

# Barham, Brown, Taylor, Introduce Youth To New Life Skills With Inner City Gardening Project

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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ALTON - Community activist Abe Lee Barham, also the Miles Davis Festival chairman, has had a dream of establishing an inner city garden in Alton. Barham's dream has become a reality and the new program is underway sponsored by the Alton Housing Authority and Theodora Farms.

The new Inner City Gardening Project will be done on a Dooley lot in the Alton Housing Authority area. Barham said the Housing Authority agreed to let him use four youth, 13-15 years old to teach them about how to garden.

Lisa Brown and Faye Taylor are also working with Barham on the project. Barham said the four kids in the gardening program will be paid for their work.

"We have to stimulate that and we have to start now," he said. "We have a monthly Organic Garden Guide that goes month by month to use in the program."

**The mission of the Inner City Gardening Project is to teach children:**

Technique of gardening

How to maintain a garden

Harvesting a garden

Canning and preserving the vegetables

**Preparation tools are:**

Three garden cultivators

Five garden hoes

Bedding and seed plants

Adequate size lot to the garden

"We will be teaching the children the skills of gardening while also allowing a stimulus of \$10 per hour for a maximum of 10 hours a week," Barham said. "Sessions began the first week of May and go through the end of September. This will exclude rainy days required for the gardening season. We are projecting operating cost to be \$10,000.

"We plan to share vegetables with our senior residents which will be the location of the garden. The long-term goal is to build on the success of 2021 by introducing and engaging more children to the gardening culture."