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JUST THE FACTS

Community gardens in Jerusalem



• By MAYA CHOSHEN

A community garden is a park created and maintained for the use of the local community and its residents. Every community garden is based on its own unique model, typically shaped by the conditions, interests and character of the local community. Global research shows that a community garden increases residents' satisfaction with their neighborhood quality of life, promotes social interaction and fosters individuals' ties to their communities. A community garden provides the resident populations with a public recreational space, improves the neighborhood's appearance and reputation and raises the local property value. Furthermore, a community garden can serve as an environmental education center, con-

serve local biological diversity, animal life and traditional food plants (herbs, vegetables and local native flora) and protect open spaces within cities.

Jerusalem is a pioneer in the development of community gardening. The city has 33 community gardens maintained by local residents: 13 gardens are currently being set up, 18 more gardens continue to operate, and there are also two older, inactive gardens.

The Community Jerusalem Green Sites Forum, which is used for coordinating and pooling resources and know-how, was jointly organized by the municipality, the Jerusalem Foundation, the Environmental Protection Ministry, JDC-Eshel, the Jerusalem Association of Community Councils and Centers, the SPNI and Shomera for a Better Environment.

Community Gardens in Select Jerusalem Neighborhoods, 2010

