Speakers

Michele Bakacs is the County Environmental and Resource Management Agent. Michele has worked with urban community gardens on mitigating soil lead issues and managing water resources.

Madeline Flahive DiNardo is the Agriculture and Resource Management Agent for Union County. Madeline has been working with local community gardens and coordinates the Union County Master Gardener Program.

Karen Ensle, EdD, RDN, FAND is the Family and Community Health Sciences Educator and County Extension Department Head. Dr. Ensle teaches and coordinates nutrition education programs in Union County working with nutrition professionals, schools, and community groups.

James Nichnadowicz is the 4-H Agent and Associate Department Head for Union County. He has been teaching children and adults about gardening for over 20 years. He has had the privilege of helping to create gardens in conjunction with schools, afterschool programs, and a variety of youth organizations.

Tamara Pellien is the Ocean County 4-H Agent. Part of her youth development work focuses on S.T.E.M. topics for school enrichment opportunities.

For directions to Trailside Nature and Science Center go to—
http://ucnj.org/community/parks-community-renewal/parks-facilities/trailsid-beta/directions/

In cooperation with the

Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Christopher Hudak, Chairman
Mohamed S. Jalloh, Vice Chairman
Bruce Bergen
Linda Carter
Angel G. Estrada
Sergio Granados
Bette Jane Kowalski
Alexander Mirabella
Vernell Wright
Alfred J. Faella, County Manager

Get Your School Garden Growing

Saturday Feb 22, 2014
8AM—3:30 PM

The purpose of this conference is to assist schools, afterschool programs, and community youth groups in starting a youth garden. Youth gardens can be used as outdoor classrooms to teach math, science, and nutrition.

This conference is being taught by Rutgers Cooperative Extension faculty with support of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

$25.00 fee includes Lunch and all materials
8:00—9:00 AM REGISTRATION
(coffee will be available)

9:00 AM Welcome and Introductions

Morning Session Topics:

Where Should Your Garden Grow? Madeline Flahive DiNardo

Site Considerations for a Vegetable Garden -
Where is the best place on the school or community property to grow vegetables? There are probably some things you have not considered! This lecture will cover important site considerations such as sun, soils, water and other things that may not currently be on your radar.

Teaching Youth About Safe Gardening Practices Michele Bakacs
Michele will cover important aspects of staying safe in the garden including teaching youth about soil practices, methods for teaching youth about soil sampling, and everyday practices for garden safety.

Panel discussion—Experiences from the Trenches James Nichnadowicz
Educators discuss how they started youth gardens and how they can assist you with yours.
Valerie Erdosi Mahaffey of the Kings Daughters Dayschool—Plainfield
Mary Greeley of the Obama Green Charter School—Plainfield
Corey Wu-Jung of Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Union County
Jonathan Phillips of Groundworks Elizabeth

Garden Enhanced Nutrition Education Dr. Karen Ensle
Karen will discuss how nutrition education comes alive in the garden and gets youth interested in eating fruits and veggies. When kids grow their own foods they are more likely to taste them. The garden adds the opportunity to be outside, get more physical activity and adds fun and hands-on activities to Math, Science, Language Arts, English, and Social Studies lessons.

LUNCH IS PROVIDED

Afternoon Session Topics: choose 2 workshops

Seed Starting in the Classroom James Nichnadowicz
In this hands-on workshop, you will learn techniques for sharing the inside of a seed with children and then how to get a seed to grow into a mature plant. We will work with the easiest seeds for youngsters to grow and discuss the options for caring for the seeds once they sprout. Copies of the seed starting/gardening curriculum, “Garden in the City”, will be given out to all who attend. Each attendee will also leave with a 6 pack of seeds in soil.

Getting Youth Excited About Compost Michele Bakacs
Incorporating composting into a school or youth led garden is a great way to teach kids about soil health, soil biology, and recycling. Teaching youth why and how to compost also helps youth learn important skills such as planning, monitoring, maintenance, patience and working as a team. This presentation will cover techniques for getting youth interested in compost and the basic supplies needed to get started.

Hydroponics in the Classroom Tamara Pellien
Tamara will highlight the methods and activities for a 12 week school based hydroponics program. Participants will learn how to operate a simple hydroponic unit as well as how to lead the activities in the program guide. Participants can expect to complete hands on activities as part of the workshop.

Friend or Foe? Pest Management in the Vegetable Garden Madeline Flahive DiNardo
No one likes to have insect or disease problems in their vegetable garden. Learn integrated pest management techniques for preventing and managing insects and diseases in a vegetable garden. Even if you do have an insect or disease problem—turn it into a learning experience for your students!

Nutrition: New MyPlate and “DIG IN” Curriculums Dr Karen Ensle
MyPlate reminds us to eat healthy foods but most people do not eat enough fruits and vegetables. This session will review curriculum developed by USDA, other federal and state agencies, and Cooperative Extension, that provide nutrition, food safety, physical activity and gardening emphasis. Curriculum will be shared for various grade levels including parent materials.