



Community Garden Mini Grant Program - Spring Application

This mini grant opportunity is offered by United Way of Central Iowa, which has set a goal to improve the health of our community. One of the strategies to achieve this is by increasing the availability and accessibility of healthy foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables. United Way of Central Iowa will act as the administrator and funder of the grant process.

Eligibility

Applicants for the mini grants must be located in Polk, Dallas, or Warren County and serve the community as a nonprofit organization, school or government entity. For purposes of this funding, a **community garden** is defined as an area of land managed and maintained by a group of individuals to grow and harvest food crops for non-retail, personal or group use, consumption or donation. Community gardens may be divided into separate plots for cultivation by one or more individuals or may be farmed collectively by members of the group and may include common areas maintained and used by group members. For purposes of this funding, the garden cannot be used for retail or job training programs and cannot be promoted as a corporate giving garden.

New and existing community gardens are eligible to apply. Priority will be given to gardens that serve communities with limited access to healthy foods, such as high-poverty or food desert neighborhoods. The award amount will take into consideration the size of the garden, the need it serves, and the resources required to support its work. Please note that we cannot guarantee the full amount requested.

Guidelines

- Must be a community garden located in Polk, Dallas or Warren County.
- Funding may be used for a new or existing garden.
- Funding will be allocated according to garden size, the demonstrated need in the budget, and availability based on funding. Historically, the maximum funding amount has varied between \$500 - \$1,500, depending on several criteria.
- Must serve the community as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, school, or government entity.
- Allowable expenses include:

○ Seeds	○ Vertical garden supplies
○ Plants	○ Fencing
○ Irrigation supplies	○ Raised garden bed supplies
○ Signage	○ Trellis materials
○ Water hydrant meter fees	○ Greenhouse kits
○ Harvest tools and packing supplies/materials	○ Community education events and materials
○ Hoop house supplies	○ Compost and compost delivery
○ Other necessary items related to the infrastructure of the garden	○ Water retention systems (barrels and elevated platforms for containers)

- Funding will be awarded in the form of a one-time check payment upon receipt of a signed contract.
- Awardees will be required to report food production or estimations either on a monthly or end-of-season basis by pounds or count.
- Eligible funding will be released to awardees upon receipt of a signed contract no later than March 20th.

Application Process: To apply, please complete the application through the [UWCI Foundant grant management system](#) using the **access code:** garden2026 and submit it **by Friday, December 19, 2025**.

If you have any questions regarding the grant submission process, please refer to the Informational and Technical Assistance recording available at www.unitedwaydm.org/gardens-rfp.

Contact Info:

Eligibility, Foundation Support, or Award Questions: Please contact **Diana Pawnell, Community Impact Manager**, at diana.pawnell@unitedwaydm.org or **John Soener, Community Investment Manager**, at john.soener@unitedwaydm.org.