

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF COMMUNITY GARDENS IN SAN FRANCISCO AND RENTAL FARMS/COMMUNITY FLOWERBEDS IN KOBE CITY

Fujio Hirata, Sheaucheng Cheng

(University of Hyogo)

(Prefectural Awaji Landscape Planning and Horticulture Academy /

USDA, Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, USA)

hirata@awaji.ac.jp

ABSTRACT

Using urban open space for citizens to do horticultural activities as a tool for providing recreation opportunity, improving urban landscape and community development exists in various forms around the world. In Japan “rental farm” is the most common type of citizens conducting horticulture activity on urban open space by paying a rental fee. However, other types of community-participated urban open space activities, such as “community flower bed”, have attracted attention recently. These so-called “community gardens” are urban landscaping activities recruiting volunteers to design and/or plant for urban open spaces.

In United States, community gardens exist around the country. We found that the American concept of community gardens is more similar to the Japanese “rental farm” concept than the Japanese “community garden.”

In this study we compare the garden facilities, participants’ attitudes, and governmental involvement among the following three types of urban horticulture activities: American community gardens, Japanese rental farms, and Japanese community flowerbeds. Our result shows, from the standpoint of contributions to the environment, the relative degrees of contribution made by Japanese community flowerbeds, American community gardens and the Japanese rental farms are clearly different. But some participants of Japanese community flowerbeds feel burdened by the activity and constant governmental support and grant are necessary for keeping sustainability of them.