Community, from page 3

dens, giving advice, sharing gardening experiences, and they look forward to seeing one another again in the spring," Rincy says. "But socialization is casual. We had a monster vegetable contest, but few participants. And we tried a community garden dinner, but there wasn't much interest. They like the situation just as it

While socializing may be slim, social consciousness seems to be high among these gardeners. The parks department and the gardeners work with the Oakland County Food Bank, donating all extra produce to needy citizens.

In Troy, the community gardens are

so popular, the parks department had to turn some people away last year. To avoid a reoccurrence this year, says Carla Vaughan of the Troy Dept, of Parks and Recreation, more land is being plowed.

The gardens, located on the former Coughlin Farm, located at Beech Road and South Boulevard, offers 20' x 30' plots which are open to residents only.

Some people go to a lot of trouble, putting fences around their own little patch of land, and installing little tool sheds and benches," Vaughan says. "There are some flowers, but the empha-sis is on vegetables."

Similar to West Bloomfield, the Troy gardeners' extra vegetables are donated to a senior citizens center.

Gardeners in Southfield grow some pretty fancy produce, such as white toma-toes, chocolate peppers, and Yellow Gold Potatoes. It's fun, and a challenge, but they also get the opportunity to show off their accomplishments at the Southfield Autumnfest, held annually the second week in September. There are prizes, but those are incidental to having fellow citizens recognize your horticultural prowess.

Plots here are available to citizens of Southfield who are 50-years-old and up, says John Webb, who supervises the 100+ gardens on Evergreen, between Ten Mile and Eleven Mile Roads.

"Some gardeners have been in the same plot for 20 years or longer," he says.

The gardens have five compost bins, which gardeners are required to put their garden waste in, and the compost is distributed as it becomes ready. These gardens are also fenced in to protect tender veggies from raccoons, pheasants, rabbits, and other small game.

"Our gardeners have a wonderful time," says Sue Wagner, of the Livonia Dept. of Parks and Recreation, "There are no age restrictions, so we have seniors and families with small children mingling and exchanging advice in the 250 plots. There are no fences to its a very informal, family atmosphere."





