

# Garden Committee Report

## January 2022

Last year I began this report with the following paragraph. As I read it anew, I find it just simply bears repeating, so here it is: *“Before I begin, please allow me to say this: We can build all the raised beds in the world, we can till the soil, we can fertilize, we can plant, we can water, BUT GOD makes the seed die unto itself and turns it into a plant. We can water, add more fertilizer, weed, BUT GOD makes it bloom, BUT GOD makes it fruit. We harvest, we deliver, do we take credit – no. GOD DID IT. Shiloh Field is a great example of what God created the world to be, a place where we do our part, and God does his part, that we may have plenty. The cooperation of God and man to do kingdom work – a little slice of heaven on earth – Shiloh Field.”* As we look back on what was 2021 at Shiloh Field, I simply must say, “God’s favorable hand has been upon us once again.”

How? It’s really pretty simple.

1. 2018 - 13,259 lbs. 2019 – 23,780.75 lbs. 2020 – 43,144 lbs. 2021 – 55,724.25 lbs. delivered. We’ve had another record year. And in the last three years we’ve produced almost as much as we did in the previous seven.
2. This past Saturday we were working on the beds in Tunnel No. 1, getting them ready for 2022. Dean and I were talking about volunteers and how blessed we have been with as many as we’ve had, and some of the quality ones we’ve been blessed with. John Oliver chimed in... “Not only that, but it’s the culture you’ve created out here. It’s upbeat, it’s friendly, it’s a place people want to come to.” That’s a real statement because John, who’d been a longtime volunteer at Shiloh Field, quit coming for about a year because he got tired of the negative culture that was out here at the time.

That’s success. ***People want to come to Shiloh Field and help their fellow man by growing ever increasing amounts of food do donate to those in need.*** If that’s not the favorable hand of God upon us, I don’t know what is. All too often I take my eyes off that fact and get stuck in the weeds of to-do lists, things-not-yet-done lists, and unachieved personal goals.

### 2021 - A Year in Review

January had started off pretty slow. We’d harvested pretty heavily the previous December trying to maximize 2020’s numbers. The winter was progressing fairly mildly, and I was beginning to think we’d avoid a heavy winter. Then came February – snowmageddon, they called it. Don’t know why, there wasn’t much snow. But it was bitterly cold. Power outages and frozen pipes were the headlines. About half the garden got killed. Most that survived did so, just barely, because we’d gotten that light covering of snow.

Then came March. For the previous 14 months we’d been hand watering our raised beds. A friend of mine, Bill Weeks owner of Manders Maintenance, came for a visit one Saturday and they installed our

overhead irrigation in Fields 1 and 2. What a godsend. We'd also gotten some seeding tools in and started using them in the nursery. This was the first spring for our Nursery, a test of what it could produce for us. Over 8,000 starts when April and May came, and what we'd grown in the nursery needed to be planted in the fields. June, July and August came and went. It was hot for sure, but not the hot it could have been. For a summer in Texas, it was a fairly mild one.

Fall came and the weather cooled. Lots of stuff to grow again, the garden took on a fresh face as all those beds of peppers and okra came out and were replaced with cabbage, lettuce, and greens.

We were rocking right along until the end of the year.

### 2021 BY THE NUMBERS – VOLUNTEER REPORT

January 01, 2020 to December 31, 2020		
MONTH	HOURS	# Vol.
JANUARY 2020	741.75	230
FEBRUARY 2020	943.25	288
MARCH 2020	742.75	217
APRIL 2020	836.50	256
MAY 2020	670.25	178
JUNE 2020	842.75	286
JULY 2020	852.25	344
AUGUST 2020	1048.75	395
SEPTEMBER 2020	1209.25	459
OCTOBER 2020	1609.25	559
NOVEMBER 2020	1161.75	483
DECEMBER 2020	701.0	250
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>11359.5</b>	<b>3945</b>

January 01, 2021 to December 31, 2021		
MONTH	HOURS	# Vol.
JANUARY 2021	1101.25	392
FEBRUARY 2021	682.0	239
MARCH 2021	1359.5	462
APRIL 2021	1154.5	409
MAY 2021	1048.5	309
JUNE 2021	1235.25	404
JULY 2021	1,205.0	475
AUGUST 2021	1156.0	536
SEPTEMBER 2021	1279.25	612
OCTOBER 2021	1614.0	633
NOVEMBER 2021	1145.5	486
DECEMBER 2021	909.5	422
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>13890.25</b>	<b>5379</b>

122%    136%

As you all will remember, we lost Cindy last year. She was the spearhead for the master gardeners. We miss her, and I believe we lost out on some volunteering as a result. Nancy is taking over that position with the program soon. Big shoes to fill Nancy! The sooner she gets started, the better.

For the year, we had a nice increase in volunteers. That's about an average of 130% of last year. Nice! I'll take a 30% increase in volunteerism any year I can get it. Hope 2022 does as well.

**2021 BY THE NUMBERS – HARVEST REPORT**

MONTH	HARVEST TOTALS	EGGS
JANUARY 2020	837.0	71
FEBRUARY 2020	2578.0	149
MARCH 2020	1808.5	237
APRIL 2020	860.5	230
MAY 2020	3244.5	222
JUNE 2020	6026.5	214
JULY 2020	8788.5	145
AUGUST 2020	7113.5	155
SEPTEMBER 2020	3862.5	148
OCTOBER 2020	3769.5	108
NOVEMBER 2020	2982.5	56
DECEMBER 2020	1272.5	57
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>43144.0</b>	<b>1792</b>

MONTH	HARVEST TOTALS	EGGS
JANUARY 2021	725.0	63
FEBRUARY 2021	513.5	66
MARCH 2021	1318.25	223
APRIL 2021	3264.75	259
MAY 2021	9240.75	281
JUNE 2021	9220.0	234
JULY 2021	10650.0	202
AUGUST 2021	7817.0	160
SEPTEMBER 2021	3500.5	224
OCTOBER 2021	3379.0	*****
NOVEMBER 2021	3383.0	*****
DECEMBER 2021	2712.5	211
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>55724.25</b>	<b>2450</b>

129%

137%

Well, there you have it. Another record year, which represented a 29% increase over last year. Not the 80% increase we had the previous year, but as the numbers go up, the percentages come down.

Incidentally, Jerry, the chicken dude has been having some health problems and having others help him with the chickens. The result is we didn't get two months of eggs reported. Still, we have a 37% increase over last year. Makes me wonder what he really produced. Assuming he had 200 dozen in October and November, that means he would have had a 60% increase. Nice!!!

Here's the breakdown by veg.

PRODUCE:	YTD 2020	YTD 2021
Asparagus	63.00	9.00
Basil	0.50	0.00
Beets	75.50	1,240.25
Bitter Melon	549.00	0.00
Blackberries	314.00	1,365.00
Bok Choy	224.50	330.50
Broccoli	123.50	211.25
Broccoli, Romanesco	0.00	21.50
Brussel Sprouts	0.00	16.00
Cabbage	1,192.50	642.50
Cabbage, Asian	2,107.50	1,882.50

Cabbage, Napa	101.00	433.50
Cauliflower	12.00	105.25
Cantaloupe	965.00	2,784.50
Carrots	1,312.50	3,145.25
Chard	385.50	583.00
Chives	4.00	0.00
Cilantro	0.50	0.00
Collard Greens	343.00	492.25
Corn	22.00	0.00
Cucumbers	6,255.50	0.00
Cucumbers, Green Dragon	0.00	2,036.00
Cucumbers, Mini Me	0.00	495.00
Egg Plant	2,510.00	1,400.00
Fennel	28.00	0.00
Garlic	12.00	0.00
Grapes	116.00	0.00
Green Beans	60.50	0.00
Kale	15.00	0.00
Leeks	0.00	24.00
Lettuce, Butterhead	953.50	629.50
Lettuce, Mix	410.00	596.00
Lettuce, Romaine	429.00	934.50
Long Green Beans	260.00	115.50
Mustard	662.00	577.50
Mustard, Florida Broadleaf	0.00	327.00
Mustard, Mizuna	0.00	716.50
Okra	16.00	2,550.50
Onions	2,723.00	0.00
Onions, Bunching	0.00	231.50
Onions, 1015	0.00	5,415.50
Onions, Texas Legend	0.00	4,976.50
Oregano	0.50	0.00
Parsley, Flat Leaf	0.50	0.00
Peaches	14.50	0.00
Pears	8.00	212.00
Peas, Sugar Snap	0.00	2.00
Peppers, Banana	999.50	1,714.50
Pepper, Bell	434.50	2,308.50
Pepper, Cayenne	18.50	0.00
Pepper, Chile	0.00	1,088.50
Pepper, Cubanelle	691.00	722.00
Pepper, Long Asian	296.00	464.50
Pepper, Habanero	179.00	0.00

Pepper, Jalapeno	256.00	626.50
Pepper, Pepperoncini	0.00	116.00
Pepper, Poblano	193.50	1,190.50
Peppers, Serrano	64.00	339.00
Pepper, Shishito	34.50	43.50
Potatoes, Irish	2,358.50	2,019.00
Potatoes, Red	2,200.00	1,765.00
Pumpkin	97.00	57.00
Radish, Daikon	1,097.00	0.00
Radish, French Breakfast	0.00	1,343.50
Radish, German Giant	0.00	467.50
Spinach	0.00	15.50
Squash, Butternut	910.50	295.00
Squash, Pumpkin	504.00	0.00
Squash, Yellow	3,893.00	1,063.00
Squash, Zucchini	2,736.00	810.50
Tomatoes	1,805.50	3,741.00
Turnips, Purple Top	1,231.00	10.50
Watermelon	875.50	1,021.50
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>43144.0</b>	<b>55724.25</b>

So, you ask me “What’s the big take away from the year.” Glad you asked, I’ve been thinking about that. Had we been able to grow the cucumbers and squash this year that we did in 2020, with the 30% increase we had garden wide, our final number would have been in the neighborhood of 70,000 lbs. “Why didn’t we?” We overhead watered this year and hand watered last year. Too much moisture led to too much powdery mildew. We’re going to have to get a handle on powdery mildew this year. This is one reason I’m designing the in-ground beds in Field 2 north (the 39 – 100’ beds) to be irrigated with both overhead and drip. The drip in the summer crops, overhead when cukes and squash aren’t there. That will help.

### General Comments

So now comes the end of the year. We had lots of lettuce, greens, cabbage, carrots, etc. in the pipeline. All was beginning to come to maturity, just in time to start sending lots of stuff to Lewisville and... old man winter showed up. Lows in the upper teens with no snow to cover our crops (like in February), killed everything. And with four subsequent similar fronts, I’m afraid the whole garden is at a total loss.

Practically overnight we went from this:



To this:



Our onion starts went from this:



To this:



We're holding out hope for the onions. If the tiny bulb didn't freeze, then it might leaf back out and survive. We're waiting a bit longer before we jump the gun and go buy onion sets from Dennis. Now if it'll just warm up a bit...

**Nursery:** We're beginning the seeding and restarting the garden. Was talking to Michael in the barn one day and he asked "What are these boxes of?" "Paperpots!" said I. "What are paperpots?" Oh boy! What's this evidence of? Been neglecting the garden committee meetings.

So, we're trying out paperpots this spring. Got romaine lettuce in a few right now. Salanova lettuce coming up next.

**Raised Beds:** Over the fall, as we've been planting, I've been trying to top off the beds with dyno dirt first. Now, as we clear out the dead stuff, we're trying to complete the task.

**Field Blocks:** We got the 25' beds all planted with onions (now mostly dead). We've only got two of the 100' beds built, as we've been concentrating on filling the raised beds now.

**Plantings:** I've managed to talk Dean out of planting potatoes in field 4 this year. The alternative is the sock garden, where we can keep a better eye on them. Attention and fertilizer this year. Fertigation through drip. Yeah, that's the ticket.

**Irrigation Plans:** As stated earlier, in Field 2 north I'm planning on installing both overhead and drip here. Been working hard on an actual irrigation plan, and putting together a parts list. Yesterday I did an inventory of what we already have vs. what is needed. We should easily be able to do it with our Rotary Grant.

**Tunnels 1 and 2:** We'd let them get too weedy this summer. As stated in earlier reports, they've been tarped for many weeks now. Yesterday we started rebuilding the beds. It's a process, it takes time, and labor. But many hands make light work.

**Communications Center:** Yeah, that's what I'll call it. What's that? Been thinking about building a cabinet on the back side of the weigh station canopy. I'd like to put the white board, the map, and any other communication tools in it. It'll be adjacent to the sign-in table where volunteers can be informed about the garden and the tasks to do. Got the plans in my head, material list on my computer, and a bid from Lowes. Now we need a nice couple of weekends for John and Finn to get it built.

### **2022 The Goal**

The goal for 2022 is 1) to get the Field 2 in-ground beds in so we can get the cukes, yellow squash and zucchini we should, 2) to continue to cultivate that "Shiloh Field culture" that John talked about, and 3) to grow the resulting 70,000 lbs. we'll be capable of.

### **Final Comments:**

Well, its January 2022. Kind of like the new year, it's time to start over. Practically everything is dead. Lots of work to do, projects to complete, places to go, people to see. Time to turn these brown fields green!

All in due time.

Doug