

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



NTEC Raised Vegetable Garden Project Underway Thanks to Generous Funding from Local Organizations

Niagara Falls, ON – June 22, 2009 – NTEC (Niagara Training & Employment Agency) is excited to expand its horticulture program this year by building raised vegetable plots and a watering system in their garden. This major upgrade is possible because of generous grants from United Way of St. Catharines and District (\$8,000) and the Niagara Community Foundation (\$4,000).

NTEC's 2,700 square foot garden has been used to grow vegetables for their food services program with surplus produce donated to Project S.H.A.R.E.'s food bank. By modifying the garden with raised beds and a watering system, more NTEC participants will take part in the preparation, planting, weeding and harvesting of the garden. Nine beds are under construction making approximately 1,000 square feet available in raised beds.

Gardening in raised beds offers several advantages including:

- making gardening easier and more enjoyable for the people we support
- providing participants with mobility issues access to the gardening program
- offering more controlled soil management, which accommodates a wider variety of vegetables
- soil in raised beds warms earlier in the spring and cools later in the fall, allowing for a longer growing season

Improving the garden is important because it gives NTEC program participants, regardless of physical limitations, the opportunity to participate in the garden program and be involved with the production of their own food. It encourages healthy eating by producing fresh, wholesome produce. NTEC participants also take pride in knowing that they are serving their community by donating vegetables they have grown to the local food bank.

While the existing garden has been adequate in the past, it will be much more accessible, efficient and bountiful with the modifications supported by the United Way of St. Catharines and District and the Niagara Community Foundation. Liz Palmieri, Executive Director of the Niagara Community Foundation says "This is a great project that will have multiple benefits, not only for the clients of NTEC but also for the community. What particularly appealed to the foundation was that the benefits will continue into the future and that we were able to leverage our grant with additional support from the United Way."

NTEC (Niagara Training & Employment Agency) is a non-profit organization that empowers people with special needs to participate more fully in community life. The agency's programs, including employment and life skills oriented programming, reach more than 180 individuals each year.

The NTEC Board of Trustees, program participants, and representatives of the United Way of St. Catharines and District, the Niagara Community Foundation and Project S.H.A.R.E., will celebrate the completion of the project on Thursday June 25 at 2:30 p.m. Members of the media are invited to attend. Please RSVP to Tori Buggeln at 905-384-3127 or tbuggeln@ntec-nss.com.

For further information, members of the media may contact:

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