

Eaton Corporation is a multinational power management company that provides energy efficient solutions across electrical, aerospace, hydraulic, and vehicle markets. They have a branch located in Waukesha, Wisconsin that has been giving back to the community for years, through its “Garden of Eaton” project. Created and maintained by Eaton employees, the garden grows a couple thousand pounds of produce each year that is directly donated to the Food Pantry of Waukesha County. This project demonstrates how a business can positively impact its community by thinking beyond profit maximization and genuinely helping families in need. The Garden of Eaton is especially meaningful to me because my dad works for Eaton. He has earned the title of being a Project Manager and even though the garden was not one of his projects, I have been able to see the garden first hand and how greatly the company values helping out the community.

The Garden of Eaton began in 2016 when employee Dan Daley helped organize a community garden behind the Eaton facility. What started as a small employee teamwork activity quickly grew into a larger community service project. Employees from many departments volunteer their time to plant, maintain, and harvest a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. Every Wednesday and Friday during harvest season, employees gather produce and donate it to the Food Pantry of Waukesha County. Since 2020, the garden has produced more than 6,000 pounds of fresh produce for local families. According to Daley, the goal of the garden is not only to help provide food but also to allow employees to directly see the impact of their hard work on the community.

Obviously my personal connection to the company makes Eaton’s community involvement stand out to me, but the garden is truly an amazing passion project that has been positively making a change in Waukesha County. Not only do I know of the garden through my

dad but I hear about it more from my dad's coworker, Mike Brandl, who has tasked himself with the upkeep of the community garden. I recently became aware of the garden because my dad was telling me about how Mr. Brandl and his wife trailered their tractor to Eaton and then tilled up all of the dirt for this year's crops. This is an amazing example of how a small Eaton family has put so much effort into the Eaton garden purely to donate the proceeds to those in the community that are in need.

Seeing a company care about more than just business success shows me how corporations can positively influence the communities around them. It is incredible to watch a company encourage their employees to physically work together in order to produce healthy food, instead of simply donating money as a tax write off. Additionally, the Eaton Garden is providing fresh produce to many Waukesha County families who otherwise may not have access to it.

Overall, Eaton's Garden of Eaton project is a powerful example of a Wisconsin business acting as a force for good. Through donating thousands of pounds of organic produce to the Food Pantry of Waukesha County, Eaton employees help families in need while also building stronger connections to their community. The project demonstrates how businesses can create positive change through teamwork, service, and compassion. Because of my family tie to Eaton, this story is especially inspiring to me and demonstrates the importance of businesses giving back to their communities.

Works Cited:

Kostolni, Isabella. (2023. Aug 31) *Waukesha's Own Garden of Eaton: Power Management*

Company's Employees Grow Produce for Food Pantry of Waukesha County. The
Freeman,

https://www.gmtoday.com/the_freeman/news/waukesha-s-own-garden-of-eaton/article_6e444196-5e86-5065-8e6b-3e52b3533e87.html