

Illinois Master Gardener

IMAGINE

INFORMATION ♦ NEWS ♦ EDUCATION



Volume 14 No. 1
January-February 2013

COORDINATORS' COMMENTS

Happy New Year to all! January is always a good time to evaluate our 2012 projects and plan for our 2013 efforts. It is also a great time to fulfill those 10 years of education time for 2013. Later in this newsletter you will see lots of great workshops and also some online classes to fulfill this requirement. Don't forget the IPM online modules designed specifically for you. We are in the process of releasing three new modules early in 2013. You can access those and other online opportunities via the MG website under "Educational Events". <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mg>

January is also the time I set aside to remind Master Gardener volunteers about some of our rules and regulations. Sometimes a gentle reminder is a good thing and reviewing the policies is beneficial to you and to our program. I am currently working with legal council on some minor changes in wording to our state MG policies (items like our disability and affirmative action statements) and hope to release the revised document in 2013.

Reporting Volunteer Hours: Active Master Gardeners are required to do 30 volunteer and 10 continuing education hours each year. Your contribution may seem small but we need to document EVERYONES hours so we can show the impact of our work to county, state and national funders. By now every Master Gardener in Illinois should be reporting their hours via the online reporting system. The system also is used to report contacts. Demographics are important to our funders and stakeholders so we know who is taking advantage of our programming efforts. Each unit may do demographic reporting differently- so you may be asked to record gender/ethnicity at programs or the staff may handle this duty in your county.

Dismissal of Volunteers: This is a topic we all hate to discuss but occasionally certain volunteers do not fit well with our mission and are released from our program. It is always best to discuss concerns you have with your local coordinator before situations get out of hand. The policies for dismissal were changed in 2009 by the state advisory committee with assistance from Extension administration and the university lawyer. Please make yourselves aware of these changes.

Use of the MG title: The title "University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener" or "Master Gardener" may only be used when you are conducting pre-approved unpaid educational programming. You may not use your title in any form of commercial advertisement or endorse any product or place of business. So if you own a greenhouse or nursery, you may not use your title in your company's ads. Once you cease being active in the program, you must tender your badge to your County Extension office. The title "Master Gardener" is not bestowed for life, so we request that once you leave the program you cease to use the title. You may however call yourself a Master Gardener alumnus and we hope you do!

Projects and Education: Projects must focus on educational efforts for the public and must be PRE-APPROVED by your local coordinator. If your project is not pre-approved you will not be covered by Extension's liability insurance. Although community beautification is a nice service, Master Gardener projects **MUST** go further and have an educational component rather than just planting and maintenance of public areas. Also, don't spend hours weeding your neighbors yard and then try to convince your Coordinator that this is volunteer time- they won't accept these hours and this may cause hard feelings. Home visits are very highly discouraged due to liability issues! Remember that our work focuses on home gardeners- not commercial entities. If you receive a call on the hotline from a nursery or greenhouse- refer that question to your Coordinator or Extension Educator. Calls about potential spray drift cases should be referred to your Coordinator or the Illinois Dept. of Agriculture.

Screening of MG Volunteers: ALL Extension volunteers in ALL program areas must go through background checks. Our new 2013 trainees have been screened prior to beginning their training. All active volunteers who had not been checked were due to go thru screening last year and very soon this should be completed. If you have not been screened or have questions contact your local Coordinator.

Best wishes for a great 2013! Monica David, Master Gardener State Coordinator

HERB DAY 2013

Herb Day 2013 has been scheduled for Saturday, January 19, from 8:00 am (when registration begins and the retail area opens) through 4:30 pm, at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center, 1001 Killarney St., Urbana, IL.

The schedule includes:

Jane Taylor, from Cape Elizabeth, Maine is the founding director of the 4-H Childrens' Garden at Michigan State University and the "godmother" of children's gardens across the United States. She will speak about "Kids in the Herb Garden" and a second talk about grilling with herbs entitled "Fire It Up With Herbs."

Carolee Snyder, from Carolee's Herb Farm in Hartford City, Indiana, will provide information about "Elderberry, Herb of the Year 2013." Snyder has served on the board of the International Herb Association and is a member of the Herb Society of America.

Jan Powers, from Stone Well Garden in West Peoria, Illinois, last spoke at the 2003 Herb Day and is returning this year to talk about "Herb Gardens." Powers is well known in the Peoria area for her gardening expertise.

There will be a retail area, selling a wide variety of herb, spice, and gardening products. Advance registration of \$60, which includes an herb-themed lunch buffet (including vegetarian options), must be received by Jan. 11 to guarantee lunch. Those interested in attending should mail checks, payable to the University of Illinois, to: Herb Day 2012, Attn: Linda Harvey, 1005 Plant Sciences Lab, 1201 S. Dorner Drive, Urbana, Illinois 61801. For more information, call (217) 244-1693, or e-mail lharvey@illinois.edu.

ILLINOIS FIRST DETECTOR FOREST PEST WORKSHOPS

Early detection and response is key to managing invasive pests. The Illinois First Detector workshops are aimed at improving first-detector and invasive species awareness. Plan to attend these workshops focusing on current and emerging invasive forest pests in Illinois. Each location will have session devoted to the emerald ash borer, thousand cankers disease and invasive plants. Sessions will cover identification, hosts, sampling, management, commonly confused look-a-likes and regulation. These sessions qualify for advanced training in IPM.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE:

February 12- Springfield 217-782-4617

February 26- Quad Cities 309-756-9978

March 7- Mt. Vernon 618-548-1446

March 14- Collinsville 618-344-4230

March 21- Champaign 217-333-7672

March 26- Lemont 630-685-2355

All workshops are from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Registration fee is \$25 and includes lunch and training materials. No on-site registrations will be accepted. These workshops made possible by an Illinois IPM grant and are sponsored by University of Illinois Extension, USDA, The Morton Arboretum, Illinois Natural History Survey and IDNR and IDA.

MG CONFERENCE 2013

SEPTEMBER 19-21

Mark your calendars to join Master Gardener from around the state at the 2013 Illinois Master Gardener Conference. The conference will be held at the wireless Center in Moline on September 19-21, 2013. A block of sleeping rooms is being held at the nearby Radisson on John Deere Commons. The conference will feature two keynote speakers, lots of breakout sessions and workshops, exciting garden tours (all day and half-day), the annual Master Gardener awards banquet, the annual silent auction (with proceeds to fund MG mini-grants) and a Mississippi river boat cruise on the Celebration Belle.

The Master Gardeners from Unit 10 are planning this conference to focus on looking back to our history for garden ideas and then using those ideas to renovate or plan new garden spaces.

Keynote speaker **Denise Wiles**

Adams is an expert on garden history and has written two books- "Restoring American Gardens: An Encyclopedia of Heirloom Ornamentals" and her new book to be released in April 2013- "American Home Landscapes 1620--2000: A Design Guide to Creating Period Garden Styles". She will share her ideas on garden history as well as the knowledge she has gleaned from her collection of hundreds of antique nursery catalogs.

The conference will also feature a second keynote speaker- Horticulturist, Garden Writer and Director of the Planting Fields Arboretum in New York- **Vincent Simeone**. Vincent studied with Dr. Michael Dirr and Dr. Allan Armitage and is the author of several gardening books. His favorite subjects for talks are woody plants and historic landscape preservation.

MASTER GARDENER PROJECT MINI-GRANTS DUE JANUARY 31

The Master Gardener state advisory committee is offering the opportunity for counties/units to apply for mini-grants through the state office. The mini-grants program is supported by the silent auction held each year at the annual state conference. The auction from the 2012 conference raised about \$6000 and this money is now available to support your projects. The mini-grants were designed to supply start-up or continuation funds for your local endeavors. Existing projects or new projects will both be considered for grant funds. Maximum grant is \$1200 but most all grants will be for smaller amounts of money. Grants will be awarded annually. A maximum of 1 grant per county per year. The state office will reimburse unit offices for expenses up to the amount of the mini-grant.

The grant funds are to be used for horticulture programs which meet the goals of the Master Gardener program and should be based on one of the Extension priorities— energy and environmental stewardship; food safety and security; economic development and work force preparedness; family health and wellness and youth development. Preference will be given to programs which make multiple contacts with their audiences— rather than single day events.

There is an application procedure to follow and applications should be submitted electronically to the state office by January 31. All those applications which are not submitted correctly and do not follow the guidelines will not be considered. The state MG advisory committee will judge the applications and winners will be announced on March 1. Applications **MUST** be written in collaboration with Extension staff and Master Gardeners. The application form calls for a project narrative and a proposed budget and will be heavily weighted to those projects which demonstrate impact and follow-up. The instructions and application can be found on the MG website under “For IL Master Gardeners”.

2013 MASTER GARDENER TRAINING LOCATIONS

Location	Class Starts
1. Bloomington	1-9
2. Canton, Peoria, Jacksonville & Hillsboro	1-15
3. Champaign	1-22
4. Chicago	1-9
5. Chicago Botanic Garden	1-16
6. Danville	1-28
7. Decatur & Springfield	1-17
8. DeKalb	1-7
9. Collinsville & Waterloo	1-8
10. Galesburg	1-24
11. Joliet	1-25
12. Naperville	1-8
13. Ottawa	1-23
14. Quincy	1-23
15. Stockton	1-8
16. Woodstock	1-25
17. Online class	1-11

Please contact your local MG Coordinator if you wish to attend a session for CE.

SEED BROADCAST - MOBILE SEED STORY BROADCASTING

Seed Broadcast is a collaborative project exploring grassroots seed action through collective inquiries and hands-on creative practices. Throughout the year, the group gathers to discuss critical issues surrounding seed and food sovereignty, visit local farms and gardens to experience what is happening in the field, and engage in creative projects, to dig deeper into the real how-to's of local agriculture. The Seed Broadcast Mobile Seed Story Broadcasting Station, seed libraries, farmers, gardeners, and folks who love local food, teamed up for public seed story broadcast events across the country in July 2012.

The Perry County Master Gardeners established a seed library at the DuQuoin Public Library in the fall of 2011. The seed library was organized through the joint efforts of Perry County Master Gardeners, Mary Jo Novak, Jane Chapman, Jon McClurkin, and Pam Swallers, working in collaboration with library staff. These volunteers also feel that seed saving is an essential practice to keep seeds and local food alive for the future. Admitting there are many challenges that they face, these seed librarians and Master Gardeners are clearly committed to see this endeavor prosper. The Master Gardeners participated in a live Seed Broadcast in July at the library and now blog about their efforts. They need more vegetable seeds that are open pollinated, they need responsible and dedicated participants, they need a sorting and storage system implemented, and they need to consider what it means to save seeds in the midst of genetically modified industrial agriculture. To view their seed saver blog visit <http://seedbroadcast.blogspot.com/search/label/Du%20Quoin>

IMPORTANT DATES

January 16-18: Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show, Navy Pier, Chicago, IL. Visit <http://www.midam.org/index.html>

January 19: 10th Annual Gardening Show, Porter County Expositions Center, IN-49 at Division Rd., Valparaiso, IN. 8 am to 4 pm. Presentations by garden experts, 100 exhibitors and vendors. http://pcgarden.info/gardening_show.html

January 26: A Winter Day in the Garden, Zwermann Theatre, Lincoln Trail College, Robinson. Keynote speaker Kaizad Irani will speak on healing gardens. Other sessions include Native Woody Plants in the Urban Landscape by Connor Shaw; Orchids by Dick Wells; Irises by Steve Poole; Garden Design by Greg Pierceall and The Good Guys Don't Always Wear White by Tom Turpin. Registration is \$35; \$45 after January 13. Breakfast and lunch are included. Sponsored by the Crawford County MGs and Lincoln Trail College. 618-546-1549 or <https://webs.extension.illinois.edu/cce/crawfordmg/>

January 26: Mid-Winter Horticulture Workshop, First Lutheran Church, Geneseo. 8:30 am to Noon. Three sessions will be offered: Turfgrasses by local experts from Teske's Garden; Colorful Conifers by Ellen Kelly and Modern Daylilies by Lynn Stoll. Cost is \$15. Pre-registration is required. Sponsored by the Henry and Rock Island County MGs. <https://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=7522>

January 28: Homemade in the HEARTland 3, U. of I. Extension Office, Milan. 1-4 pm. A hands on workshop to make soy based botanical favorites and learn about growing herbs in your backyard. \$12 fee. <https://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=7476>

January 31-February 2: Illinois Grape Growers and Vintors Association conference, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield. <http://www.illinoiswine.com/conference.html>

February 5: Southern Illinois Commercial Tree Fruit School, Holiday Inn, Mt. Vernon, IL. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mms> or 618-344-4230

February 6: Southwestern Illinois Commercial Tree Fruit School, Knights of Columbus Hall, Hardin. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/ccgms> or 217-243-7424.

February 10-12: Annual Midwestern Herb and Garden Show, Times Square Mall, Mt. Vernon. The show features educational sessions and Midwestern vendors. Keynote speaker Melinda Myers will talk on Small Space Gardening and Low Maintenance Big Impact Perennial Gardens. Other sessions include Beekeeping, Daffodils, Bees, Bats, Birds, Composting and more. Free admission. <http://www.midwesternherbandgardenshow.com/>

February 12-13: IL Small Fruit, Strawberry and Southern IL Vegetable School, Holiday Inn, Mt. Vernon, IL. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/ccgms>

February 16: Joys of Gardening, Highland Community College Student Conference Center, Freeport. 8:25 am to 4 pm. Keynote Mark Dwyer is Director of Horticulture for the Rotary Gardens in Janesville, WI. Four break-out sessions with unique garden classes to choose from. Registration is \$25 (with lunch) or \$15 for a half day with no lunch. Sponsored by the Stephenson County MGs. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/jsjw> or 815-235-4125.

February 16: Nursery School-Lessons in Gardening, iwireless Center, Moline, IL. 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. The keynote speaker will be Kelly Norris, Horticulture Manager at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens who will present "Dig This! Stylish Gardens for Savvy Gardeners". Choose from 15 different classes including New Annuals and Perennials; Cut Flowers from the Garden; Conifers; Fruits; Xeriscaping; Soaps and more. \$45 fee includes breakfast, lunch, snacks and handouts. Sponsored by the Rock Island County MGs. For information call 309-756-9978 or register at <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=7568>

February 18- May 20: Homegrown Challenge: Vegetable Gardening Classes, U. of I. Extension Office, Milan. 5:30-6:30 pm. Free classes for the new or beginning gardeners on planting, care, and harvesting produce. <https://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=7521>

February 19 & 20: Gateway Greening Conference, Gateway Center, Collinsville, IL. Keynote addresses by Bill Findley, Head Groundskeeper for Busch Stadium and Dan Heims, President of Terra Nova Nurseries "Container Crazy" and "Small Space Gardening". Two days of sessions include: Maple and Oak Problems; EAB; Coneflowers Gone Crazy; A Year in Drought and much more. MG admission with ID card or letter of active status is \$35 for 1 day and \$50 for 2 days. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mms> or 618-650-7050.

February 23: The Gardener's Pathway: Expand Your Palette of Ideas, Kishwaukee College Conference Center, Malta. Keynote address by Rich Tobiasz on Organic Gardening. Attendees may choose from 17 different breakout sessions such as Beneficial Insects and Pollinators; Small Fruit; Healing Gardens; Building a Garden Obelisk and more. Cost is \$50. Day includes continental breakfast, garden lunch and exhibit hall of unique items. Sponsored by the DeKalb County MGs and Kishwaukee College. 815-825-2086, ext. 2040.

February 23: The 'Natural Landscape' Symposium, Lincoln Land Community College, Litchfield. 8:15 to Noon. Andrea Faber Taylor, recognized expert on the benefits of nature to children's health, will be the keynote speaker. Attendees will also choose 2 - 60 minute sessions from topics such as Beneficial Insects; Invasives; Tomato IPM; Edibles in Containers; Blueberries and Native Plants. Register at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cjmm>

March 2: 18th Annual Gardener's Palette, John Wood Community College, Quincy. 9 am- 3:30 pm. Fifteen gardening classes to choose from including sessions by Extension educators, Boehms Garden Center, Seed Savers Exchange and Rich's Foxwillow Pines. Fee is \$40 which includes lunch, snacks, choice of 5 classes and vendors. Sponsored by the Adams-Brown County MGs. 217-223-8380.

March 2: Home, Lawn and Garden Day 2013, Central Catholic High School, Bloomington. The event fee of \$40.00 includes several choices of workshops, exhibitors, door prizes, and lunch. Participants select 3 workshops from over 40 topics and chose 1 of 9 NEW "Dessert with a Master Gardener" mini-workshops. The welcome session is "Building a Living Wall" and Kaizad Irani will bring the keynote message of the "Inner Sanctum". Sponsored by the McLean County MGs. Online registration will open in mid-January at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/lmw>

March 2: Gardening For Food and Fun, NIU campus, Rockford. Keynote talk given by Greg Mueller, CBG VP of Science and Academic Programs. Fifteen classes and workshops to choose from including Container Gardening, Fairy Gardening, Conifers 101, Advanced Deciduous Tree Care; Native Plants; Roses, Vegetable Gardening and more. Fee is \$40. Sponsored by the Winnebago County MGs. Register at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/jsw>

March 9-17: Chicago Flower and Garden Show, Navy Pier, Chicago. Garden displays, shopping and lots of educational sessions. <http://chicagoflower.com>

March 9: Russell Allen Garden Day, Meyers-Evans Student Center Lincoln College, Lincoln. 9 am to 1pm. The keynote speaker will be Dianne Noland, producer of Midwest Gardener on WILL-TV who will talk on "Great Perennial Combinations". Breakout sessions include Container Gardening; Herb Gardening; Horticulture Happenings at the IL. Executive Mansion; Native Plants; Cooking with Herbs and Hummingbirds. Registration fee is \$10 before March 2 and \$12 at the door. Sponsored by the Logan County MGs. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/lms> 217-732-8289.

March 9: Ready..Set..Grow, Sauk Valley College, Dixon. 8:30 am to 3 pm. Sessions on Sustainable Landscaping; Vertical Gardening; Rain Barrels; Beekeeping; Seed Starting and much more. The keynote address will be by "Ornamental Edible Gardens" by Mark Dwyer, Director of the Janesville WI Rotary Gardens. Registration is \$40 & includes breakfast, lunch and door prizes. Sponsored by the Ogle, Lee and Whiteside Co. MGs. 815-732-2191 or 815-835-2070. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/bdo>

March 14: Growing ProHort Workshop, Illinois Central College, East Peoria. Day long workshop includes speakers and lunch. Presented in partnership with the IL. Green Industry and Extension. Watch for details at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/fmpt> or 309-543-3308.

March 16: Gardener's Day, Western IL University Student Union, Macomb. 9 am to 3 pm. Experts from across the region will speak on New Plant Releases; Designing for Extreme Weather; Creating Certified Wildlife Backyard Habitats; Local Foods; a tour of the WIU living library with over 2,000 plants and much more. Registration fee of \$40 includes break out sessions, lunch and vendors. Sponsored by the McDonough County MGs. 309-837-3939.

March 23: Gardener's Day, Morgan County Extension Office, Jacksonville. 9 am to Noon. Topics include Pollinator Plants; Rain Gardens and EAB. In addition there will be a rain barrel workshop in the afternoon for an additional charge. \$10 per person. Sponsored by the Morgan and Greene County MGs. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/ccgms/> or 217-243-7424.

IMPORTANT DATES CONTINUED

March 23: Weekend Gardener, Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville. 8:30 am to 2:45 pm. Choose from 16 exciting workshops including Wildflowers, Designing Containers, Attracting Butterflies; Tomatoes; Entryway Designs, Turfgrass and more. Fee is \$40 and includes lunch. 618-939-3434.

April 6: Gardeners Big Day, Dickson Mounds Museum, Lewiston. 8 am to 4 pm. \$25 includes lunch, your choice of gardening seminars, workshops, vendors, displays and much more. Sponsored by the Fulton County MG. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/fmpt/> or 309-547-3308.

April 6: Gardenfest 2013, McHenry County College, Crystal Lake. Keynote speaker is Bruce Spangenberg, Horticulture Department Chair at the college. The day long event offers seminars and workshops in all areas of horticulture. Sponsored by MCC and the McHenry County MGs. Contact Amy Carzoli at acarzoli@mchenry.edu or 815-455-8764.

June 13-15: American Hosta Society National Convention, Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel, Milwaukee WI. Educational sessions and tours of gardens. \$139 per person. <http://www.2013ahsconvention.com>

September 7-14: International Master Gardener Conference, Alaskan cruise leaves from Seattle WA. <http://www.uaex.edu/imgc2013/>

September 19-21: Illinois Master Gardener Conference, iwireless Center, Moline.

ALLAN ARMITAGE'S HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS FOR THE SUN ONLINE CLASS

A self paced, self-study online certificate program authored by Allan Armitage, one of the world's leading experts on and researchers of perennials. In this professional development course, you will learn the characteristics, propagation methods and optimal growing conditions of 20 species of sun perennials. Register by January 20 to receive the \$149 holiday fee. Offered by the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education. For more information or to register go to: <http://www.georgiacenter.uga.edu/ppd/courses/horticulturegreen-industry/armitage-s-herbaceous-perennials-sun>

HOW MUCH DOES A VEGETABLE GARDEN COST/SAVE?

Gail Langellotto, Oregon State Master Gardener Coordinator recently published a blog on the cost of starting a vegetable garden, versus yield and cost saving. She came up with 6 studies, that reported 8 observations. For each garden, she looked at the difference between yield and cost (difference = yield - cost). Then she adjusted the value of the difference to its 2012 value, using an online Consumer Price Index inflation calculator. Gail then divided this adjusted difference by the size of the garden, to arrive at the value per square foot of garden area.

Altogether, the gardens in these studies had an AVERAGE VALUE OF \$0.74 / square foot of garden area, and a MEDIAN VALUE OF \$0.62 / square foot of garden area. For a modest-sized garden, 200 square feet in size, that's a return of \$148 in the first year. For larger gardens, 500-700 square feet in size, that's a return of \$370-\$518 in year one, alone!

In at least 5 out of the 8 observations, the costs incurred included what was needed to establish a garden, and not simply to maintain a garden. These costs are sure to decrease in subsequent years, as the cost of maintaining a garden is substantially less than start up costs. Thus, even in the first year after establishment, the net economic benefits of vegetable gardening are positive - and these economic benefits are sure to increase in years two, three and beyond.

The 'winning' crops in these papers included:

- salad greens
- tomatoes
- beets
- broccoli
- potatoes
- strawberries



These were the fruits and vegetables that yielded the most, in terms of dollars saved by not having to purchase these items. However, to truly get the best value from your vegetable garden, it is important to plant what your family likes to eat.

For a full look at the studies Gail used in her blog as well as her own home measures to cut down on vegetable garden start-up costs visit Gail's blog at: <http://osumg.blogspot.com/2012/04/how-much-does-vegetable-garden-costsave.html>

FINDING CHICAGO'S FOOD GARDENS WITH GOOGLE EARTH

Urban agriculture is promoted as a strategy for dealing with food insecurity, stimulating economic development, and combating diet-related health problems in cities. However, up to now, no one has known how much gardening is taking place in urban areas. Researchers at the University of Illinois have developed a methodology that they used to quantify the urban agriculture in Chicago.

“There’s been such a focus on community gardens and urban farms, but not a lot of interest in looking at backyard gardens as an area of research,” Sara Lovell Taylor, crop sciences researcher said. An accurate map of these sites would be helpful for advocacy groups and community planners. Taylor uploaded lists of gardens from non-governmental organizations into Google Earth, which automatically geocoded the sites by street address. She used a set of reference images of community gardens, vacant lot gardens, urban farms, school gardens, and home food gardens to determine visual indicators of food gardens. Using these indicators and Google Earth images, doctoral candidate John Taylor examined the documented sites. Of the 1,236 “community gardens,” only 160, or 13 percent, were actually producing food.

Taylor then looked at Google Earth images of Chicago to locate food production sites. He identified 4493 possible sites, most of which were residential gardens of 50 square meters or less, and visited a representative sample of gardens on vacant land to confirm that they were really producing food. The final estimate was 4,648 urban agriculture sites with a production area of 264,181 square meters. Residential gardens and single-plot gardens on vacant lots accounted for almost three-fourths of the total. To map the gardens onto community areas, the shapefiles were joined with 2010 Census tract shapefiles and shapefiles of 77 community areas and neighborhoods from Chicago’s GIS portal. The tract information was subsequently joined with the Census Bureau’s 2005-2009 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates of demographic and housing characteristics.

The maps showed that garden concentration varied by neighborhood. “Chinatown, Bridgeport was kind of a hot spot,” Taylor said. Both of these neighborhoods have large Chinese-origin populations. Even outside those areas, many of the larger gardens were associated with households headed by people of Chinese origin. Neighborhoods in the northwest with large numbers of Polish and Eastern and Southern European immigrants also had a high density of backyard gardens. They were not all growing the same kind of food. “There are distinctions between these cultural groups because the crops they select are sometimes from their home areas in addition to the suite of crops we can all grow in our backyards,” Lovell explained. As people move across borders, they often bring seeds with them. “In a Mexican neighborhood where we were working, a lot of people grow a tropical corn that is 12 to 16 feet high,” Taylor said. “It’s grown not for the ears of corn but for the leaves, which are used to make tamales.” He noted that many older African-Americans in Chicago who came north during the Great Migration from the south from the early 1900s to the 1970s remember farming and growing up with gardens. “They are almost reproducing in miniature in their backyards the southern landscape and gardening practices that they associated with their youth,” he said.

Garden type varied by neighborhood as well. Home food gardens are concentrated in the northwest, where people tend to live in detached houses. Vacant lot gardens are concentrated in the economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the south and west sides, as are the community gardens. Lovell said that, in some communities, more than half of the lots are vacant, and making use of them could be a huge opportunity. Chicago has a program that allows people living next to a vacant lot to purchase it at a fraction of what it would normally cost.

The results of this study suggest that both backyard gardens and vacant lot gardens contribute substantially to Chicago’s total food production. “Home gardens actually contribute to food security,” Taylor said. “They’re under appreciated and unsupported.” He noted that people grow not only for themselves but for their neighbors as well, which is particularly important in food deserts where fresh produce is in short supply.

The study, “Mapping public and private spaces of urban agriculture in Chicago through the analysis of high-resolution aerial images in Google Earth” by John R. Taylor and Sarah Taylor Lovell, published in *Landscape and Urban Planning*, is available online at <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S016920461200237X>.

OOH AAH PLANTS! BY JANE TAYLOR

Extension educators and Master Gardener Coordinators attended a youth garden workshop this fall to promote sustainable youth garden programs in our Illinois communities. The featured speaker was Jane Taylor, founding director of the Childrens Garden at Michigan State and internationally recognized expert on youth gardening. She shared her favorite Ooh! Aah plants for children (and adults too!) and where to locate the seed or plants.

PLANTS

1. Chocolate mint, *Mentha piperita piperita*;
2. Tomato 'Sungold'
3. Dinosaur kale (Lacinato, Tuscan)
4. Scarlet Runner bean or Painted Lady, *Phaseolus coccineus*
5. Sensitive plant, *Mimosa pudica*
6. Pepper 'Pizza'
7. Eyeball plant, Toothache plant, *Acmella oleacea*
8. Love-in-a-puff, *Cardiospermum halicacabum*
9. Hopi red dye amaranth, *Amaranthus cruentus*
- 10 Red Noodle beans, *Vigna unguiculata*
11. Spinning tops or dancing gourds
12. Blue potatoes >All Blue=
13. Wee-Be-Little pumpkins, *Cucurbita pepo*
14. Radish 'Watermelon'
15. Sunflowers, *Helianthus*, a wide variety of sizes and colors

SOURCES

Plants from many sources
(J, JS, PT)
(J, JS, PT)
(J, PT, JS)
(SSE, J, FP)
(T)
(J, N)
(FP, SS)
(PT)
(J, PT, N)
(SSE, BCHS)
(SSE, J, JS)
(J, JS, PT, N)
(PT, J)
Many sources

SEED SOURCES

- (BCHS) Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds, www.rareseeds.com
(FP) The Fragrant Path, www.fragrantpathseeds.com
(J) Johnny's Selected Seeds, www.johnnyseeds.com
(JS) John Scheepers Kitchen Garden Seeds, www.kitchengardenseeds.com
(N) Nichols Garden Nursery, www.nicholsgardennursery.com
(PT) Pinetree Garden Seeds, www.superseeds.com
(SESE) Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, www.southernexposure.com
(SSE) Seed Savers Exchange, www.seedsavers.org
(SS) Select Seeds Antique Flowers, www.selectseeds.com
(T) Territorial Seed Co.: www.territorialseed.com

