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Congresswoman Matsui Introduces Resolution to Designate August as “Community Gardening Awareness Month”

Recognizing Power of Community Gardens In Providing for Families, Cities Across America

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-05) reintroduced House Resolution 454 that will distinguish August of each year as Community Gardening Awareness Month, starting in 2012. This commemorative resolution will serve to recognize the increasing participation of Americans of all ages in their local community gardens and the health and social benefits that come as a result of producing more nutritious food in cities across the country.

“Recognizing August as Community Gardening Awareness Month will help bring attention to the growing trend of community gardens and what they can provide America’s families as well as supporting those who want to take part in feeding their families and their communities,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “Since first introducing this bill in 2009, I have continued to see firsthand the benefits of community gardens, such as the one in the Tahoe Park neighborhood of my hometown of Sacramento. Community gardens have a positive effect on our families, our communities and our health.”

Congresswoman Matsui understands the roles community gardens can play in the lives of American families, helping them to shrink their monthly grocery bills, introducing produce and more nutritious foods into their children’s diets, and creating a connection between our communities and the food people feed their families. The American Community Gardening Association's recent community garden survey has seen a 125-150% growth in community gardens since 1992. It is expected that more and more Americans will take-up community gardening in the coming years, with activity peaking in August of each year.

“Community gardens are on the rise across the nation and in Sacramento; in part because of the economy, but also because people want to know where and how their food was grown and that it was grown organically,” said Bill Maynard, Vice President of the American Community Gardening Association and Community Garden Program Coordinator for the City of Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation. “Community gardening beautifies neighborhoods, builds friendships, creates community and also increases access to fresh local produce. Community Garden Awareness Month will help bring attention to a national movement.”

In the last two weeks alone, two new community gardens have opened in Sacramento and there is a growing interest for more. On October 20th the garden at Valley Hi Park opened, and the garden at Camellia opened October 29th.

The Community Gardening Awareness Month Resolution would establish Congressional support for the goals and ideals of National Community Gardening Awareness Month, including:

- Raising awareness about the importance of community gardens and urban agriculture;
- Improving access to public land for the creation of sustainable food projects;
- Encouraging further growth of community gardens and other opportunities that increase food self-reliance, improve fitness, contribute to a cleaner environment, and enhance community development; and
- Supporting cooperative efforts among federal, state, and local governments and nonprofit organizations to promote the development and expansion of community gardens and to increase their accessibility to disadvantaged population groups.

The resolution was introduced with the support of Representatives Earl Blumenauer (OR-03), Donna Christensen (VI-AL), John Conyers (MI-14), Bob Filner (CA-51), Raul Grijalva (AZ-07), Marcy Kaptur (OH-09), Barbara Lee (CA-09), Jim McGovern (MA-03), Jim Moran (VA-08), Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC-AL), Gregorio Sablan (MP-AL) and Jose Serrano (NY-16).

A copy of the resolution is available [here](#) .

For more information about community gardens in the Sacramento region, click [here](#) .

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