Box will be onsite! Be sure to mark your calendars for your:

**ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN  
MEMBER PREVIEW  
May 30, 5:30-8 p.m.**



# DO YOU ORIGAMI?

GRAB A SQUARE PIECE OF PAPER & FOLD!



## YOU'RE INVITED!



**The Gardens is turning 20! Join us for our Birthday Bash on May 8 from 5-7:30 p.m.**

As members, you have played a vital role in getting us to where we are today and we are so grateful for your support. Let's celebrate together and dream about the next 20 years!

This free, family-friendly event is open to the community. We'll have complimentary cake, a full cash bar, Panhandler's Pizza available for purchase and activities to enjoy.



Learn more and RSVP at [fcgov.com/gardens/birthday-bash](https://fcgov.com/gardens/birthday-bash).





# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Bryan Fischer  
Curator of Plant Collections and Horticulturist

It can be overwhelming to look at a plant's name when you're shopping. What does it all mean? Believe it or not, botanical Latin names weren't created to add complexity to gardening; they arose from a need! Perhaps the quickest way to understand this is to consider the plant referred to as "sage." I can think of a number of plants referenced by the common name, ranging from western big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) and culinary sage (*Salvia officinalis*), to ornamental garden sages, like meadow sage (*Salvia x*). To avoid confusion, botanists employ a name system devised over 300 years ago, consisting of two name parts that are a bit like a first name and a last name. Just as everyone in my family could appear on a roster under "Fischer," all pines fall into the genus *Pinus*. A second, more precise name, much like my first name "Bryan," is applied to each species in the group to distinguish them from one another. So, just like "Fischer Bryan," the name for the species Mugo pine is written as *Pinus mugo*. Since it's Latin, it is italicized for clarity. Only the genus is capitalized.

There's a logical origin to these names, too. Typically, the genus name is the Latin name for that plant (if it was present in ancient Rome, as is the case for the genus *Pinus*), a

person's Latinized name (often the person doing the classifying or someone they wanted to honor), or a Latin descriptor for a feature of that whole group of plants. The

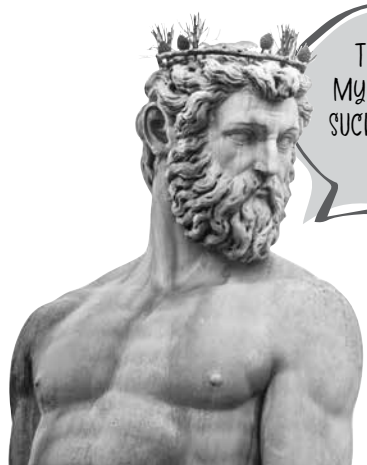
second name typically describes something about the plant's physical appearance, where it grows, or is another person's Latinized name. A quick trick to know which it might be is to check the name's ending: species-level names originating as the names of people typically end in "i" or "ii," pronounced "eye" or "ee-eye," respectively. These names are often worth an internet search; knowing a name's origin, like the fact that Western poison ivy's scientific name (*Toxicodendron rydbergii*) translates to Rydberg's (rydbergii, botanist involved with its scientific naming— poor guy!) toxic (*toxico*) tree (*dendron*, like dendrology), makes it much more memorable.

MY NAME IS TOXICODENDRON, BUT CALL ME IVY.



To see this naming practice in action, we invite you to The Gardens on Spring Creek, where we've done our best to present this information in the clearest, most concise manner possible. Our new plant identification tags consist only of either two or three lines. For clarity, the top is always the scientific name. The bottom is the common name and, in the middle, if the plant has one, is where either a common name or a trade name will appear. If a plant has a trade name, (officially trademarked), we use that instead, as that name is far more commonly used by the public.

By reducing the amount of text and increasing the text size on our signs, we've aimed to keep them more legible. We hope the simplicity encourages you to further investigate those that interest you most and inspires you to try your tongue at some Latin!



TALKING ABOUT MY GARDEN TAKES SUCH A LONG TIME. CARPE DIEM!

# Pro Tips for Plant Selection



Whether you're designing a new landscape, overhauling a tired yard, or just filling a few gaps in your flower beds, you want plants that will thrive. Step one is choosing the right plant for the right place. Once you've cleared that hurdle, how do you know if you're getting a high quality plant? To avoid choosing wrong, here are some tips to help you pick the best plants possible.

## Root Health

Enough fertilizer can make almost any plant look good, but without healthy roots, a perfect set of foliage and flowers can easily fail after planting. Don't be afraid to gently remove a plant from its pot to check its roots. There should be enough roots to hold the soil together when you remove it from the pot, and roots should be visible on the surface of the rootball. Watch out for rootbound plants that have been in a pot for too long with dense roots tightly wound around the rootball. While there are ways to resolve a rootbound condition, it's easiest to avoid these plants in the first place.

Another important factor in root health is color. Root color can vary between different species of plants, however healthy roots are generally white, while dead or dying roots are brown. You may need to gently brush a bit of dirt off the roots to get a good look.

**Pro Tip:** Learn to assess the health of a plant by its roots so you can take advantage of early-season plant sales when plants are still dormant. Even with no visible foliage, you can pick a winner by reading the roots!

## Locally Grown

Locally grown plants have real benefits beyond the feel-good aspect of spending locally. Locally grown plants are acclimated to our seasons. A tree shipped from California in April may already be leafed out, risking a damaging spring freeze in Colorado. However, a tree grown here on the Front Range is unlikely to have broken dormancy yet, making it much more resilient.

Locally grown plants are also adapted to the intensity of our sun and dry air. They have been exposed to our high-altitude environment during production and are not as prone to the leaf scorch we often see on plants shipped in from low-elevation regions with higher humidity and milder sunlight.

For an incredible selection of high quality locally grown plants, look no further than Fort Collins Nursery. We recently built a new growing facility in Ault, and in 2023 we produced over 82,000 trees, shrubs, and perennials for sale at our retail store in Fort Collins. Our team takes pride in ensuring only strong healthy plants leave our growing facility, and we're proud of every plant we grow!

## Expert Advice

If you're still unsure about picking a healthy plant, just ask! A local expert can help you select between multiple options. Trust me, they want you to succeed, and they've seen more than a few plants, so don't be shy about picking their brains!

**Fort Collins**  
**NURSERY**

**2121 E. Mulberry**  
**Fort Collins, CO 80524**  
**970-482-1984**

**www.FortCollinsNursery.com**



COMMUNITY

# SPRING

## PLANT SALE

## PLANT SALE PREVIEW! MAY 18-19

As always, our annual Plant Sale delivers tried-and-true favorites alongside choice, hard-to-find specialties. This year, keep your eyes peeled and space in the basket for:

- *Oenothera pallida*, a rare-in-cultivation, native evening primrose with white flowers that open over just a few minutes at dusk, attracting hummingbird moths
- *Scutellaria orientalis*, a superb, yellow flowering rock garden with scalloped leaf edges and yellow, tubular flowers provided to us by a local crevice gardener
- *Incarvillea olgae*, a shrubby hardy gloxinia, with its finely cut leaves and pink, tubular blooms on a 3' plant is perfect for larger spaces, like garden beds and borders
- *Agastache foeniculum*, prairie purple hyssop, has an anise scent and displays its showy blooms in early to midsummer as many garden perennials slow down



Gardeners interested in meadows and prairies should check out native grasses, including:

- *Eragrostis spectabilis* (purple lovegrass), with its diaphanous haze of rosy seedheads
- Blue Heaven® little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), a tight and upright blue-silver column to 2'

For larger spaces, we have a few offerings, too, like:

- the eccentric prickly pear relative cholla (*Cylindropuntia*) with glistening, white spines
- the rare Plant Select® *Heptacodium miconoides*, or seven-son-flower, a handsome, upright shrub sporting white blooms as many flowers fade in summer's heat.



This year, we are also offering native perennials in larger, #1 size pots thanks to an expanded partnership with Colorado State University. Just remember, these plants go fast and entry is by time slot, so get your free ticket sooner rather than later! Member early access to Plant Sale tickets begins on April 29-30.



## ARE YOU READY TO ROCK?

You heard it here first—this year's Live at The Gardens Concert Series is going to be the best yet! Get the full line-up at [fcgov.com/gardens/concerts](http://fcgov.com/gardens/concerts). As members, you'll have first access to purchasing tickets. Mark your calendars for these on-sale dates and times.

- **Tuesday April 9** at noon: Corporate, Contributing, Sustaining and Leadership Member early access
- **Wednesday, April 10** at noon: All Member early access
- **Friday, April 12** at noon: Public sale begins

**OPEN DAILY!**  
TICKETS REQUIRED

**Members receive free admission during normal business hours.**

The Gardens is open daily from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. during the growing season, with final entry at 4:30 p.m. For more information, please visit [fcgov.com/gardens/admissions](http://fcgov.com/gardens/admissions).

**CONTACT US**

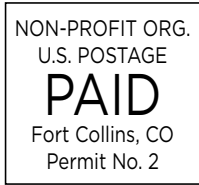
Phone: 970-416-2486  
Email: [gardens@fcgov.com](mailto:gardens@fcgov.com)  
Web: [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

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[@gardensonspringcreek](https://www.instagram.com/gardensonspringcreek)



2145 Centre Ave. Fort Collins CO 80526



**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

Planning your garden for the upcoming season and dreaming of an abundant harvest? Consider “planting it forward” to help fight hunger from the ground up by participating in our community-wide Plant it Forward initiative.

A partnership between The Gardens and Food Bank for Larimer County, we encourage all gardeners to share their bounty by donating fresh fruits and vegetables. Consider cultivating extra crops in your garden this year!

Each year, there is a growing demand for services at the Food Bank. Your

contributions will assist children, families, and seniors experiencing food insecurity in our community. Last year, Plant It Forward contributed more than 58,000 lbs of fresh produce!

Donations are accepted throughout the growing season. Drop off your produce at the location that works best for you. Remember—no donation is too small. Together, we can have a large and lasting impact on our community.

Gardeners, Let’s Plant it Forward!

**FOOD DROP LOCATIONS**

**Food Bank Office & Warehouse**

5706 Wright Dr, Loveland  
• Mon–Fri, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Fort Collins Fresh Food Share**

1301 Blue Spruce Dr, Fort Collins  
• Tues, Thurs, Fri & Sat, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
• Wed noon to 3 p.m.

**Loveland Fresh Food Share**

2600 N. Lincoln Ave, Loveland  
• Tues, Thurs, Fri & Sat, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
• Wed noon to 3 p.m.

**The Gardens on Spring Creek**

2145 Centre Ave, Fort Collins  
• Mon–Sun, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Want to learn more?  
Use this QR Code to  
watch a short video!