

Today's weather
 HIGH: 81
LOW: 71
Sunrise: 6:08
Sunset: 8:58

THE GAZETTE

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\$2.50

Produce pantries installed at several organizations



Sara Crawford The Gazette

MEDINA - Fresh produce is making its way through Medina County as Hope Recovery Community sets up produce stands outside local organizations and nonprofits.

In 2024, Medina's Recovery Farm harvested about 4,000 pounds of produce, Hope Recovery Community Executive Director Stefanie Robinson said. All the produce goes to the community, whether distributed to local organizations like Feeding Medina County or via a produce pantry set up outside a local organization.

In the garden's most recent off-season, Robinson said there was a lot of chatter about the produce pantries Hope Recovery Community set up at its Medina location, 200 Highland Drive, and the Cleveland Clinic Medina Hospital. As the harvesting season approached, more organizations expressed an interest in installing a pantry at their location.

Since the initial conversations, Hope Recovery Community has built and installed wooden produce pantries at the Children's Center of Medina County, the Medina County Health Department and Cups Cafe.

Cups Cafe Executive Director Cindy Maxwell said the organization has a long-standing partnership with Hope Recovery Community. A produce pantry was installed at Cups Cafe, 126 N. Court St., a few weeks ago.

"We had it placed right next to our outside donation box so that anybody who needs food can get some nonperishables inside our donation box, but they would have some fresh vegetables to be able to choose from as well," Maxwell said.

As produce is harvested from the Recovery Farm's vegetable garden, Robinson said people from Hope Recovery Community will do a delivery route, filling up the farm truck with produce and dropping it off at produce pantries in the area.

At Cups Cafe, several of its volunteers are Hope Recovery Community members, Maxwell said. As the produce comes in, Maxwell has seen volunteers' pride and ownership over the work they've done.

Robinson echoed a similar experience, stating that she can sense their purpose, empowerment and confidence in the work they do with Hope Recovery Community and the Recovery Farm.

"It's just nice that there are people that might not have produce otherwise, (who) might not have these items otherwise, that are able to access them at these locations," Robinson said. "It's all because we're giving an opportunity to people in recovery."

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