



# GOD'S GARDEN

**W**OW! Real vegetables! I sometimes kinda took for granted growing and harvesting veggies during my twenty-five years on my farm. There were times I took this kinda for granted even made its way to the dinner table despite the exquisite tastes.

Since the walk began in early 2002, I've been starving for real vegetables. For those of us who have been privileged to eat from a garden, store bought food just ain't the same. There have been less than ten times in over 1000 walk days where I've eaten fresh food from a garden. Few gardeners are around any more, it seems.

One of those times was August 12, 2004 in Huron, South Dakota. I picked broccoli, cukes, zukes, yellow summer squash, green beans, beet greens, carrots, bell peppers, cabbage, and more—I can't remember. I didn't pick any okra, thank you very much. That night was a feast.

What was kinda special for twenty-five years became very special that August eve. Man, those veggies were good!

I harvested from GOD'S GARDEN. The Huron Baptist Church allowed this homeless person to sleep in their church building and pick and eat from their garden.

Ten years earlier they aptly named their garden. This name appeared during their first growing season after some things changed.

Homeless people were seen by the congregation picking from their garden. Understandable questions were raised like: Isn't a garden finite? Can't only so much be harvested? Will everyone be able to make salsa?

Through the urging of Pastor Mark, the homeless were allowed to continue picking and the garden became GOD'S GARDEN. Everyone had more than enough throughout the entire growing season.

How was that possible? Because it was GOD'S GARDEN—that's how!

From the Bible, Matthew 14:15-21 *And when it was evening, the disciples came to Him, saying, "The*



God's Garden in Huron, South Dakota.

*place is desolate, and the time is already past; so send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.'*

*But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat!"*

*And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish."*

*And He said, "Bring them here to Me."*

*And ordering the multitudes to recline on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food, and breaking the loaves He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave to the multitudes,*

*And they all ate, and were satisfied. And they picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve full baskets.*

*And there were about five thousand men who ate, aside from women and children.*

The Lord has blessed me with the ability to work with the soil and plants to produce bumper good tasting crops. After honing this gift of a "green thumb" for a quarter century I was privileged in 2001 to live at Meeting Grounds' Clairvaux Farm in Earleville, Maryland.

During that summer, numerous persons noticed how things growing at the farm had never looked so good. After accepting their thanks, I'd take them down to the watermelon patch, and tell them, "Yes, it's true I'd gotten the soil much more balanced nutritionally, and had tilled, planted, weeded, watered, and moved plant runners

to the best places for proper spacing. I'd loved the plants—babied them, prayed for them, and protected them. Yes, I'd worked hard and cared for the garden."

Then the real reason for the marked difference that summer was shared. "I had nothing to do with the little watermelon seeds that sprouted at the right time, rooted themselves, and sent up green leaves that grew into 10 to 20 foot long vines. I had nothing to do with the vines being loaded with luscious 20 to 25 pound fruits, each filled with more seeds for starting the miracle all over again next year. GOD did it!!"

It's such a miracle that seeds turn into fruits, or a human egg and sperm can turn into a baby being born nine months later, or the sun shines, the rain falls, the wind blows, fish swim, and so on...

Such is how it is in GOD'S GARDEN. When we decide to really pay attention, be thankful, and to truly have faith and believe in something more than ourselves, GOD'S GARDEN comes alive. Praise God for the opportunities to be part of life on Earth. May we all work at getting our priorities in better order.

Till the next time...

In Christ's love, **Don**

Miles to date: 11,742

Money picked up along road: \$771.06

Unsolicited money given by motorists: \$1,775.03

Of 986 nights: 385 nights homeless on streets

601 nights cared for by humanity



Mural at Meeting Ground, Clairvaux Farm