**Program Description \***

**Including treatment, approach, description of any interactive elements, and episodic descriptions (if the project is a series)**

**What**: ***Growing It Together***. An entertaining, enlightening and informative six-episode series that celebrates the people, plants, and pleasures of community gardening. Where food culture meets garden-to-table meets fertile soil.

**Why**: Some 35% of Americans, 63% of Los Angeles County and 44% of Orange County are renters. Many more don’t have enough room or sunlight to grow food. Community gardens offer both – for apartment, condo dwellers, and homeowners alike. Isolation and disconnection from nature can contribute to illness and depression. Gardening brings joy, togetherness, beautiful flowers, and delicious food into being. Growing food heals. Growing food with others heals even more. Join us as we share how growing friends and food in communities helps make our world a better place. ***Growing It Together*** makes it happen.

**When**: Filming can occur year-round, to spotlight cool and warm season crops. Ideal air dates: April – September, when gardening is on everyone’s mind.

**Who**: Hosted by [Christy Wilhelmi of Gardenerd](https://christywilhelmi.com/), with guests from community gardens, and other gardening experts.

**Where**: Community Gardens across Southern California – we’ll have plenty to choose from. There are over 120 community gardens in Los Angeles County alone!

**Episodes:** Each 30-minute episode takes place in a different community garden – with a spotlight on crops that grow best in each garden and reflect the diverse cultures and culinary traditions of the gardeners and the surrounding community.

Currently we’re centering each episode around a particular plant family, although that could change and become coupled with the name of each community garden with a focus on a plant family that grows well there and the people who grow them.

Each episode includes tour of a community garden, a short garden lesson, and interviews with members of that community garden (think America’s Test Kitchen format but outdoors).

**Episode ideas:**

**What’s a Brassica?** – explore vegetables in the Brassicaceae family – Broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, collards, kale, kohlrabi (the alien vegetable), turnips, and mustard greens. Did you know that all these plants were bred from the same mother plant? Yes! A wild cabbage started it all. From there, breeders developed plants that formed bigger flower buds (like broccoli and cauliflower), leafy greens (like kale), and spicy leaves (like mustards and Asian greens). Wow!

Learn how and when to grow your favorite cruciferous vegetables (named for the 4-petaled flowers they make, shaped like a cross). Meet the gardeners who grow them, and savor family recipes passed down from generation to generation.

Dive into the Heirloom Collards Project to learn more about the cultural and historical significance of collard greens to southern communities and descendants of formerly enslaved people. Get inspired to grow a rare variety in your own garden.

**Lettuce Entertain You** – first time gardeners will find lettuce easy to grow. And more experienced gardeners will learn that there’s so much more available than Romaine, Iceberg, and oak leaf varieties. How about Drunken Woman Looseleaf, or Forellenschluss lettuce? Bring the salad bowl to life with interesting and delicious varieties.

Learn how to start lettuce from seed both by direct sowing and indoors in seed trays. Learn how to thin seedlings so they grow abundantly.

Meet gardeners who don’t have room to grow at home. Hear their story, and how growing food in a community garden has elevated their lives.

**The Roots of it all –** Carrots, parsnips, beets, turnips, radishes make any meal heartier and more delicious. Carrots come in almost every color of the rainbow! Radishes are perfect crops for those with short attention spans, and turnips (the underdog of the root world) can be transformed by roasting them.

Learn how to grow root vegetables from seed, and how to separate seedlings when purchased from the nursery.

Explore a community garden where members are trying new foods and how others use these root veggies in traditional meals.

**The Fabulous Flavorful Alliums –** Onions, garlic, shallots, and green onions are the base of every meal. Nearly every culture uses these flavors in cooking, and in many cases, as health remedies. Green onions are quick and easy to grow, and can be grown as a semi-perennial crop. Onions, garlic, and shallots are perfect crops for new gardeners who have space for them because they need little tending throughout the season.

Learn how to plant these crops and how they function as pest control helpers in the garden.

Explore a community garden and the folks who grow these crops for their families. Hear growing tips from experts that help solve problems with onion-family crops.

**Top Notch Tubers –** potatoes are a staple food that we take for granted, but there’s more to potatoes than meets the eye. They are incredibly fun to grow, especially with small children. Harvesting is like digging for buried treasure! Potatoes can be grown in pots, small planters, and larger spaces. It’s the perfect small-space edible crop.

Learn how to grow potatoes from “seed potatoes” in containers or in the ground. Discover interesting varieties to grow in addition to russet or red potatoes.

Explore a community garden where gardeners are growing potatoes for themselves and others. They share their tricks for a successful growing season and how their family prepares them.

\*Additional episode ideas available upon request.

**What is the relevance to Southern California? \***

More than half of LA residents live in rental properties, where they can’t install a permanent garden of their own. Community gardens abound in Los Angeles and surrounding areas, giving folks a patch of land to call their own. These gardens are oases in the middle of a bustling concrete jungle.

**Project Timetable \***

Flexible. Since we can grow year-round in SoCal, we can focus on either cool- or warm/hot-season crops as needed. We estimate 3 shooting days, and approximately 3 to 4 weeks post-production per episode. For 6 episodes, we estimate a 4-month timeline for pre-, production, production and post.

**Business Plan \***

**Including the approach being taken to secure funding from underwriters**

We have a list of potential garden-related sponsors to approach for underwriting for the show. We hope to secure at least 2 major corporate sponsors with the option of product placement or smaller sponsorship opportunities for small / local companies. See below for list of potential sponsors.

**Identify key staff and talent \***

**Including resume information**

**Host/Executive Producer**: **Christy Wilhelmi** is founder of Gardenerd, the ultimate resource for garden nerds, where she publishes newsletters, her popular blog, and top-ranked podcasts. She also specializes in small-space, organic vegetable garden design and consulting. She holds regular organic gardening classes in the US via Zoom and in-person, and offers tips on her YouTube channel (with 51K+ subscribers) worldwide. Between 50-70 percent of her family’s produce comes from her garden of less than 300 square feet. Christy spent 20 years on the board of her local community garden in LA. She is author of Gardening for Geeks (Fox Chapel Publishing) and its updated version *High-Yield, Small Space Organic Gardening* (April 2025), Grow Your Own Mini Fruit Garden (Cool Springs Press) and Garden Variety: A Novel (William Morrow) which is set in a community garden in Los Angeles. @gardenerd1 on Instagram (47K+) and TikTok (16.7K).

**Producer: Steven Reich** is an Emmy Award winning writer and producer. He is a producer and director of Emmy nominated *City Walk*, *The California Coastal Trail* and Emmy Award winner *Lost LA* on KCET. Credits include: *Wolves: A Legend Returns to Yellowstone* and Emmy nominated *Avalanche: The White Death, Finding the Next Earth* and Emmy nominated *Alien Earths* for National Geographic, *Valley of the T-Rex* for Discovery, *The Liberty Bell* for Independence Hall in Philadelphia, *Killer Subs in Pearl Harbor* and *Secrets Beneath the Ice* for NOVA and *What will the Future be Like?* for NOVA scienceNOW, and the *Walking PSA* for the Office of the Surgeon General of the United States. He is a Communications Award Finalist of the Keck Futures Initiative sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences and winner of the Chris Award and the National Education Association Award for the Advancement of Learning Through Broadcasting. Reich serves on the Board of Directors of Ocean View Farms Community Garden.

**Proposed Budget \***

**Specifying month-by-month expenses according to the Project Timeline.**

See timeline above. Budget spreadsheet and month by month expenses available upon request. Estimating $80-90K per episode including all pre/post production elements, equipment rentals, marketing/publicity/press kit, donations to community gardens, location permits, etc.

**Examples of producer’s previous work \***

Christy’s YouTube videos:

<https://youtu.be/Pe_x_wBd3J4>

<https://youtu.be/yLvd7hRRhTM>

A guest segment on Hallmark Home & Family: <https://gardenerd.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Home_Family_ACT%209.mp4?_=1>

Steve’s Previous Work:

KCET’s City Walk segment (shot at Ocean View Farms featuring Christy) – writer, director, and producer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYj1pDfdykc&t=11s>

The Lost LA - Yosemite episode writer, co-director and producer - Local Emmy Winner

<https://www.pbssocal.org/shows/lost-la/episodes/yosemite>

Nova: Secrets Beneath the Ice – writer

<https://ca.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/nvfb-sci-secretsice/wgbh-nova-secrets-beneath-the-ice-full-length-broadcast/>

**Project history and prior submissions to distributors or production organizations \***

Christy came up with the idea 5 years ago, at the start of the pandemic. She shared it with Steve while standing in his plot at Ocean View Farms organic community garden. She developed the framework and episode breakdown, shared it with Steve, and he fine-tuned it for the proposal. At the time Steve was working on his own PBS show proposal, *Volunteers*, which was given a letter of intent from PBS SoCal in 2024. PBS is our choice for a home for *Growing It Together*. We have not submitted it anywhere else. PBS SoCal has right of first refusal.

**Proposed funding sources and relationship to producer and content**

Potential sponsors include:

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| \* Christy has a contact there |
| Armstrong Garden Centers |
| Bulldog Tools |
| Cool Springs Press (one of Christy’s publishers) |
| Down to Earth Fertilizer |
| Dr. Earth Fertilizer |
| Dramm\* |
| Farmer's Defense |
| Felco (pruners) |
| Gardener's Supply Co. |
| GrubTerra - for chickens |
| Haws Watering Cans |
| Hisea - boot company |
| Home Depot |
| Kellogg Garden Products \* |
| LA Community Garden Council  |
| Lowes - dropped their DEI initiatives, so probably not |
| Malibu Compost\* |
| Master Gardeners of Los Angeles - UCLA Extensions\* |
| Master Nursery Garden Centers \* |
| Mini Farm Box (friend) \* |
| Muckboot |
| Peaceful Valley Farm & Garden Supply |
| Seed Companies - see Trusted Links page on Gardenerd.com |
| Smart Pots - expressed interested in sponsoring on Instagram |
| Vego Gardens \* |

**Are you seeking national distribution or would like PBS SoCal to be your presenting station?**

We see future seasons branching out beyond Los Angeles and Southern California. The goal is to reach as many folks living in cities as possible to inspire the birth of new community gardens, and local participation in existing community gardens everywhere. We’d love PBS SoCal to be our presenting station with the potential to expand nationally.

**Indicate what you are specifically seeking from PBS SoCal | KCET.**

A letter of intent from PBS SoCal | KCET to air the show, any assistance with attracting underwriters (if needed), and future distribution (sponsorship to other PBS stations) if seasons expand beyond SoCal.

**Contact details for the person submitting the proposal for consideration, including their e-mail address**

Christy Wilhelmi – 310-773-4806 christy@gardenerd.com

**URL to submission**

https://gardenerd.com/services/television-growing-it-together/