

Collection #  
DVD 1621–1622; 1758–1759

**GERMAN GROWERS OF INDIANAPOLIS  
ORAL HISTORIES, OCTOBER–NOVEMBER 2018**

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November 2018; December 2018

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## COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 4 audio discs

COLLECTION DATES: 26 October 2018; 9 November 2018; 27 November 2018;

PROVENANCE: August E. Wiegman and Joseph F. Boarini, Indianapolis, October 2018; Anne Maschmeyer and Robert Roehling, Indianapolis, December 2018

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Gardeners Benefit Society of Indianapolis Photographs (P 0136)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2018.0358m0001; 2018.0358m0002; 2018.0404m0001; 2018.0404m0002

NOTES:

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

Many German immigrants who settled in Indianapolis were fruit and vegetable growers. One group settled just south of Indianapolis, opened nurseries, and farmed fruits and vegetables. Their main area of concentration was in an area bordered by Bluff Road, Banta Road, Harding Street, and Madison Avenue.

In 1867, these German immigrants formed the Deutscher Gartner Unterstutaung Verein zu Indianapolis, or Farmers Benefit Society. The society served as a social and professional organization for the gardeners. It also had an insurance benefit for farmers who were unable to work and provided a \$100.00 death benefit for the spouse. Meanwhile, the growers found an outside market for their produce with the opening of the City Market in 1886.

The Marion County Greenhouse Association was formed in 1920. It sought to create a more consistent approach to their produce, which they marketed under the "Hoosier Boy" brand. In addition to selling to grocers and wholesalers, the organization also operated a farmer's market at South and East streets.

The industry hit its peak in the 1940s by having the largest concentration of greenhouses in the county. With the advent of frozen vegetables and transportation of fresh produce with refrigeration, the greenhouse industry started a decline. Despite the decline, greenhouse producers still maintain a presence on the south side of Indianapolis, though now the primary income is received from the landscaping business and the sale of plants to individual garden growers.

Sources:

Indianapolis *Star*, 26 June 2016, 6 February 2018

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of four oral histories of German growers from the south side of Indianapolis. The interviews were in conjunction with the "German Growers of Indianapolis" exhibit at the Indiana Historical Society, April–August 2019. Joseph F. Boarini and August E. Wiegman were interviewed by Daniel Gonzalez and Jessica Fischer on 26 October 2018. Anne Maschmeyer was interviewed by Daniel Gonzalez on 9 November 2018 and Robert Roehling was interviewed by Daniel Gonzalez on 27 November 2018.

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