

Dawn Davies examines a plant in the vegetable garden at the New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill. (Spectrum News 1/Meghan Parsons)

PRODUCE HARVEST

New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill ready for harvesting season

BY [MEGHAN PARSONS](#) | WORCESTER COUNTY

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BOYLSTON, Mass. - It's almost harvesting season at the New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill, which means more produce on hand to donate to the community.

Each week, they bring about 100 pounds of vegetables to the South Worcester Neighborhood Center.

"This year, oh I would say about 30 to 40 different things that we could potentially donate ranging from tomatoes and pepper, which are the most favorite, to onions, figs, strawberries," said Dawn Davies, who manages Tower Hill's vegetable garden.

Davies said they've been donating to local food pantries for more than 20 years. Just last year, they expanded their garden space to grow more produce to donate.

"When I was younger, we went through a period of food insecurity," Davies said. "The foods that were provided through the government or local food pantries are a lot of dry goods, not a lot of fresh produce"

Davies said fresh produce is sometimes hard to find in communities and it can be expensive to buy in the store, so these deliveries help get better, healthier foods in the hands of more people.

"In some downtown areas, they don't even have a lot of supermarkets to go to," Davies said. "They are usually at a distance, so every time I go drop off food the people come out with a big smile on their face and everyone is really excited to get the fresh produce"

Last year, Tower Hill donated more than 1,100 pounds of food. This year, even with challenges created by the drought, they've already donated about 700 pounds.

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