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ACTION SHEET: ORGANIZING A WORKSHOP ON THE SFG METHOD **Gardening Toolkit**

The Square Foot Gardening (SFG) method offers a simple system that can be implemented in just about any home, even those with extremely limited access to green space. This Action Sheet focuses on how to organize a workshop on the SFG method for members of your community. Sharing this knowledge can teach others to grow their own local, fresh, nutritious, organic food, demonstrate to them the connection between health and food, and increase their self-sustainability.

Scheduling the Workshop

Select the best day and time for your group, possibly on the weekend. Plan for about a one-hour workshop and seek to have it facilitated by a local individual, ideally a SFG Certified Instructor (CI), or organization representative familiar with the method. Share that the purpose of the workshop is to learn how to build a Square Foot Garden and grow fresh, nutrient dense food with “no work, no weeds, and no worry.”

Conducting the Workshop

In order to give them a good overview of the SFG Method, participants should be shown [this 1-minute video](#). In addition, share any of the [official SFGF videos](#). The workshop should include the building of a 4-foot by 4-foot garden as a model. Once participants have the necessary knowledge and materials, they may build their gardens at their homes, by utilizing their knowledge gained through the workshop, and also through the use of PPC’s Info Sheet: The Square Foot Gardening Method (created in conjunction with the SFGF).

Seek Materials from Local Resources

At least 2 months in advance of the workshop, figure out what materials you will purchase. If possible, source materials from family-owned and run garden centers. Creative construction of a SFG box is also encouraged by reusing, recycling, and repurposing available free materials such as suitable discarded lumber, an old book case or bed frame, even stone, brick or rocks. Consider asking for support from building contractors, pediatricians, hospitals, and community groups like Kiwanis or Knights of Columbus, who support health & wellness programs for youth, veterans, elderly and inner city initiatives. Another option is to raise funds to purchase Square Foot gardening materials from the Square Foot Gardening Foundation’s [approved vendor](#). Your gardening box must have a grid to be a Square Foot Garden.

Estimated Cost of the Materials for the Workshop

The total cost for a do-it-yourself 4’ x 4’ by 6” deep gardening box frame complete with Mel’s Mix (8 cu. feet) can come to just under \$200. This cost may be reduced if you’re able to acquire donated resources from a community partner, supporter, or business. If you’d like to learn more, take [SFGF’s online course](#). For \$29.95 you can learn SFG with video tutorials and go at your own pace.



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Garden Box Frame

The cost of the materials for a do-it-yourself 4' x 4' by 6" deep gardening box frame can come to less than \$20 depending on your choice of materials, access to materials, fundraising efforts (if applicable), and other factors. The building instructions in the SFG book will guide you through the recommended method of construction and insure that all aspects of the SFG method are met (e.g. frame, weed cloth, grid, etc.). Refer to the [3rd Edition SFG Book](#).

Soil

If you use the Mel's Mix recipe (described in the book), the cost of the soil will be your highest expense at approximately \$150. This investment is a one-time commitment and Mel's Mix will last 7-10 years with added compost. You will find that veggies, fruits, herbs and flowers will thrive in this soil mix. Eight (8) cu. feet total will be needed to fill the bed, 2 cu. feet by volume of each of the key 3 ingredients. Use the [handy calculator](#) to find the volume of Mel's Mix you will need. You will need to source your ingredients, or contact a local SFG CI for guidance & support. You can find local help on the SFGF official Forum found [here](#). Peat moss or coco coir, and a variety of composts can be found easily. It is best to source at least 5 types of compost. Coarse vermiculite sometimes can only be found in small bags or not at all in the big box stores or smaller garden centers, but can be purchased and delivered to your door through [ULINE](#) or [GreenHouse Mega Store](#).

Plan and Plant, Harvest and Plant Again, and Again

Learn about cold and warm weather crops. Select what you will plant according to the weather and season in your area at the time of your workshop. Then plant according to the seed spacing and how the plant grows 1 - 4 - 9 - 16 seeds or plant starts (small plants in plastic cell packs commonly found at home and garden centers) and in each square according to your garden placement. Almost everything you can grow in a conventional row garden can be planted in a SFG. SFG teaches crop rotation and sustainability by harvesting one square at a time, replenishing the square with compost and planting again and again. [Use the planting chart](#). Join SFGF's [official Forum](#) or find a [Certified Instructor](#) for suggested resources on planning/planting. Seek and share donations of organic, non-GMO, heirloom seeds and starts from your local seed companies, seed libraries, farmers, and farmer markets.

PPC would like to thank the Square Foot Gardening Foundation for their collaboration on developing the content of this document. The SFG Foundation teaches self-sustainability and self-reliance through gardening via the SFG method.



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