



Frederick County Master Gardeners Support Local Community Gardens

Susan Trice, Frederick County Master Gardener Coordinator

In response to the numerous community garden establishments and requests to help with them, the Frederick County Master Gardeners (FCMG) participated in a state-wide training under the new interest area called, 'Grow It Eat It'. Once these folks were trained, they began to give talks related to food gardening, made and sold salad boxes, and gave numerous demonstrations around the county. This year, representatives from the various community gardens were invited to attend a meeting whereby resources and a demonstration were given and a survey was conducted. The gardens that were represented include: Frederick News Post Community Garden, Frederick Community Garden, Frederick PAL Center, Middletown Primary School Garden, Middletown Valley Community Garden Association, Stonebridge Community Garden, Willowbrook Community Garden, Monocacy Valley Elementary Community Garden, Foxfield Garden, Community Garden at Fox Haven Farms, as well as folks from Brunswick. If your group was unable to attend and would like to receive these materials, please contact us.

A resource book was compiled by Susan Trice, Horticulture Educator/ FCMG Coordinator, and was presented to each garden representative. It consists of information in the following areas: University of Maryland Home and Garden Information Center, Grow It Eat It Program, Calendar including the 'Planting Dates for Vegetable Crops in Maryland HG16', Vegetable Information, Soils (Tests, Fertilizers, and Composting), Integrated Pest Management. Websites, including www.emmitsburg.net, and information on creating a community garden. A 'pest' section will be added later.

Susan showed the group how to use the HGIC website (www.hgic.umd.edu). She went into each of the areas on the home page which includes: "Timely tips" for various areas that are updated monthly, 'Publications' which has many free fact sheets listed that can be downloaded, 'Plant Diagnostic' whereby you can look at vegetable signs and determine the causes, 'Master Gardener' which includes information about the master gardener program, 'Links' consisting of reputable links for various areas, 'Invasive Species' whereby you can read all about the stinkbugs, 'What's New' for updated information and the ability to search or send in a question to the center. There is also a GIEI link on the home page that will take you to that section which includes educational videos. Two of the popular ones are 'Starting a Garden' and 'Tomato Late Blight'.

Representatives marked the location of their gardens on a map and well as completed a survey to give us a chance to gain contact information and give them a chance to let us know how we can best help them. It is our hope and objective to match a master gardener volunteer with each community garden to serve as a liaison between the garden and Extension.

Lois Royer, Chair of the GIEI Committee, relayed to the group a little about the history of this committee and some of the other activities available to the public. Many thanks to Meryl Benenati for creating the map display and working along with Susan to develop the whole evening's program.



L-R: Meryl Benenati, Fred. Co. MG; Chris Bransome and Debbie Clark of Garden I- Willowbrook; Susan Trice, MG Coordinator

For more information about horticulture or the Master Gardener Program in Frederick County, call the Frederick County Office, University of Maryland Extension, (301) 600-1596, or visit <http://www.frederick.umd.edu/>. Our mission is to educate Maryland residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes and communities. Equal Opportunity Employer/Equal Access Programs.