

Opelika Grows is a multifaceted project begun in 2012 through a partnership with Opelika City Schools, Keep Opelika Beautiful, Inc., The Food Bank of East Alabama and several colleges at Auburn University. In the vision statement for **Opelika Grows** the stated goal is to address local needs of school reform, hunger relief and city beautification. There is correlation between hands-on learning with growing plants and finding solutions to needs within a community. Your visit to the Community Garden, located on Glenn Street near the Community Arts Center, will deepen your understanding of their vision

The fenced outdoor irrigated Community Garden is 10,000 square feet of plant growing space. The greenhouse in the same area is 30' by 90'. Inside the greenhouse you'll see bedding plants, both vegetable and ornamental. A fifty bucket Hydroponic System using drip irrigation is a must see. There will be members of the **Opelika Grows** team available to answer questions.

Residents and business of Opelika may lease space in the Community Garden. The areas of the community garden that are not leased each spring are planted by members of the **Opelika Grows** team. The produce harvested is donated to the Community Market and The Food Bank of East Alabama. In 2017, 7,000 pounds of food was donated to reduce food insecurity locally.

Students from all the schools within the Opelika School System can participate in **Opelika Grows** utilizing outside classroom space at their individual schools or at the Community Garden. Hands on learning can include plant identification, propagation, sustainability, and nutrition.

An onsite woodworking shop serves as an instructional location where some students from the Opelika Learning Center receive hands on instruction during weekly class times. Many of the students successfully acquire skills that can lead to better career choices.

Please notice the ornamental plantings that make this unique growing place so special. There are resident goats and chickens to see. You might just catch a glimpse of one of several "egg" plants pecking their way around the garden.