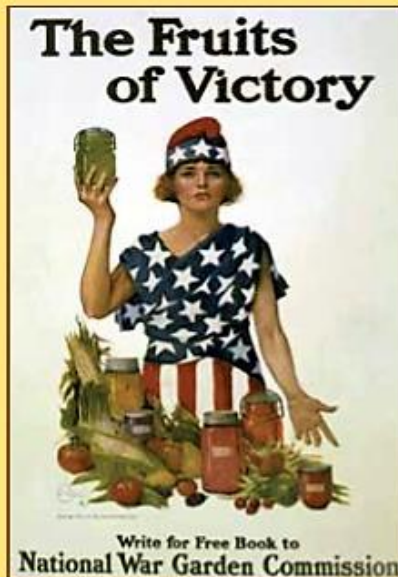


## Spotlighting War Gardens



**W**hen fighting in Europe erupted in 1914, people around the globe began experiencing severe food shortages. Many in Europe were starving because their farmers were fighting at the frontlines. To combat famine, Americans were encouraged to plant vegetables in their backyards, public parks, and vacant lots. The patriotic plots were called War Gardens. The National War Garden Commission launched a campaign of press releases, posters, and leaflets explaining how to turn empty land into vegetable patches and how to preserve surplus produce.

**U**.S. schoolchildren aged nine to fifteen were encouraged to plant School Gardens. The young gardeners dutifully tended their produce in backyards and nearby vacant lots on Saturdays and after school. The School Garden Army aimed to teach thrift, industry, service, patriotism, and responsibility. Because so many Americans cultivated War Gardens and School Gardens, food supplies expanded, waste was reduced, and more food was available for the troops in Europe. War Gardens were a major success.

