Conserving our Natural Resources...

Growing the Garden State...

and...

Horticulture for the Health of It!

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The Value of Volunteering

Independent Sector is the leadership network for nonprofits, foundations, and corporations committed to advancing the common good. This estimate helps acknowledge the millions of individuals who dedicate their time, talents, and energy to making a difference.

According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, about 62.8 million Americans, or 25.3 percent of the adult population, gave 7.9 billion hours of volunteer service worth $184 billion in 2014.

The Independent Sector has calculated a national average of $23.56 per-hour value for volunteerism, while here in New Jersey that value for 2015 is $26.70 per hour, a 4% increase from 2015. More information may be found at www.independentsector.org

Annual Hourly Investment for Rutgers Master Gardener Volunteers

- 54% volunteering
- 40% training
- 6% continuing education

Statewide Rutgers Master Gardener Program Summary

Jeffrey M. Zlot, Director
Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension

THE RUTGERS NJAES MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension faculty and staff provide expert and in-depth training in all aspects of gardening and horticulture to prospective Master Gardener volunteers. Topics include plant biology, propagation, soil science, and plant and pest diagnostics, to name a few. Master Gardeners provide volunteer hours to assist NJ residents in answering their home horticulture questions and provide community service through educational projects.

Statewide Summary for 2015

- 326 Newly Trained Rutgers Master Gardeners
- 2,476 Active Rutgers Master Gardeners
- 8,612 New Jersey residents trained since 1984
- 163,337 Volunteer Hours
- $4,361,098 2015 Volunteer Value

Statewide Highlights

- 21,435 Garden Helpline clients
- 33,264 pounds of produce grown, harvested and donated
- 887 educational seminars, workshops, and presentations attended by 13,797 adults and 6,367 youth
- 618 media contacts (newspaper and television interviews, feature stories, and press releases).

1984 - 2015

Rutgers Master Gardener Program Summary

- 2,549,058 Cumulative Volunteer hours
- $49,656,072 Cumulative Value from 33 Years of Rutgers Master Gardener Volunteer efforts
2015 NJ State Master Gardener Conference

“Through the Garden Gate”

The Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

This association is a statewide advisory board that assists Rutgers Cooperative Extension in expanding its educational and outreach mission. The RMGANJ is comprised of representatives from current RMG county programs, and assists with existing outreach programs and expanding activities to new audiences.

2015 RMGANJ Leadership

President: Ellen Simonetti, Monmouth County
Vice President: Kathy Dopart, Middlesex County
Treasurer: Patricia Schanzlin, Sussex County
Recording Secretary: Jane Gardner, Sussex County
Atlantic County

Program founded in 2004
www.rutgers-atlantic.org/garden

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 16
Master Gardeners currently active: 88
Master Gardeners trained to date: 287
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 5,805
  Consultation & Diagnostics: 1,321
  Community Outreach: 3,462
  Community Education: 366
2015 Volunteer value: $154,993
Total Volunteer hours to date: 45,650
Total Volunteer value to date: $1,141,665

Outreach Highlights:
- 2,199 website hits
- 469 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 52 feature articles in The Press of Atlantic City
- 32 educational programs for 700 adults
- 10 newspaper interviews, 5 press releases
- 4 PowerPoint Presentations

Gardening and Greening

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society awarded the Atlantic City Aquarium the Blue Ribbon for Public Spaces/Parks in their 2015 “Gardening and Greening Contest.” For seven years, John Collett coordinated a dedicated team of Rutgers Master Gardener of Atlantic County volunteers, including Bill Johnson, Camille Ochman, Marion Millar, Vivian Millar, Dee Zaniewski, Linda Joseph, Kathy McCormick, Suzanne Tomasino, and Laura Widell, as they designed and installed new plantings to beautify the park and demonstrate techniques for successful gardening at the seashore. Gardening at this public space is a challenge because of the large amount of space to be covered (nearly 8 acres) in a location bordered by seawater on three sides, with constant winds, inaccessible fresh water, and the need to acquire new planting materials each year. Other RCE teams managing similar demonstration sites throughout Atlantic County have provided RCE programming with tremendous and invaluable outreach to our residents.

Bergen County

Program founded in 1984
http://mgofbc.org

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 25
Master Gardeners currently active: 238
Master Gardeners trained to date: 891
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 10,294
  Consultation and Diagnostics: 886
  Community Outreach: 1,751
  Community Education: 97
2015 Volunteer value $274,850
Total Volunteer hours to date: 187,310
Total Volunteer value to date: $2,901,975

Outreach Highlights:
- 23,584 website hits
- 790 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 8 educational programs for 464 adults

Horticultural Therapy Programs

Horticultural Therapy Programs in Bergen County have grown in popularity and now reach many diverse groups, including post-stroke seniors, developmental disabled youth, housing authority residents, long-term hospital care recipients, and more. Rutgers Master Gardeners are recognized widely for this special application of horticulture, and the countless individuals that benefit each year. Successes are not measured in pounds of produce grown, but in the number of lives that have been improved as a result of successes with plants. Rutgers Master Gardeners are uniquely suited to facilitate these activities, as their knowledge base, creativity, artistic skills, and desire to help others makes it a natural connection. Innovative programs are being developed to serve veterans with PTSD, using greenhouses and gardens as tools for therapy, rehabilitation, and training. New well-funded partnerships with Columbia University and the VA Medical Center are also underway. Master Gardeners and Horticultural Therapy - Perfect Together!
Burlington County

Program founded in 2001
http://www.mgburlington.org

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 11
Master Gardeners currently active: 149
Master Gardeners trained to date: 330
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 6,257
  Consultation & Diagnostics: 2,423
  Community Outreach: 3,619
  Community Education: 795
2015 Volunteer value: $167,062
Total Volunteer hours to date: 75,601
Total Volunteer value to date: $1,840,882

Outreach Highlights:
- 8,121 website hits
- 899 lbs. of produce grown and donated
- 532 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 21 feature articles in the Burlington County Times
- 17 educational programs for 256 adults
- 10 PowerPoint Presentations
- 1 Facebook Page, 3 YouTube videos

Smith’s Woods Butterfly Garden

The Master Gardeners of Burlington County took over the Butterfly Garden at Smith’s Woods just this year in 2015. It was a project started by the county parks department. It is in a county park, with trails, playgrounds and pavilions that is frequently visited by residents of the area. The small group of master gardeners who have been working on this project have done a great amount of work in a little time. They have identified the plants that were already present and have planted more in order to attract butterflies and other pollinators. Their plans for the upcoming year include focusing on specific butterflies and their host plants, incorporating signage to the garden to educate visitors and slowly expanding their garden areas.

Camden County

Program founded in 1996
http://www.camdencounty.com/parks

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 16
Master Gardeners currently active: 96
Master Gardeners trained to date: 472
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 5,729
  Consultation & Diagnostics: 2,741
  Community Outreach: 1,327
2015 Volunteer value: $152,964
Total Volunteer hours to date: 72,579
Total Volunteer value to date: $1,722,730

Outreach Highlights:
- 17,913 website hits
- 900 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 24 feature articles for the Courier Post
- 1 Facebook Page with 40 educational posts

‘New’ Demonstration Garden

With agreement from the Camden County Parks Department and assistance from RCE Agent Mike Haberland, Rutgers Master Gardeners repurposed an old horse paddock into our first demonstration garden. We planned and constructed two raised beds, one as a vegetable garden, and the second as a flower garden showcasing perennial pollinator plants. Both gardens were pollinated by two bee hives that were tended by a team of Master Gardeners. The demonstration garden also displayed different types of compost bins, showcasing choices residents have in making their own compost. The display consists of a 3-bin composter and several other styles contributed by our Master Gardeners and the Parks Department. The 2015 Demonstration Garden turned out to be a great learning endeavor for our Rutgers Master Gardeners and a useful tool in our mission to serve the public.
**Cape May County**

Program founded in 2003

http://www.capemaycountygov.net/

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 0
Master Gardeners currently active: 24
Master Gardeners trained to date: 142
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 1,248
  - Consultation & Diagnostics: 176
  - Community Outreach: 661
  - Community Education: 366

2015 Volunteer value: $33,321
Total Volunteer hours to date: 18,095
Total Volunteer value to date: $388,399

**Outreach Highlights:**

- 157 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 29 educational programs for 455 adults, 119 youth
- 12 PowerPoint Presentations
- 3 feature articles and 4 news releases for the Atlantic City Press and Cape May County Herald

**Special Services School Gardens**

Brenda Church led the charge in restoring and expanding an existing garden at the school. Phase One was reclaiming the existing garden from weeds and over growth while also providing a place of learning for the students. The students were taught the proper function and use of various garden tools, methods of dividing and replanting plants, and proper pruning methods. In Phase Two, the garden was divided into several areas, a pollinator garden and a milkweed patch, the “nursery” where a variety of larval plants provide habitat for a number of butterfly species, a forest area planted with seed and berry sources for the birds, and a labyrinth was designed with plants that have different scents and textures, providing a sensory input the autistic students attending the school require to calm down and self-regulate. The students were very proud that their garden had been certified as a wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.

**Cumberland County**

Program founded in 2006

http://www.co.cumberland.nj.us/

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 10
Master Gardeners currently active: 42
Master Gardeners trained to date: 142
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 3,487
  - Consultation & Diagnostics: 679
  - Community Outreach: 1,953
  - Community Education: 626

2015 Volunteer value: $93,103
Total Volunteer hours to date: 34,133
Total Volunteer value to date: $825,983

**Outreach Highlights:**

- 2,523 lbs. of produce harvested and donated
- 580 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 208 Radio & TV spots, Channel 22 and 1240 SNJ
- 60 programs for 889 adults and 1,189 youth
- 16 press releases and 6 feature articles for the Cumberland/Salem Guide, South Jersey Times, Atlantic City Press, and Cumberland Review
- 3 PowerPoint presentations

**Horticulture Enrichment**

This program at the VA NJ Memorial Home in Vineland began when Master Gardeners met with veterans and staff. Rutgers Master Gardener Suzanne Cavanaugh, who has been with the program from its inception and is still active in the program today states, “I like working in the program because it gives me the opportunity to thank the veterans for their service.” The monthly program has an educational outreach to 345 veterans. Master Gardener volunteers comment “It's a good feeling when we see them enjoy themselves.” and “It is a gift to work at the Veterans' Home with the vets and the members of their families.” This partnership is a win-win for Master Gardeners and the Veterans alike.
**Essex County**

Program founded in 1986

[http://essex.njaes.rutgers.edu/](http://essex.njaes.rutgers.edu/)

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 27
Master Gardeners currently active: 126
Master Gardeners trained to date: 798

Total volunteer hours in 2015: 12,263
  - Consultation & Diagnostics: 2,024
  - Community Outreach: 7,623
  - Community Education: 669

2015 Volunteer value: $327,422
Total Volunteer hours to date: 187,567
Total Volunteer value to date: $3,165,422

**Outreach Highlights:**
- 7,465 website hits
- 915 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 45 educational programs for 666 adults, 309 youth
- 2 PowerPoint presentations
- 1 Facebook page

**Monthly Horticulture Meetings**

Every month from September through June, the Rutgers master Gardeners open up Garibaldi Hall at the Essex County Environmental Center to the senior citizens of Essex County. Some live independently while others come from assisted living and nursing facilities. The seniors are treated to an afternoon of activities including exercise, plant knowledge, snacks, and an activity based on that month’s theme. The monthly activities for the seniors allow the Master Gardeners to help the seniors with physical activities and exercises. The program goal is to relax, enjoy their creative expression, and stimulate their sensory and intellectual growth. These monthly meetings also serve to provide social interaction amongst all the attendees, seniors and volunteer alike.

**Hunterdon County**

Program founded in 1992

[http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/mg.htm](http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/mg.htm)

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 13
Master Gardeners currently active: 95
Master Gardeners trained to date: 394

Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 11,338
  - Consultation & Diagnostics: 1,876
  - Community Education: 6,450

2015 Volunteer value: $302,725
Total Volunteer hours to date: 232,195
Total Volunteer value to date: $4,810,611

**Outreach Highlights:**
- 9,118 lbs. fresh produce harvested and donated
- 4,336 website hits
- 1,726 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 93 programs for 567 adults and 232 youth
- 3 news releases

**Growing Tomorrow Gardeners**

Rutgers Master Gardener volunteers offer a ‘Seed to Salad’ program in two local schools in Clinton and Whitehouse Station. Team Leaders Carolyn Taylor, Joanne Karpinach, and Laurie Fischer, along with nine Rutgers Master Gardener volunteers led 21 new programs for elementary aged students in the two schools, reaching over 550 students, teachers and parents. Educational programming on various topics included soils and minerals, composting and decomposers, and applied vegetable gardening. Rutgers Master Gardener volunteers also conducted youth programming for Special Education students at Hunterdon Central High School, led by Master Gardeners Ginny Shanahan and Elisabeth Black. With class sizes up to thirty, seventeen Rutgers Master Gardener volunteers spent over 40 hours educating students in a wide range of horticultural topics and applied vegetable gardening.
Master Gardeners - What They Do
New Jersey Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who assist Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) Cooperative Extension in its mission to deliver horticulture programs and information to the general public.

Master Gardeners are engaged in their local communities and use their skills in a variety of areas including:

- **Answering questions through the Garden Helpline and plant clinics**
- **Gardening demonstrations, newspaper articles, and speaking engagements**
- **Providing horticultural outreach programs**
- **Assisting in research projects with Rutgers NJAES faculty and staff**
- **Harvesting and packing produce for community food banks**
- **Offering school and community gardening projects**

Anyone with an interest in gardening and a commitment to volunteer service can become a Rutgers NJAES Master Gardener.

Visit us at njaes.rutgers.edu/mastergardeners.

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**Mercer County**

Program founded in 1993

[http://www.mgofmc.org](http://www.mgofmc.org)

- Master Gardeners trained in 2015: **24**
- Master Gardeners currently active: **259**
- Master Gardeners trained to date: **703**
- Total Volunteer hours in 2015: **18,688**
  - Consultation & Diagnostics: **4,744**
  - Community Outreach: **278**
  - Community Education: **42**
- 2015 Volunteer value: **$498,970**
- Total Volunteer hours to date: **302,686**
- Total Volunteer value to date: **$6,387,443**

**Trent House Summer Camps**

For the past three summers Rutgers Master Gardeners of Mercer County have partnered with the YWCA, Boys and Girls Club, Home Front, and 4-H to present day-long summer camps to over two hundred children at the historic Trent House located in Trenton, New Jersey. RMGs participate in the camps by leading activities that enrich camper’s knowledge of gardening and nature. Children take part in small group experiential guided tours through “Mr. Trent’s” kitchen garden where they engage in varied aspects of gardening and harvesting produce. Tours also teach campers the role that insects play in pollination as the garden is always alive with a variety of flying creatures. Campers also learn how flower and fruit structure are related through edible demonstrations as they move through the garden to hunt for pollinators. Many children are cautious of insects when they first arrive, but soon learn the value of ‘bugs’ as they search for hidden garden creatures. Campers join in garden food preservation and preparation activities presented within the historical environment.

RMGs developed and presented educational material in consultation with Historic Horticulturist Charlie Thomforde. The day ends with campers playing games from the colonial period followed by marching to their buses led by the Old Barracks Museum Fife and Drum Corp.
Middlesex County

Program founded in 1988
http://www.co.middlesex.nj.us/extensionservices

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 46
Master Gardeners currently active: 255
Master Gardeners trained to date: 485
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 8,572
  Consultation & Diagnostics: 1,055
  Community Outreach: 1,226
  Community Education: 488
2015 Volunteer value: $ 228,872
Total Volunteer hours to date: 141,817
Total Volunteer value to date: $ 2,426,790

Outreach Highlights:
  • 2,204 Garden Helpline client contacts
  • 1,000 visitors to the Butterfly House
  • 700 lbs. produce donated
  • 64 educational programs, 949 adults, 518 youth
  • 10 PowerPoint presentations
  • 4 Community Garden Start-ups

Veterans Memorial Park - Menlo Park

Rutgers Master Gardeners Martha Moncek and Susan Roberts have conducted hands-on horticultural classes at the Veterans Memorial Home in Menlo Park. Throughout the growing season, classes are held once or twice a month depending on the need or interest expressed by residents and staff. Each class or session is about 2-3 hours and topics include seeding, planting, maintenance and design. Martha and Susan have been very successful acquiring funds to establish raised bed gardens which are more appropriate for residents confined to wheelchairs. The Middlesex County Master Gardener Greenhouse Project provides plant material, primarily annual flowers and herbs, for the hands-on sessions held both inside and outside of the facility. The residents and staff of the Home are grateful for the program and it has been recognized every year by the Veterans Home administration.

RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

Becoming a Master Gardener
The first Master Gardener program in New Jersey was established in 1984. Since then thousands of New Jersey residents have completed the Rutgers NJAES Master Gardener training program. These volunteers have given hundreds of thousands of hours in service to the residents of New Jersey.

Master Gardeners receive in-depth training in horticulture from NJAES Cooperative Extension faculty and staff. Successful graduates of the training program become Certified Master Gardeners after completion of the required volunteer service.

Master Gardeners participate in many statewide events:
  • NJ Flower and Garden Show
  • Spring and Fall Conferences
  • Rutgers Ag Field Day
  • Rutgers Gardens Summer and Fall Festivals
  • New Jersey Museum of Agriculture Landscape Auction

For more information, please call your county Cooperative Extension office listed online at www.njaes.rutgers.edu/county.

Visit us at njaes.rutgers.edu/mastergardeners.
Monmouth County

Program founded in 1999
http://www.visitmonmouth.com

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 26
Master Gardeners currently active: 219
Master Gardeners trained to date: 481
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 23,709
  Consultation & Diagnostics: 2,790
  Community Outreach: 11,232
  Community Education: 3,744
2015 Volunteer value: $ 633,030
Total Volunteer hours to date: 256,382
Total Volunteer value to date: $ 6,437,004

Outreach Highlights:
- 3,875 lbs. of produce harvested and donated
- 2,079 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 96 programs for 2,232 adults and 2,550 youth
- 29 Community Gardens supported, with 7 newly created
- 15 School Gardens supported, 6 new ones
- 6 news releases

School Garden Conference

The Rutgers Master Gardeners of Monmouth County held their first annual School Garden Conference in 2015. The day began with presentations that included Monarchs, Milkweed, and School Gardens, the New Jersey School Garden Contest, School Gardens and the Common Core Standards, and Vegetable Gardening.

Afternoon sessions included Composting and Vermicomposting, Gardening in Small Spaces, Pea Planting, Growing Microgreens, Starting a Shared Garden, Learning Through Gardening, Cooking Vegetables, and Beekeeping. Additionally, the RMG educational gardens on site had informational stations.

Even with a large snowstorm the night before with the resultant delayed opening of county offices, and during the same day as the new PARRC testing for schools, the day of the event over 65 people attended from all over the state as well as New York, representing over 30 schools. Professional Development Certificates were distributed to all attendees. This conference was a successful, cooperative effort between Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Rutgers Master Gardeners, NJ Agricultural Society, Monarch Teacher Network, Greater Newark Conservancy, NJ Farm to School Network, and the Freehold Soil Conservation District.
Morris County

Program founded in 2003

http://morris.njaes.rutgers.edu/garden/

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 20
Master Gardeners currently active: 118
Master Gardeners trained to date: 297
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 3,637
  Consultation & Diagnostics: 1,086
  Community Outreach: 1,370
  Community Education: 1,181
2015 Volunteer value: $ 97,108
Total Volunteer hours to date: 46,210
Total Volunteer value to date: $ 1,086,957

Outreach Highlights:
- 1,063 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 633 lbs. of produce harvested and donated
- 133 educational programs for 2,219 adults
- 3 PowerPoint presentations

Morris County Community Gardens

The Morris County Master Gardeners are in their 3rd year of succession planting at these sites, with demonstration garden plots with crops, planting schedules and layout, and harvest times coordinated. Informational signage is placed around the plots and all produce is donated to the Interfaith Food Pantry. During 2015, garlic, onions, shallots, and scallions were harvested in July, followed by a planting of fall cold-tolerant crops which were harvested in October, November and December. This year, the Morris County RMGs added a new demonstration plot for the Rutgers Tomato Trial. Six varieties of tomatoes, known only as numbers 1 through 6, were planted in late June. MGs have been evaluating and tending them throughout the season, with replications at four other sites (in multiple counties).

Ocean County

Program founded in 1990

http://ocean.njaes.rutgers.edu/garden

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 27
Master Gardeners currently active: 143
Master Gardeners trained to date: 884
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 17,390
  Consultation & Diagnostics: 6,346
  Community Outreach: 2,179
  Community Education: 1,173
2015 Volunteer value: $ 464,313
Total Volunteer hours to date: 271,922
Total Volunteer value to date: $ 5,116,359

Outreach Highlights:
- 9,337 lbs. of produce harvested and donated
- 6,817 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 2,465 web site hits; 1,280 ticks identified
- 52 educational programs, 1,476 adults, 65 youth
- 18 news releases, 12 online articles
- 3 PowerPoint presentations

‘Celebrating the Familiar’ Exhibit

The Rutgers Master Gardeners of Ocean County partnered with the Toms River Business Development Corporation to have 20 sculptures displayed from May through September 2015 in downtown Toms River. The public sculpture exhibit, "Celebrating the Familiar," by Seward Johnson. RMGs designed, planted, and maintained container gardens to complement 8 of the 20 sculptures, delivering planters on the exhibit’s opening day before a public unveiling and formal ceremony while also maintaining planters until the exhibit closed on September 9, 2015. All participating RMGs were thrilled to be a part of this unique experience, receiving a plaque commemorating their service from their partner. The project generated publicity for the RMGs of Ocean County as they celebrated 25 years of service to the residents of Ocean County.
Passaic County

Program founded in 1996
http://www.mgapc.org

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 0
Master Gardeners currently active: 136
Master Gardeners trained to date: 411
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 11,448
  Consultation & Diagnostics: 1,758
  Community Outreach: 8,078
  Community Education: 118
2015 Volunteer value: $ 305,662
Total Volunteer hours to date: 152,769
Total Volunteer value to date: $ 3,249,888

Outreach Highlights:
  • 3,541 web site hits
  • 278 Garden Helpline client contacts
  • 104 pounds of produce donated
  • 36 educational programs, 158 adults, 17 youth
  • 1 Facebook page

Teaching Vegetable Garden

The Rutgers Master Gardeners planned and installed a teaching vegetable garden at the Extension office in Wayne. The garden included three types of garlic, lettuce, red cabbage, escarole, cauliflower, eggplant, collards, carrots, beets, bush and pole beans, snap peas, bell, hot, and sweet peppers, and nine varieties of tomatoes. The raised bed garden was planned to provide programming along with the 4-H Youth Development team. In the meantime, a total of 104 pounds of vegetables harvested throughout the summer were donated to the food pantry at the Father English Center. “The Father English pantry is one of the busiest in Paterson. It is a ‘People’s Choice Pantry,’” remarked Pantry Director Carols Roldan, “in that clients are given a cart and make their own selections.” This project provides Rutgers Master Gardeners an opportunity to improve their gardening skills and help needy families and individuals.

Somerset County

Program founded in 1991
http://somerset.njaes.rutgers.edu/garden/

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 27
Master Gardeners currently active: 108
Master Gardeners trained to date: 295
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 8,994
  Consultation & Diagnostics: 1,172
  Community Outreach: 491
  Community Education: 9
2015 Volunteer value: $ 239,072
Total Volunteer hours to date: 164,431
Total Volunteer value to date: $ 3,112,600

Outreach Highlights:
  • 1,259 Garden Helpline client contacts
  • 8 Educational programs, 60 adults and 564 youth
  • 4 news releases
  • 1 television interview (Verizon Fios 1)

‘Keep Bugging Me’ Team

The Rutgers Master Gardeners have teamed up to “Keep Bugging Me,” a group dedicated to enhance and support the personal growth of knowledge for fellow Rutgers Master Gardeners and the general public regarding the diversity of life and the intricacies of ecosystems. Insects, arachnids, plant diseases and weeds are collected, preserved, mounted and identified. Physical attributes, ecosystems, behaviors and remediation techniques are researched, an abstract is written, and the subject is displayed for presentation. These volunteers research these topics and more, utilizing this knowledge to create movies, crossword puzzles, word searches, artistic renditions of specimens, PowerPoint presentations, and interactive games. Presentations are available to Master Gardeners and Public Outreach events which includes 4-H fairs, classrooms, the Garden Helpline, continuing education and training, community gardens, and community events.
**Sussex County**

Program founded in 1998

[http://www.rmgsussex.org](http://www.rmgsussex.org)

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 16
Master Gardeners currently active: 145
Master Gardeners trained to date: 369
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 6,681
  - Consultation & Diagnostics: 167
  - Community Outreach: 4,318
  - Community Education: 1,350
2015 Volunteer value: $178,383
Total Volunteer hours to date: 91,413
Total Volunteer value to date: $2,162,918

**Outreach Highlights:**

- 2,068 lbs. of food and produce donated
- 346 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 61 educational programs, 1,056 adults, 470 youth
- 4 PowerPoint presentations
- 1 online article for 147 viewers

**Springfest 2015**

Through an interactive and award-winning exhibit titled "Plants in Action" Rutgers Master Gardeners of Sussex County taught Springfest Garden Show attendees about how plants move. Every March, over 10,000 attendees enjoy the four day show of gardens, vendors, speakers and educational exhibits. "Plants in Action" focused on how plants move. Thigmomonastic movements were explained through use of a sensitive plant which responds to touch by closing its leaves rapidly. Photonastic movement was shown by using an oxalis plant which folds up its leaves at night. Phototropism was illustrated by showing how plants lean toward the light, whereas the movement of sunflower buds tracking the sun's progress across the sky is called heliotropism. Morning glory, cardinal and black-eyed susan vines were grown to show thigmotropism, how a plant senses a support and twines around it. A time-lapse video accompanied the display, showing the plants actually in action, twining, growing, responding, and following the sun. Witnessing plants acting in their environments was a fun educational experience for show attendees.

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**Union County**

Program founded in 1987

[http://mastergardeners-uc.org](http://mastergardeners-uc.org)

Master Gardeners trained in 2015: 22
Master Gardeners currently active: 234
Master Gardeners trained to date: 857
Total Volunteer hours in 2015: 7,837
  - Consultation & Diagnostics: 2,310
  - Community Outreach: 2,764
  - Community Education: 1,933
2015 Volunteer value: $209,248
Total Volunteer hours to date: 185,992
Total Volunteer value to date: $3,392,168

**Outreach Highlights:**

- 1,888 lbs. of produce grown and donated
- 1,042 Garden Helpline client contacts
- 20 educational programs, 1,650 adults, 334 youth
- 7 news releases
- 1 television interview (Verizon Fios 1)

**Greenhouse Grand Opening**

Rutgers Master Gardeners and the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders celebrated the official opening of the county greenhouse facility located in the demonstration garden at Trailside in the Watchung Reservation. The new facility features a 21' x 36' x 8' greenhouse, handicapped accessible parking and walkways, a patio area and solar powered cistern. The project was funded by the Union County Open Space Trust Fund. Vegetables and herbs are grown in the greenhouse to supply the Master Gardener “Sharing Garden” which produce and greens for local food pantries. Students from the Cerebral Palsy League of Cranford attended spring and fall planting workshops in the greenhouse, learning how to transplant annuals and plant flower bulbs for forcing. The new facility was also enjoyed by youth enrolled at the County Park Department’s summer camp programs.
Rutgers Master Gardener Program Faculty and Staff

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This annual publication showcases and highlights both the overall statewide effort as well as the local training and outreach accomplishments of the Rutgers Master Gardener Program as reported by the 17 individual counties offering the program.