



Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,
News and Education

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Coordinators Comments

Today with increased awareness of food safety and the increasing energy costs required to transport our food long distances, consumers are looking for local sources of healthy food. The Illinois Farm Direct-Farmer to Consumer Directory- helps consumers find fresh locally produced food by connecting directly to farmers. Farm Direct features 600 growers and processors and 200 farmers markets who sell directly to consumers. Check the website www.illinoisfarmdirect.org to find local farmers or the product you're looking for in this directory.

Cheap food prices and overflowing store shelves are hiding the true environmental and social costs of our current food and agriculture system. Since the 1970's, research has identified the excessive amounts of energy used to transport and package foods from distant states and countries. In the future as petroleum supplies decline, food systems will need to adjust. To conserve energy, to reduce global warming, and to decrease costs, farms and consumers should attempt to participate in more local food systems. Furthermore, the long term loss of family farmers and the impoverishment of rural communities continues. Fewer and fewer young people can become farmers. The dominant food distribution system is vulnerable to terrorism and massive contamination.

The good news is that we now have an alternative. A growing number of farmers are choosing to work with nature, rather than wage war against it. These farmers use sustainable or organic practices that build up the soil, reduce runoff, create habitat for wildlife, treat livestock humanely and best of all, produce safe, wholesome food. In your local markets, you as a consumer have the power to communicate with farmers and to encourage them to grow your favorite foods in an environmentally and socially sound manner. Thus, your actions will help us rebuild Illinois' local food systems. As University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners you can play a large role in directing and counseling consumers on how to find and support local farmers and local food supplies.

 Monica David, Master Gardener Coordinator

Conference 2009 to Feature Popular National Speakers

Mark your calendars now for the 2009 Illinois Master Gardener Conference to be held September 10th through 12th at the Kemper Convention Center in Effingham, Illinois. The convention center is well-known for its outstanding food and for the adjacent award winning Hilton Garden Inn. The Effingham area has lots of things to offer including the popular Rosebud Theatre and the Ballard Nature Center as well as local wineries and antique malls. Conference tours will be offered to the Ballard Nature Center (an all day program of lectures and hands-on learning); local outstanding nurseries and greenhouses; wineries; the Vandalia community garden and nearby Mennonite settlement; and local MG projects and gardens. East Central Illinois Master Gardeners have planned a tour to meet each and every attendees interests!

A highlight of this years conference will be an outstanding lineup of speakers focusing on "Nurture Nature, Nurture You". The keynote address will be given by Holly Shimizu, Executive Director of the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington D.C. Holly's resume is impressive. She worked in public gardens in Holland, Germany and Belgium and spent a year at Wisley, the Royal Horticultural Society's garden in England. Holly spent eight years as curator of the National Herb Garden at the U.S. National Arboretum and four years as managing director of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond, VA. Gardeners probably know Holly best as a correspondent on the "Victory Garden", the PBS television show, which she has worked on for the last 12 years. Her keynote address will focus on Backyard Bounty- plants that are edible, fragrant and beautiful in our landscapes but also serve as food sources in today's challenging economy.

Joining Holly Shimizu will be Cheryl Bennerup from Sunny Border Nursery in Connecticut; George DeVault, Director of Seed Savers in Decorah, Iowa and John Gaydos, Director of Product Development for Proven Winners. More information about classes, speakers and tours will be available in the May Imagine and on our website. Registration will begin in June. Plan to join the fun and meet other Master Gardeners from around the state.

Important Dates

March 21: Gardener's Day, Western Illinois University. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sessions will include Butterfly Gardening; Plants and Pets; Shade Gardens; Irises; Turf Care; Curb Appeal; Ornamental Grasses; Herbs; Winter Interest in the Landscape; Perennial Maintenance; Landscaping Those Difficult Spots and Gardening for All Ages. Cost is \$35. Sponsored by the McDonough Co. MGs. 309-837-3939.

March 21: Gardeners Day, U. of I. Extension Bldg., IL State Fairgrounds, Springfield. Registration starts at 8:00 a.m. One hour breakout sessions include: Tools-Our Third Gardening Hand; Rain Gardens-A Wise Way to Use Run-off; Organic Gardening; Composting; Street Side Planting; Herbal Bath Salts; Heirloom Plants- Flowers; Growing Culinary Herbs and Vegetable Gardening-Getting Started. Presented by Sangamon-Menard Unit MGs. Registration fee is \$8 in advance (before 3-13) and \$10 at the door. www.extension.uiuc.edu/sangamonmenard.

March 28: Gardeners Day, Carlinville Lutheran Church, Carlinville. 8:30 a.m. Sponsored by the Macoupin Co. MGs.

April 2: "Using Native Plants and Controlling Honey-suckle". Monroe County Annex, Waterloo. The speakers are Carl and Pen Daubach, Co-coordinators of the CLIFFTOP conservation group. 618-939-3434.

April 4: Gardenfest, McHenry County College, Crystal Lake. Pam Duthie, the keynote speaker, will present "Armchair Gardening". Breakout session topics are Organic Gardening; Herbs; Flowers and three hands-on classes including "The Care and Feeding of Tools". Cost is \$40 and includes lunch. Call 815-455-8697 to register. Sponsored by the McHenry Co. MGs.

April 7: April In Paris, Edgar County Fairgrounds, Paris. Three sessions will be offered: Using Italian & Irish Design Elements in Your Backyard; Top Annuals & Perennials for Shady or Hot, Dry Sites and Seasonal Lawn Care. Fee is \$10 plus a \$5 donation for lunch. 217-465-8585 or www.extension.uiuc.edu/edgar. Sponsored by the Edgar Co. MGs.

May 2: Seventh Annual Plant Sale, Logan County Fairgrounds (bldg with the green door), Lincoln. 9 a.m. to Noon. Logan Co. MGs will staff an information table to answer plant questions. 217-732-8289

May 4: Twilight Garden Tour, Schaefer Farms Nursery, Kaskaskia Rd., Waterloo. David Robson will lead the tour through the nursery. 618-939-3434. Sponsored by the Monroe Co. MGs.

Garden Trip to Charleston, S.C.

Join the fun! Illinois and Arkansas Master Gardeners will meet this fall for a combined six day trip to view the gardens of Charleston, South Carolina. Led by Illinois Master Gardener Coordinator Monica David and Arkansas Coordinator Janet Carson, this trip will feature outstanding private and public gardens as well as a chance to spend time with South Carolina Master Gardeners and visit their gardens and projects. Highlights of the trip include tours of Magnolia Plantation, Middleton Plantation Gardens and Brookgreen Gardens. Magnolia Plantation is the oldest public garden in America with sections of the garden dating back more than 325 years. Middleton Plantation, a National Historic Landmark, has 65 acres of landscaped terraces, shadowy allees, ornamental ponds and garden rooms which combine for a spectacular 18th century garden. Brookgreen Gardens situated just south of Myrtle Beach, is a diverse mix of forested swamp, salt marsh, sandy ridges and fresh tidal swamps. Today the property includes spectacular display gardens such as the Archer and Anna Hyatt Huntington Sculpture Garden, the Live Oak Allee garden, the Dorothy P. Peace Garden for Children and the Fountain of the Muses garden.

The trip will also include tickets to the Charleston Preservation Society's Fall Tour of Homes and Gardens. Participants will have time to explore eight to ten private homes and gardens in Charleston. This is a self-paced, self guided tour which covers six to eight city blocks in the national historic area of downtown Charleston.

Lastly, the tour will include time with South Carolina Master Gardeners- visiting their private gardens and volunteer projects. This is a great opportunity to meet gardeners from both Arkansas and South Carolina and share garden stories and project successes.

The trip runs October 1 to 6, 2009. Tour cost is \$795 and includes hotel, all breakfasts, 2 dinners, coach transportation and entrance to all the gardens and events. Airfare is not included, but if 10 or more people travel from the same airport it may be possible to secure a group flight. Should we not reach a minimum of 20 persons on this trip, a surcharge may be added. View the full itinerary and booking form at <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/> – under "News and Updates". For information or to book your trip–call Robyn Gulstrom at 269-629-9248.

Southern Illinois Youth Named National Junior Master Gardener® of the Year



Eighth grader Joshua Greene from Bluford, Illinois was recently selected as the 2009 National Junior Master Gardener® of the year. He will receive his award at the International Master Gardener conference on March 23 in Las Vegas. Joshua was chosen from a pool of national applicants and was the top vote getter of three finalists.

Joshua is a member of the Jefferson County JMG® group entitled “The Dragon Lilies” where he became a certified Junior Master Gardener in 2007. His accomplishments in this program are impressive and too numerous to mention in this brief article. Some of the highlights include:

- * assisted his 4-H group leader in teaching community classes for all ages about vermicomposting and container gardening
- * designed a pop-up book about the life cycle of a butterfly for a 4-H group lesson and assisted the younger children in the class
- * assisted in presenting a container gardening class to the public at the Midwestern Herb and Garden Show at the Times Square Mall in Mt. Vernon
- * helped his JMG® group design a “Spooky Garden Walk” for community children
- * worked with his JMG® unit to design and plant flower beds at the county courthouse
- * as a Beespotter for the University of Illinois, he spotted an uncommon species of bee which helped researchers collect data on population status of bees

Joshua’s favorite project has been his work with square foot gardening. He met Mel Bartholomew, originator of Square Foot Gardening who tutored him. Together with his father, Robert Greene, Joshua built a 4 by 4 foot frame where he planted vegetables and flowers. He produced enough produce for this family and friends. Josh’s work with the JMG® has increased his science scores at school and he has learned respect, responsibility and how to help others. Congratulations to Joshua Greene on this prestigious honor!

Horticulture Therapy versus Therapeutic Gardening

Horticultural therapy, as defined by the American Horticultural Therapy Association (AHTA), is the use of professional directed plant, gardening and nature activities applied therapeutically for the purpose of restoring the physical and mental health of its participants. The American Horticultural Therapy Association is dedicated to promoting all levels of interest in the development of horticulture and related activities as a therapeutic and rehabilitative medium. Horticultural therapists are professionally trained in horticultural therapy. They have acquired skills and knowledge in the horticultural and therapeutic field and have completed an internship at an approved horticultural therapy site such as the Chicago Botanical Garden’s Beuhler Enabling Garden. Also, they conduct themselves as paid professional therapists in a professional setting.

The American Horticultural Therapy Association instructed the Illinois Master Gardener office several years ago that the terms “Therapeutic Horticultural Gardening” or “Therapeutic Gardening” are appropriate, but the title “Horticulture Therapy” has been protected by the AHTA and should not be used by Master Gardeners in describing their projects.

Master Gardeners are not professionally trained horticultural therapists and volunteer their services to an agency. However, it is advisable that Master Gardeners develop objectives and skills when working with people who have disabilities. First, have a positive attitude when working with people and develop a non judgmental attitude. Second, develop objectives and skills for each project to be written down and followed. Skills are divided into four categories: Physical (fine and gross motor skills, spatial relations, and figure-ground relations); Cognitive (problem solving skills, following a sequential completion of steps necessary for success etc.); Psychosocial (communicating with others, having appropriate affective expression etc.); and Horticultural (Identify plant, plant needs, plant maintenance, understanding ecology and web of life etc.).

McLean Master Gardeners started a gardening program in the fall of 2008 with the Occupational Development Center in Bloomington-Normal, a federally designated not-for-profit agency serving individuals with disabilities and other life barriers since 1965. The project is now a popular “Therapeutic Gardening” project for this group of volunteers.

Working with people with disabilities is very rewarding. Master Gardeners are volunteers, not trained Horticultural Therapists, who assist people with disabilities to develop skills and an appreciation for gardening.

✍ Mariellen Griffith, McLean County Master Gardener

2009 Master Gardener Apparel Sale



Master Gardener apparel sales will begin in May this year. Watch for your sell sheet in the next issue of *Imagine*. All ordering will be done via the internet (through the Master Gardener website at

<http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/mg>) and apparel will be shipped to your local extension office for pickup mid-summer.

This year will feature favorite items like denim shirts, polo shirts, hats, T-shirts, jackets, MG pins, decals, patches and license plate covers. New items for 2009 include a fleece jacket, long-sleeve T-shirt and gingham shirts. Master Gardener apparel is a great way to show your pride and promote your local projects.

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