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**City of Duluth Parks and Recreation Division**

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**SUBJECT: "Edible Duluth" Promotes Community Gardening, Seeks Volunteers for Orchards**

**BY: Pakou Ly, Public Information Coordinator**

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## **"Edible Duluth" Promotes Community Gardening, Seeks Volunteers for Orchards**

[Duluth, MN] - In 2012, the City of Duluth Park Maintenance Division organized the planting of fruit trees in City parks. The trees, all apple and cherry, were planted to encourage “public edible landscaping” – a practice being done in many cities across the nation that provides public spaces for fruit and vegetable production. The fruit trees have also served as a catalyst for the development of a new City effort called Edible Duluth.

“Edible Duluth aims to promote, develop and create sustainable and maintained edible landscapes on public property,” explains Robert Dunsmore, Lead Worker, City of Duluth, Parks Maintenance. “The energy and excitement over edibles and community gardening is growing in Duluth. The City is proud to be a partner in promoting a healthier community.”

To date, the fruit trees are one of the significant accomplishments of Edible Duluth. From 2012 to the present, City Park Maintenance staff has been trained in integrated pest management to maintain and properly care for the orchards.

During the upcoming 2015 growing season, Edible Duluth is recruiting orchard “adopters” who will be tasked with monitoring, watering, mulching and caring for the trees, in partnership with the City and Park Maintenance. Additionally, as fruit production increases significantly over the next few years, neighborhood adopters will be asked to help coordinate harvest parties and other events ensure the fruit is utilized and consumed.

“An important part of Edible Duluth is how it will provide meaningful opportunities for citizen involvement,” says Cheryl Skafte, Volunteer Coordinator, City of Duluth, recalling another Edible Duluth project that was done in conjunction with the Duluth Public Library and the Northland Boys and Girls Club.

“Last summer, we used the seeds from the Duluth Public Library’s Seed Lending program to plant edible garden spaces in six of the circles located along Michigan Street,” says Skafte. “We received many compliments about how attractive the gardens were and how delicious the beans were! We look forward to supporting that garden project again this year.”

The fruit trees are located in 13 parks across Duluth – as far east as Brighton Beach and as far west as Chambers Grove. Each orchard contains between five to 17 trees. For a complete listing of tree locations, the public is invited to visit the Edible Duluth website at [www.duluthmn.gov/parks/volunteer/edible-duluth](http://www.duluthmn.gov/parks/volunteer/edible-duluth).

Edible Duluth is also working closely with the Duluth Community Garden Program (DCGP) and other community groups. “We’ve long hosted community garden plots on City property,” says Jahn Hibbs, Executive Director, DCGP. “The partnership with the City has helped those spaces thrive.”

For more information, please contact Cheryl Skafte at 218-730-4334 or [cskafte@duluthmn.gov](mailto:cskafte@duluthmn.gov). Learn more online at [www.duluthmn.gov/parks/volunteer/edible-duluth](http://www.duluthmn.gov/parks/volunteer/edible-duluth)

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