Interest in different types of urban agriculture such as community gardens has waxed and waned over time, but within the past twenty years or so there has been an increase in the study, establishment, and number of community gardens in the United States (Lawson 2005). They have garnered attention for several reasons, one of which is the range of perceived benefits they provide to both the environment and citizens. One of the purported benefits is the provision of better food security and the establishment of an avenue for providing fresh, sustainable food to those who struggle to feed themselves and their families (Teig et al. 2009). However, many details about community gardeners and the degree to which garden participation affects gardeners’ consumption of fresh food, or the affordability of fresh food, are highly variable and largely unknown. This research aims to understand who is gardening, why they garden, how accessible the gardens are, and whether gardening improves food security in Denver, Colorado.

As a case-study of place-based analysis of community gardens, Denver has the potential to provide a greater understanding of trends in community gardens and gardeners while also determining what gardeners get socially, physically, mentally or economically from community gardening. Results from the study can be used to advise the local Food Policy Council in their policy suggestions to the city, and it can inform the non-profit umbrella group of Denver Urban Gardens, because the members are conscious about the social and health contributions that their gardens make to their gardeners and are highly invested in the success of community gardens.