



## **Our Mission: Reviving the “Victory Garden” for a New Generation!**

The Black Forest Victory Garden Club was founded 7 years ago by Paul Smith and Emmy McAllister. We are a husband-and-wife team. Our members continue to dispel the myths that growing vegetables in Black Forest above 7000’ elevation is complicated, takes a lot of time and money, requires a greenhouse and is doomed to fail anyway because of hail!

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So what IS a Victory Garden???? Well, back in World War II -- not only were many food staples like coffee, butter, eggs, meat and sugar in short supply and rationed, but fresh fruits and vegetables were in short supply too, due to the lack of men working on the farms and the lack of fuel to transport farm produce to markets. As a result, the government called upon ALL Americans to plant “Victory Gardens” to help keep Americans fed.

Working together, Americans everywhere rallied and mobilized and made the almost-unimaginable happen! They grew Victory Gardens in every nook and cranny, from rooftops of tall buildings to vacant lots and in back yards! And they ended up growing almost 40% of all the fruit and vegetables grown during those trying years!

Neighbors worked together and helped one another garden any way they could. They shared expertise, seeds, tools, labor and land. Often, neighbors bartered produce or formed food co-ops to share their seeds and crops. The Victory Garden movement was so successful, that in the city of Chicago, 90% of those who created Victory Gardens had never gardened before!

The missions of the Black Forest Victory Garden Club are 1) To revive the kind of passion for growing food that our ancestors had in those trying years; 2) To revive comradery, pride and “community” around growing what we eat; and 3) to provide education, so that gardeners can improve their gardening skills and their enjoyment of gardening! Our members also participate in many money-saving and time-saving group purchases.

Some of the most fun and exciting experiences our members have is when we share growing techniques and strategies that we have experimented with and found to work here, against the odds!

Over the course of each year, our members receive many e-mailed just-in-time info-sheets and how-to sheets! Paul and I ask that each member purchase a large 3-ring binder so they can store all this valuable gardening information in hard copy as well as digitally for future reference.

This year, 2021, we are focusing on self-reliant, sustainable and “survival” vegetable gardening, featuring 1) dependable crops that give us high yields for the space allotted and the time and resources invested; and 2) the kinds of vegetables that store extremely well for long periods of time without freezing, canning or drying – basically the kinds of vegetables that our ancestors grew long ago to keep them well-fed over the winter months! It’s amazing how many vegetables can be easily stored for many months once you know how!

Our club provides information applicable to most kinds of outdoor vegetable gardening, and training in many creative gardening strategies and techniques that dramatically shorten the learning curves of gardeners new to Black Forest! Two of these are “Winter Seed Sowing” and “Back to Eden Gardening”, both of which have proven to be so easy, inexpensive and productive here! Our members have created e-books on both of these.

“Winter Seed Sowing” is a *mind-boggling* way to grow our own vegetable seedlings – outdoors, during the winter and without any electricity or fuel of any kind! So easy, so inexpensive and so totally unbelievable!

“Back to Eden Gardening” is the ultimate in low maintenance gardening: No tilling, no fertilizing and almost no watering or weeding. For most of our club members, it produced amazing harvests the very first time they tried it! To see the free documentary film that started the whole world-wide Back-to-Eden movement, visit [www.BacktoEdenfilm.com](http://www.BacktoEdenfilm.com) and scroll down to the bottom of the page.

Paul and I also plan to provide detailed, step-by-step instructions on seed-saving this year, so that even those who are new to seed-saving can experience success their very first time! Some seeds -- like those for beans, peas and tomatoes, for example – are easy to save. Others take some planning ahead, and still others require some *strategic* planning!

Everyone is welcome to participate in our club, whether they live in Black Forest or not. Membership and meetings are free of charge. We used to meet about once a month, January through September, before the virus hit, and we plan to begin meeting again soon. Hopefully, by August, we will be able to enjoy our Open Gardens again! It’s so fun and inspiring to see what other gardeners have done!

The Black Forest Victory Garden Club is a project of the Black Forest chapter of the Weston A. Price Foundation, an international non-profit organization that provides education on how to use food to create health and on how to prevent and reverse medical conditions and wide-spread diseases of our time, including COVID-19. I am the Volunteer Chapter Leader of the Black Forest chapter. Best regards to all, Emmy McAllister