



## A Study on Hobby Gardens at Sivas Cumhuriyet University in Turkey

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### Abstract

The popularity of hobby gardens has been increasing in recent years. This study focuses on hobby gardens at Sivas Cumhuriyet University in Turkey. The total number of parcels established is 80 at Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens. Employees of Sivas Cumhuriyet University use the hobby gardens. In the hobby garden, users mostly deal with soil and have a picnic. Products grown in hobby gardens are grown for the users' own needs, not for profit. For this reason, hobby gardens are in great demand at Sivas Cumhuriyet University. Among those who use Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens, there are those who do not know enough about growing agricultural products. These people receive assistance from neighboring hobby gardens. It is observed that neighboring garden users also provide the necessary assistance. In this case, it shows the contribution of Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens on social solidarity.

**Keywords:** Hobby Garden; Urban Agriculture; Sivas Cumhuriyet University; Turkey

### Introduction

Hobby gardens are defined as small agricultural parcels used by people living in the city for the production of vegetables and fruits in their free and leisure time. The Hobby gardens are recreational areas where the individual can be with nature and green areas. Hobby gardens are usually located near the city. It is a place where people living in the city spend their free time meeting agriculture. History of hobby gardens goes back to old times. In Western countries, it goes back as early as the 18th century, while Turkey is emerging towards the end of the 20th century [1]. Today, the countries with the most hobby gardens in the world are Germany, England, Netherlands, Denmark, The United States of America, Belgium, France, Finland and Sweden. Hobby gardens have intensified especially in developed countries. Hobby gardens create emotions such as curiosity, creativity, excitement and exploration of nature. In addition, hobby gardens contribute to the development of the person socially and culturally, environmentally. It is an open laboratory area, especially for children and youth. At the

same time, hobby gardens increase the green area system. Hobby gardens contribute positively to the urban ecosystem and urban aesthetics [2-4].

Today, importance has been given to hobby garden designs in cities. There are examples of hobby gardens in parks, school gardens, sites and universities in Turkey [5]. There are hobby gardens on some university campuses in Turkey. Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University, Ahi Evran University, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Atatürk University, Bilkent University, Bingöl University, Erciyes University, Gaziantep University, Gebze Technical University, Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, İnönü University, Kilis 7 Aralık University, Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Muş Alparslan University, Ondokuz Mayıs University, Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University, Trakya University and Yıldız Technical University are among the universities that have a hobby garden. There are also hobby gardens on the campus of Sivas Cumhuriyet University. Sivas Cumhuriyet University was established in 1974 as Turkey's 13 university. Sivas Cumhuriyet University, one of the largest Universities of Turkey with

about population of sixty thousand, is working towards the development of the green campus and social life in recent years. In this context, hobby gardens were built at Sivas Cumhuriyet University Campus. The aim of this study is to introduce hobby gardens made by Sivas Cumhuriyet University.

## Materials and Methods

One of the most important brand values of Sivas city is Sivas Cumhuriyet University. The study area is Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens located in the central Anatolian part of Turkey. Sivas is the coldest city in the Central Anatolia Region. The average altitude of Sivas city is 1250 meters. Sivas city has a unique climate character. Terrestrial climate is dominant in Sivas. The summer season is very hot and dry. Winters are cold and snowy. The winter months are freezing cold and the average winter temperature is around 0 °C. The average number of days when temperature values fall below is 132 °C. Due to the low temperature in winter, rains are generally in the form of snow. The Average snow thickness is around 20 centimeters. In other seasons, it is in the form of rain [6]. Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens are located near Sivas-Kayseri highway. The aim of this research is to introduce hobby gardens created by Sivas Cumhuriyet University on campus, which is an example of recreation areas that have been in great demand in recent years. There are 80 parcels in the study area (Figure 1). Transportation in Sivas is easy. The university campus can be reached by a single bus from all over the city.



**Figure 1:** General view of Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens.

This study consists of direct observation, examination, analysis and synthesis stages in the field of research. The related literature has been scanned, sample studies have been examined, some technical information about hobby gardens has been provided. Then, field research was carried out at different periods in the hobby gardens in the study area. In this study, the common areas, camellias,

gardens and cultivated products in hobby gardens are examined at Sivas Cumhuriyet University.

## Results and Discussion

Sivas Cumhuriyet University has created hobby gardens for its academic and administrative staff to have a good time with their families, to grow all kinds of fruits, vegetables, flowers and organic agriculture and to develop hobby neighborhoods and conversations. Modern hobby gardens located on campus in Sivas Cumhuriyet University were established in 2017. There are a total of 80 parcels in hobby gardens created on campus at Sivas Cumhuriyet University. Hobby gardens allocation, maintenance and repair operations are carried out by “Hobby Gardens Management” under the responsibility of the Rectorate of Sivas Cumhuriyet University. Hobby Gardens Management monitors and collects income and expenses of hobby gardens. Sivas Cumhuriyet University has prepared regulations on the establishment and operation of hobby gardens. Within the framework of this regulation, Sivas Cumhuriyet University leases its hobby gardens to its academic and administrative staff. Hobby gardens are allocated for a maximum of two years. If the hobby garden is requested to be left within the allocation period, the applicants in the reserve list can be allocated. Parcel owners must pay the electricity and water fee used. These fees are calculated by dividing the total amount by the number of parcels. There is one electricity and water meter for the hobby garden. After the hobby garden, electricity, and water charges are paid, the garden is delivered. Garden users are obliged to abide by the rules specified in the regulation, and garden allocations of those who do not obey the rules are canceled.

The main usage rules that the hobby garden parcel owners are obliged to obey are as follows; Hobby garden use rights cannot be transferred. Persons other than the person allocated for his hobby garden cannot use it. The hobby garden cannot be moved outside its borders and gardens cannot be combined. Hobby gardens should be evacuated at 23:55 at the latest. Alcoholic beverage consumption is prohibited in hobby gardens. Hobby garden is allocated to only one of the people who reside at the same address. Users of the hobby garden should dump their trash in the places specified regularly and take care of garden and environmental cleaning. Any interference that may cause image pollution is prohibited. It is forbidden to grow plants whose production is prohibited in the hobby garden. The use of pesticides in the hobby garden will be within the

knowledge and permission of the management. It is forbidden to plant trees in the parcel in the hobby garden. Hobby garden users should avoid any behavior that disturbs other garden users. Hobby garden users are obliged to consider the warnings of the management. Any requests and complaints must be notified in writing to the hobby garden management. Hobby garden users are obliged to follow the rules. For garden users who do not follow the rules, cancellation of the allocation is made. The management has the right to terminate the right to use the hobby garden unilaterally.

Sivas Cumhuriyet University created 80 hobby gardens, each approximately 70 square meters, for its academic and administrative staff in 2017. Each parcel in Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens is 7x10 meters in size and has a usage area of about 70 square meters. There are floodlights and general lighting installations in the hobby garden. There is a wooden camellia with a lighting system in each hobby garden. There are also concrete and stone paved roads between the hobby gardens.

Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens can be rented for a small fee. The average of 200 Turkish Lira in 2017, 250 Turkish Lira in 2018, 300 Turkish Lira in 2019, 2020 and 2021 were collected from those who were allocated hobby gardens. These usage costs are also used in the payment of electricity and water expenditures.

Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens are surrounded by a wire wall and have two entrance doors. In the hobby garden located on an area of approximately 7726 thousand square meters; there are fountains, masjids, water closets, garbage containers, camellias, storage, children's playground, irrigation and a lighting system. It was observed that the common areas are very close and suitable in terms of their location. The Lighting and security of hobby gardens are sufficient. Agricultural activities such as vegetable and fruit growing are generally carried out in hobby gardens. People who rent the hobby garden at Sivas Cumhuriyet University grow the vegetables and fruits they want. Agricultural crops grown include tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, zucchini, cucumber, beans, onion, lettuce, parsley, cress, sorrel, dill, mint, sunflower seeds, strawberries, melon and watermelon.

Parcel owners can use their hobby gardens between April and October due to the cold climate of Sivas city where the research area is located. In other months, hobby gardens are not used. Be-

cause in other months, the air temperature can be below 0 °C. In this case, it can cause frost and icing. Generally, planting and planting operations are carried out in the hobby gardens in April and May as agricultural activities at Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens.

The Sivas Cumhuriyet University is one of the rare campuses with a hobby garden. Hobby gardens in general of Turkey are located at the university campus in a limited number. All 80 parcels located at Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens are used for agricultural activities. Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens is 100% full. There is no unused empty parcel. The average distance of the hobby garden from the Sivas city center is approximately 8 kilometers. The distance between the city centers of settlements hobby gardens varies between 2 and 17 kilometers in Turkey [7,8]. This shows that there is no problem at Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens in terms of transportation and distance. In fact, the vast majority of users reside in lodgings located on campus very close to the hobby garden. Users usually come to the hobby gardens on foot or by private vehicle. There is also a possibility to reach the hobby garden by public transport. It was observed that the users were satisfied with the distance of the hobby gardens to the city.

Instead of being an activity for profit, Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens are made for reasons such as growing crops and getting away from stress. It can be said that the income level of the users is good. Those who use hobby gardens are generally people with little previous agricultural activity experience. Generally, hobby gardens are visited several times during the week and at the weekend and 1-4 hours are spent. The vast majority of users are married and hobby gardens are mostly used by family members. It is seen that Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby gardens support solidarity among users.

Hobby gardens make positive contributions to the urban ecosystem and urban appearance. Supporting the hobby gardens is promising in terms of agricultural sustainability in Turkey [9]. For this reason, increasing the number of hobby gardens will make positive contributions to the city and the university.

## Conclusion

Due to the fast pace of life and hard work, people living today need to move away from their environment for a short or long time

to have fun and relax. For this purpose, people turn to natural or rural areas close to nature. However, it is not possible for this request to be realized in the increasingly urbanized world. In this case, hobby gardens with sufficient facilities are preferred to meet the need for recreation and rest. For this reason, Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens are also highly preferred by employees. In conclusion, Sivas Cumhuriyet University Hobby Gardens contribute ecologically, psychologically and socially to users. Therefore, existing hobby gardens should be preserved and new hobby gardens should be created in Sivas Cumhuriyet University.

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