



**COMMUNITY
HEALTH TRUST**
of Pajaro Valley

PRESS RELEASE

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The Community Health Trust Receives Federal Funding to Expand Community Gardens and Address Food Insecurity in Watsonville

[City of Watsonville and Master Gardeners to partner with Community Health Trust]

[Watsonville, CA, July 26, 2023] The Community Health Trust of Pajaro Valley (CHT) is proud to announce that it has received a \$341,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) [Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production](#) (UAIP) competitive grants program to build three new gardens in Watsonville over the next two years.

CHT is working closely with the [City of Watsonville](#) and Monterey Bay Master Gardeners to bring fresh produce to Watsonville residents through the expansion of its [Community Gardens](#) program. The sites for the three new community gardens are all on City-owned property and in census tracts with high rates of poverty and food insecurity.

"This funding comes in at a great time to continue to nurture growth and wellness in our community," said Tamara Vides, Assistant City Manager. "We are delighted to support and partner with the Community Health Trust in this effort."

Through the UAIP program, the USDA is investing \$7.4 million in 25 grants in 16 states and territories that support urban agriculture and innovative production. Funding limits only allowed USDA to select the top scoring 10% of the applications reviewed. This year, USDA received more than 300 applications. For more information about the UAIP grant awards, visit [Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grants](#).

The Watsonville Community Gardens project builds on CHT's seven years of experience with community gardens and 25-year history of supporting an underserved community. Since 2020, in partnership with the City of Watsonville, CHT has managed the Carey-Davis Community Garden. The Watsonville Community Gardens project will use this successful model to expand community gardens on City-owned property to increase access to healthy, fresh foods, as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with food transportation.

The Watsonville Community Gardens project will provide communal space for Watsonville residents who are at greatest risk of food insecurity to grow their own produce, thus increasing



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their access to fresh food. With funding from USDA, CHT will more than double the number of sites in its community gardens program, which will relieve food insecurity for 78 households.

About Community Health Trust of Pajaro Valley: Founded in 1998 and serving a tri county area, the Community Health Trust is recognized for its leadership as a convener in the South Santa Cruz County area. CHT is motivated to foster an equitable Pajaro Valley with health, wellness and a full quality of life for all through access to resources, activities, and choices that help prevent illness and improve quality of life.

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