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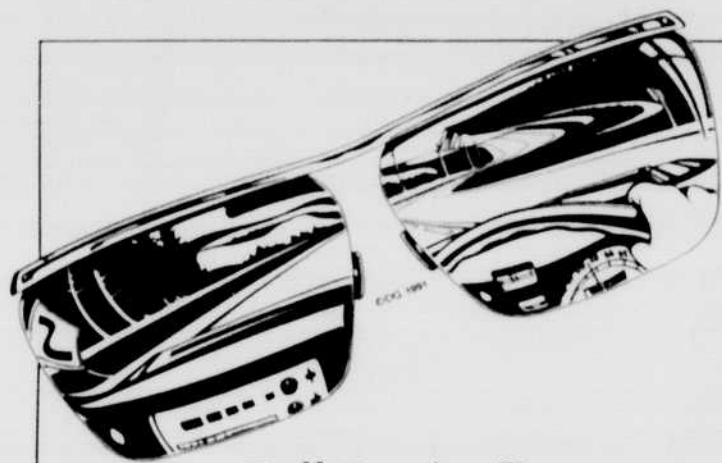
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Photo by Jeff Paslay

Chris Harding tends to his plot of land at the River House Community Gardens, one of several local sites with garden areas for rent.

## Grow it organically by renting a garden plot

By June Williams  
Emerald Contributor

Having a garden is unthinkable for many students. The cramped housing students generally can afford leaves little room for even a flowerpot.

However, Eugene Parks and Recreation has a solution for all apartment dwellers with green thumbs.

The Community Gardens program, started in the early 1970s, allows residents to rent garden plots on city-owned land.

Chia Lian Chen, a physics student at the University, has a large plot in the garden outside Westmoreland student housing.

"It's a very good idea for Eugene," Chen said. "I do it mainly for fun, but the fresh vegetables are good, too. You can supply a whole summer's worth of vegetables. I haven't shopped for two months."

Chen uses organic methods, which are strongly encouraged by the program. Chemical fertilizers may be used, but chemical pesticides are prohibited.

After Chen and his wife started the garden in early April, he found out that having a garden means a lot of work, especially in Eugene.

"The soil was very hard at first, and the garden hasn't

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