Greetings,

The Home and Garden Information Center (HGIC), Master Gardener Program (MG), and Grow It Eat It (GIEI) are three of University of Maryland Extension’s (UME) most popular and effective state-wide programs. They operate 24/7 and are used by tens of thousands of residents who want to learn how to create healthy and sustainable gardens and landscapes. Our programs are valuable because they address some of the big issues of the day:

• Invasive species…we provide safe and effective solutions to the brown marmorated stink bug inside and outside the home, and help residents identify and deal with an array of invasive plant and pest species.
• Reducing pesticide and nutrient pollution…we teach best sustainable gardening and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices through personal consultations.
• Childhood obesity and food security…we work with UME’s nutrition educators to use gardening as a way of exposing kids to veggies. If you grow it you are more likely to eat it! We’ll focus more heavily on youth and school gardens this year.

We have much to look forward to this year as we build on last year’s successes and identify new opportunities for projects, funding, and partnerships. Thank you for your interest in and support of HGIC and don’t forget to call or e-mail us when YOU have a plant or pest question!

Center Director and University of Maryland Extension Specialist

Service

• Toll-free telephone service 8 am-1 pm, Monday - Friday. Callers receive one-on-one assistance from Certified Professional Horticulturists 800-342-2507
• Fact Sheets and other publications: Scores of fact sheets authored by Home and Garden faculty and horticulture consultants are available to the public in printed and electronic versions. Clients request publications via phone, mail or website.
• Maryland Home and Garden e-newsletter: sent four times per year to listserv subscribers. The newsletter contains timely articles and helpful tips.
• Media spots for newspapers, radio, and television stations. Q & A and “plant of the week” columns for the Baltimore Sun website, Washington Gardener Magazine, and local newspapers statewide.
• Statewide coordination of the Master Gardener and Grow It Eat It Programs.
• Internet services - hgic.umd.edu (includes Plant diagnostic, GIEI and MG websites)
  o Send a Question to our staff. Answers are received via e-mail within 48 hours.
  o Download fact sheets and watch educational videos
  o Diagnostic website offers photographic keys to help residents diagnose and solve their plant problems.
  o Timely information delivered directly to clientele via Facebook, Twitter, and Blog.

2010 IMPACTS

• 10,257 clients assisted by horticulture consultants via the HGIC’s toll-free phone number
• 418,136 unique visitors to the HGIC, Plant Diagnostic, Grow It Eat It and Master Gardener websites (combined) with a total of 542,236 user sessions
• 3,552 questions answered via online question submission service
• 2,695 subscribers to the GIEI Network News and 2,050 subscribers to the HGIC e-newsletter;
• 4,000 people stay connected through facebook, twitter and blog
• 71 educational videos with 210,000 downloads between 6/2009 and 1/2011

Notes from the Director
The Grow It Eat It (GIEI) campaign started in 2009 and matured into a full-blown program in 2010. GIEI is a HGIC-MG partnership and a “signature program” for UME’s Food Smart Impact Team. Maryland residents are eager for the food gardening knowledge, skill-building, and problem solving provided through GIEI around the state.

**2010 GIEI Impacts:**
- 180 MGs took GIEI training; MGs taught 152 classes to about 4,719 residents
- 3,777 gardeners joined the GIEI network- a 110% increase over 2009
- GIEI website had 69,881 unique visitors- a 47% increase over 2009
- Dozens of GIEI displays and workshops around the state reached tens of thousands of Marylanders
- GIEI was a winner of the 2010 Northeast Extension Directors’ Award of Excellence
- The GIEI blog- over 30,000 page views in 18 months
- Over 1,000 regular viewers/followers on Twitter and Facebook
- 28 new YouTube video clips on food gardening topics

**And, we are off to a fast start in 2011:**
- Dozens of classes and workshops are being scheduled around the state
- More resources and support for youth and community gardens
- Distribution of 10,000 GIEI promotional seed packets purchased with support from the Food Smart Impact Team
- New web-based contests are coming along with an expanded plant and pest problems section
- New food gardening video clips will be shot and posted throughout the season

**2010 Awards and Recognition**

In July of 2010, the Grow It Eat It Campaign received the 2009 Award of Excellence from the Northeast Cooperative Extension Directors. This is the highest award presented by the Directors of Extension in the northeast. It recognizes Extension outreach programming that has achieved outstanding accomplishments, results, and impacts in addressing contemporary issues.