SMART Goal Setting

The SMART acronym can help us remember the components of an effective goal:

**Specific:** The goal identifies a specific action or event that will take place.
**Measurable:** The goal and its benefits are be quantifiable.
**Achievable:** The goal is be attainable, given available resources.
**Realistic:** The goal is challenging, but also allows for the likelihood of success.
**Timely:** The goal defines the timeframe in which it will be accomplished.

Here are some additional tips that can help you set effective goals:

1. **Develop several goals, but not too many.**
   A list of five to seven items gives you several things to work on over a period of time.

2. **State goals as declarations of intention, not items on a wish list.**
   “We want to start a community Compost site” lacks power.
   “We will start a community compost site” is intentional and powerful.

3. **Attach a date to each goal. State what you intend to accomplish and by when.**
   A good list should include short-term and long-term goals.

   You may want a few goals for the current year, and some for two or three month intervals.

4. **Be specific.**
   “Outreach to the neighborhood” is too general; “tell five neighbors about the project before the end of the month” is better.

5. **Share your goals with someone who cares about your success.**
   Sharing your intentions with family members, friends, or a mentor will help ensure success.

6. **Write down your goals and put them where you will see them.**
   The more often you read your list, the more results you get.

7. **Review and revise your list**
   Experiment with different ways of stating your goals.

   Goal setting improves with practice, so play around with it.

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*Adapted from: How to Start a Community Garden (2017), Kairsten Nitsch, The Garden Works Project*

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