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Over 700 Trees Planted by Local Suburban Farming Group

Organization helps community care for and harvest trees for charity

Submitted by Ashley Hagin



Lamorinda residents prepare to harvest pears during a family day. Photo Siamack Sioshansi

pruning and spraying to save busy homeowners from having to become tree experts. The organization also harvests the excess fruit to donate to local food banks - in a typical day, volunteers visit four to five homes and harvest between 500 and 1,000 pounds of fruit.

Still, for those who want to learn how to care for their own trees, The Urban Farmers also offers pruning classes and workshops. "A few people can learn enough at a workshop to get out there and prune their trees," says Sioshansi. "Most others, including the most confident gardeners, don't feel comfortable pruning a tree. One of my friends said pruning is like swimming: You can't learn by talking about it."

To raise that comfort level, the organization is in the final stages of planning two orchards - 125 trees in Danville and 27 trees in Lafayette - for training purposes. "This way, homeowners who want to learn can come out and make as many cuts, under supervision, as they need until they feel they can swim to the other end, at home," Sioshansi says. The orchards will be planted in early February; families and individuals are invited to participate.

The Urban Farmers' group fruit tree purchase is now open and will run through Feb. 6. Visit www.theurbanfarmers.org or www.facebook.com/theurbanfarmers.org for more information about upcoming events.

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