

GROWING PLACES

SHOLAN FARMS

Starting up a new community garden is no easy feat, but the strong have survived at the Growing Places portion of the Sholan Farms Community Garden.

Lorena, Lucia and Wendy have all returned for more, and Jessica and Rebecca, both new this year, are jointly facing the unique challenges of gardening within a working apple orchard. For example, early spring brought bees—two dozen hives of migrant bees, to be exact, trucked in for two weeks to pollinate the apple blossoms and ensure the orchard has a plentiful harvest this fall. Nervous about stings, our gardeners reached out to the orchard's President, Joanne DiNardo, for a little reassurance. Luckily, she informed us that bees make perfect gardening partners. While it's best for us to water and weed in the cool morning or evening hours of the day, bees are most active pollinating our crops in the mid-day heat. Timing aside, they're also pretty harmless, being far more interested in their job of pollinating than in bothering people.

With that temporary issue faced, our gardeners turned to the next, more enduring challenge of weeds. Since the garden is set in an open field between apples on the left and berries on the right, our gardeners found themselves contending with a healthy, vigorous crop of field grasses. Quickly coming together to get ahead of the problem, the ladies gathered to spread woodchips in the garden aisles, keeping the weeds clear of the beds and replacing a section of fencing found to be damaged.

With an admirable can-do attitude, some awesome teamwork and the key direction of their mentor, Luci, these ladies are well on their way to a successful season. Keep up the great work. We're impressed!

Photos, clockwise from top: Luci, Rebecca and Rebecca's daughter planting early spring crops; Jessica planting her first-ever lettuce, Lucia watering a lush garden in 2013

