



# Cooper Sprouts Community Garden: Promoting Health, Wellness, and Community Camaraderie



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For the Cooper University Hospital Internal Medicine Residency Community Outreach Project

## Introduction

The Cooper Sprouts Community Garden is a local garden in Camden, NJ which operates with input from a number of stakeholders including community members, medical students, and physicians all with the common goal of continuing to rebuild and restore the local community and to continuously improve the health and well being of Camden residents.

## Problem Statement

The health and well being of Camden residents are negatively affected by the lack of availability of safe outdoor spaces and healthy food options, which ultimately are causing low activity/fitness level and development of poor nutritional habits.

## Community Need Assessment

### 1. Food Desert

Lack of healthy and inexpensive food options contributes to food insecurity and unhealthy eating habits among residents

### 2. Lack of Safe Outdoor Space

Causes decreased activity which causes decreased overall health and wellness

### 3. Community Cohesion

Camden residents often lack a sense of belonging and common vision

## Goals

To participate in and help maintain the Cooper Sprouts Community Garden by cleaning, weeding, and maintaining grow boxes as well as producing fresh fruits and vegetables to be distributed for free to the community, ultimately providing the community with a local resource of healthy food and promote a healthy, active lifestyle among Camden residents.



## Objectives

1. Achieve a participation rate of 100% among CUH Internal Medicine Residency Program in at least one Cooper Sprouts Community Garden Event by the end of the 2019-2020 academic year
2. Strengthen the relationship between Camden residents and CUH Internal Medicine residents by hosting more than 5 garden events with an average of 10 of more community members present at each garden event
3. Produce 50 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to provide to community members in need for free

## Results and Future Plans

Future plans for the community garden include sustained involvement from our IM residents that can foster better relationships with the community. Ideally this will translate into better health education and a greater sense of community for the resident of the city of Camden. The community garden could also be a potential gathering space to conduct cooking classes and healthy recipe exchanges, further promoting health, wellness and community.