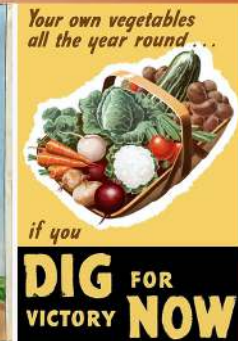
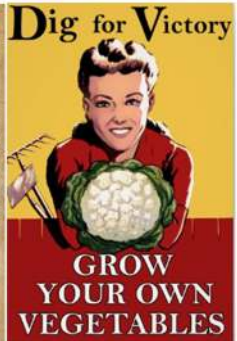




# CALIFORNIA COMPOST COALITION



## INTERNATIONAL COMPOST AWARENESS WEEK

MAY 3-9, 2020

### Digging on Victory Gardens

International Compost Awareness Week is the largest and most comprehensive outreach initiative of the composting industry. This year, it is being held May 3 – 9, where planting a victory garden will be momentous. The United States Composting Council’s Research and Education Foundation supports initiatives that enhance the stature and practices of the composting industry by supporting scientific research and educating practitioners and the public to advance environmentally. Although this year we cannot schedule group events, we are still able to celebrate what composting stands for in many different ways, especially when you have some victories after years of planting.

The pandemic created an unexpected break in our food chain and unpredicted success suddenly emerged from the ground up with home gardening. An escape to the grocery store is fraught with COVID-19 exposure and dwindling supplies, as we see that industrial agricultural is faltering before our eyes and we miss our congregation at the local farmers market to glean our cherished organic veggies. Gardens and compost use are flourishing on the home front with people eager to build their own food security, and to cultivate something beautiful and fruitful in times of great stress and uncertainty.

The victory garden self-sufficiency movement began during World War I and the Spanish flu, calling on Americans to grow food in whatever spaces they could. It continued into World War II where at one point, it was estimated that home, school, and community gardeners

produced close to 40 percent of the country’s fresh vegetables, from about 20 million gardens. If extrapolated for today, there could be 66 million victory gardens feeding 167 million people. That’s a lot of compost use!

As noted by George H. Thomas, *“localizing food production to not only reduce the energy used within the supply chain but to connect the consumer with the producer whether it is a neighbor or the local organic farmer at the farmers market. Whether it is generational gardening knowledge passed down through a family member through hands-on backyard ingenuity or the family farm that once was guided by the Farmers Almanac and now organized through GPS and data in the cloud, where the end goal is to produce an abundance of crops through efficient methods. Localizing food production provides opportunities to connect the consumer with the producer whether it is a neighbor with a surplus of vegetables for gifting or trade or the local organic farmer at the farmers market...and the local compost producer.”*

Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of ICAW this year, the goals remain strong to increase public awareness around the many benefits of compost use, especially making the connection to combating climate change and reducing methane emissions from landfills, while building healthy soils and growing nutritious food. Victory begins at home.

***“If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.” – Cicero***

|                                    | 1917  | 1943  | 2018  | 2020 Potential |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|
| US Population                      | 103.2 | 136.7 | 326.7 | 326.7          |
| Household Size                     | 4     | 3.5   | 2.53  | 2.53           |
| Households (Millions)              | 25.8  | 39    | 129.1 | 129.1          |
| Victory Gardens/Gardens (Millions) | 5     | 20    | 42    | 66             |
| Population with garden (Millions)  | 20    | 70    | 106   | 167            |
| % of Population with Garden        | 19%   | 15%   | 33%   | 51%            |

# SOIL LOVES COMPOST



IN YOUR

# VICTORY GARDEN

US COMPOSTING COUNCIL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPOST AWARENESS WEEK