



## Johnson County Government Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Johnson County Hosts WIC Community Garden Kickoff Event

JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS (May 8, 2013) – Through a grant from the Kansas Health Foundation and K-State Research and Extension, Johnson County is supporting a new community garden that will grow fresh produce for Kansas WIC (Women, Infants and Children) clients. The goal of the WIC Community Garden is to educate, empower and feed the clients in the Kansas WIC program, creating a healthier community. A kickoff event to celebrate the garden project is scheduled for Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. at the garden located at 11875 S. Sunset Drive, Olathe, KS 66061.

**In the event of inclement weather, the kickoff event will be re-scheduled to Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m. Please check the JCDHE website <http://jcdhe.jocogov.org> after 5 p.m. tomorrow (May 9<sup>th</sup>) for an update.**

WIC is a program that provides nutrition and health education, healthy food and other services to Kansas families who qualify. WIC's goal is to help keep pregnant and breastfeeding women, new moms, and kids under age 5 healthy. The addition of a community garden will further support the commitment of Johnson County Government to improving access to healthy foods in our community. "Not only will produce grown in the WIC Community Garden be distributed to clients, but the garden will be a teaching tool for clients to be empowered to grow their own food in the future," said Laura Drake, WIC program manager.

The current WIC program provides a stipend for families to shop for healthy, nutritious foods. Qualified nursing mothers and pregnant women receive \$10 per month for fruits and vegetables and children who qualify, receive \$6 per month.

The WIC Community Garden project is a collaboration between many Johnson County government program partners: its Facilities Department, including the Sustainability Program, Environmental Division, Health Education Division and WIC of the Health and Environment Department, Facilities Department, Access to Healthy Foods Coalition, and K-State Research and Extension. Success of this program will rely on attracting community volunteers and deepening relationships with community partners. Johnson County Government has been awarded this grant through the Kansas Community Gardens Project, a joint initiative of the Kansas Health Foundation and K-State Research and Extension.

Volunteers are welcome to participate in this exciting and beneficial community garden. They can sign up by contacting the volunteer coordinator at [gardencordinator@jocogov.org](mailto:gardencordinator@jocogov.org). For more information visit [www.jcdhe.jocogov.org/health/wic/garden](http://www.jcdhe.jocogov.org/health/wic/garden).

**Media Photo Opportunity** at 11:15 a.m. on Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at the WIC Community Garden, 11875 S. Sunset Drive, Olathe, KS

Planting ceremony scheduled with WIC clients and community volunteers.

**Weather permitting, please see below.**

## About Johnson County

Nestled in the southwestern quadrant of the Kansas City Metropolitan Region, Johnson County, Kansas is a community of choice with a current population of more than 544,000, making it the most populated of the 105 counties in Kansas, but traditionally having the lowest mill levy in the state. Johnson County offers a vibrant quality of life including nationally recognized schools, libraries and parks where businesses and families choose to locate and call their home. For more information visit the county's website at [www.jocogov.org](http://www.jocogov.org).

