

# Goldwood Gardens



With one greenhouse, two hoop houses and 15 production acres, Goldwood Gardens produces a variety of fresh goods. Owner Canda Goldwood started a Community Supported Agriculture Program (CSA) to provide fresh produce to locals, and now 100 people annually participate in the program.



## GOLDWOOD GARDENS AT A GLANCE

Year Established:

1998

Employees:

5 employees

Leadership:

Canda Goldwood (Owner)

Located just off Lincolnway in Columbia City, is Goldwood Gardens, a fresh produce paradise with organic fruits, vegetables, flowers and herbs. Owners, Ron and Canda Goldwood established the business in 1998. With 37 acres, 15 of those being production acres, one greenhouse and two hoop houses, they're able to produce fresh goods 10 months out of the year.

### HELP ON THE FARM

Goldwood Gardens has two full-time and three part-time employees, but also receives help through work shares. People in the community come work on the farm for a few hours and receive homegrown goods in exchange. They have 15-20 people on average, who participate in the work share program. "When we're hiring we look for people who have a basic knowledge of farming or an educational background in agriculture, have the ability to adapt to situations, but most importantly have a strong work ethic," said owner, Canda Goldwood.

### COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AG

In 2008 Goldwood Gardens started a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program with just five people. The CSA program allows local residents to get direct access to fresh produce from local farmers. Residents can purchase a

"share" of produce from Goldwood Gardens, packaged as a fresh basket. Goldwood Gardens now has around 100 people annually from Whitley, Allen and Kosciusko counties, who participate in the CSA program.

### FRESH DINING EXPERIENCE

Goldwood Gardens is an active seller at the farmer's market in downtown Columbia City, but with a convenient location between Warsaw and Fort Wayne, they also sell to nearby Warsaw restaurants such as: Cerulean, Noa Noa and Bistro 54. "We're centrally located between Warsaw and Fort Wayne, so it's a great location and we have a diverse group of customers. I've always been in the restaurant business so this opportunity was a great way to specialize in that area," said Canda.

Canda Goldwood is an active client in the EDC's Small Business and Entrepreneurship program, and continues to look for ways to improve her business. Her advice to other agribusiness owners is, "In this business you can't do everything on your own. You're more successful if you work with other farms and help one another and learn from one another."