



## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The garden is a partnership between REMMSCO and the UNC FFORC team, which seeks to provide fresh, nutritious produce to the REMMSCO residents. We sat down with REMMSCO residents and staff to learn about their experiences working in the garden as part of this partnership. This is what they shared was most significant to them.



FFORC

Food · Fitness · Opportunity  
Research Collaborative

### PHYSICAL SPACE THAT PROMOTES SOCIAL BONDING

Gardening has facilitated socialization and collaboration amongst residents, aiding in the positive coping habits that support recovery

"It's therapeutic with the fellowship and the camaraderie with the other guys, you know. We get in there, working together, being surrounded by other clean and sober people, you know, and just doing something different that what I used to..."

### HOLISTIC HEALTH BENEFITS (MIND, BODY, SPIRIT)

Residents have benefitted holistically from gardening, most notably their mental health

"...[the garden's] really helped me be still and slow down some because we all have that racing mind and those thoughts can be intrusive and overwhelm you and cause anxiety, worry and fear..."

"I've learned to come out of my shell, because I have been in treatments before and didn't want to share, just kinda isolating myself, where I just stayed inside myself. Since I've been here, I've been able to open up and genuinely laugh and have some fun with the guys, cutting up, and it's a safe environment...it lifts my self-esteem. I feel part of...as opposed to being an outsider."



## LEARNING NEW SKILLS & EXPERIENCES

"I like it personally because it gets me out of my head. It's something I'm learning, I'm learning a lot from Mr. Dave out there. He has a lot of knowledge. It helps with meditation."

"I think there's more awareness of nutrition need. Guys will have never had had something. And we talk to them usually in the spring, what do you like, and we try to incorporate that into the...[garden]. That's one of the reasons we do the raspberries and the figs and the apples, can we grow fruit? Well, yes we can. Trying to find things that they are interested in, that will peak their interest so that they will learn new stuff"

The REMMSCO residents overwhelmingly mentioned how the garden has aided in their recovery journey. It functions as an environmental facilitator that connects residents, an avenue that makes them more comfortable with the group. The garden has also offered the opportunity for residents to connect with the earth and soil to support wellness, learn new skills, remind them of childhood memories, in addition to providing healthy foods to cook and prepare for meals to share together.

## ACCESS TO HEALTHY PRODUCE

It's not a very big garden, but it's still a project that got, something that we have done, we nurtured, we reap the benefits from it, you know. All the way around from the nutritional value to the mental value to the emotional value. And it's a good thing. It brings us together.

## INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTIONS

"...we [my family] had a huge garden. The family would all get together, and it kinda reminds me of this right now. This is my family, for now. So yeah, it's good for us to get out there. Just share time together. We laugh and joke when we are out there, and...bond"



## DEVELOPMENT OF ALTRUISM & COMMUNITY AWARENESS

"I'm a really deep person and to me it all started in a garden and that was put here for us. I feel like it's a part of our duty and a part of who we are to take care of the earth and plants. So that does a lot for me..."

