

COUNTY VISIONS

300 North Avenue East • Westfield, NJ 07090-1499 • 908/654-9854

RUTGERS
New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station



SPRING 2016



As we prepare for spring, this past month RCE held its 4th Annual *Get Your Vegetable Garden Growing: Home—School—Community 2016* on Saturday, February 27, 2016 at the Rutgers School of Health Related Professions (SHRP) Scotch Plains Campus. Participants included school and community personnel and avid gardeners from Union County and other neighboring counties. The purpose of the conference is to assist consumers in starting a home, school, or community garden. These gardens can be used as outdoor classrooms to teach math, science, and nutrition education. Sessions were taught by Rutgers Cooperative Extension and on-campus faculty with support of the Union County Freeholders and attendance by Bette Jane Kowalski, Board Liaison for RCE.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Laura Lawson—Rutgers University Dean of Agricultural & Urban Programs followed by workshops on: Seed Starting/Container Gardening taught by Jim Nichnadowicz, 4-H Agent; Cooking With Kids for a Healthy Life taught by Rutgers Dietetic Interns and Dr. Karen Ensle; Starting a Community Garden taught by Madeline DiNardo, Agricultural Agent and Improving Your Soil Through Composting, taught by Michele Bakacs, Environmental Agent.



The afternoon session also included a panel of experts in gardening including: Groundwork Elizabeth Director Jonathan Phillips and his colleague Jackie Park Albaum, Valeria Erdosi-Mehaffey from Kings Daughters Day School in Plainfield, and Adrienne Miller-Kubicz from Union Township. They spoke on the barriers and positive outcomes of gardening in schools and communities.

Evaluation results indicate the conference was again rated an excellent, organized and well-managed conference with comments: "I will be starting a garden at school for students with disabilities—Thank you for the great resources, good practical information and great day" "I look forward to next year's conference".

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Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and County Boards of Chosen Freeholders.
Rutgers Cooperative Extension is a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

In cooperation with the
Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders

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Alexander Mirabella
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A Service of the Union County
Board of Chosen Freeholders

UNION COUNTY
We're Connected to You!

Alfred J. Faella, *County manager*
James Pelletiere, *Clerk of the Board*

Karen M. Ensle, EdD, RDN, FAND
FCHS Educator and County Extension Dept Head

James Nichnadowicz, MS
4-H Agent & Associate County Extension Dept Head

Madeline Flahive-DiNardo, MBA
Agriculture and Resource Management Agent

Michele Bakacs, MS
County Environmental and Resource Management Agent

Janet Brun, RDN, CDE
NJ SNAP-Ed Program Associate

Office Support Judi Laganga

For information or questions, please call:
908-654-9854

James Nichnadowicz
JAMES NICHNADOWICZ
Associate Department Head 2009
County 4-H Agent

Madeline Flahive-DiNardo
MADELINE FLAHIVE DINARDO, MBA
Agriculture & Resource Management
County Agricultural Agent

Karen M. Ensle
KAREN M. ENSLE, EdD, RD, FADA, CFS
Department Head and
Family and Consumer Sciences Educator
Michele Bakacs
MICHELE BAKACS
Agriculture & Resource Management
County Environmental and Resource Management Agent
County Agricultural Agent
Middlesex/Union Counties

Family and Community Health Sciences Department

FCHS Classes for Local Community Groups and Agencies

Need a program for your group, agency, school, or business that promotes health, wellness and obesity prevention? Here are 3 new programs that you can schedule for a small fee. Call or e-mail Dr. Karen Ensle, RDN, FAND, CFS to schedule a program 908-654-9854 or ensle@aesop.rutgers.edu

Forget Fad Diets: Just Learn to Eat Heart Healthy

Learn to trade high-fat/high calorie foods for healthier options. Understand how important food preparation is to calorie content, food portions selected and overall diet which shapes our health and wellness.

Lead Poisoning Prevention & Nutrition

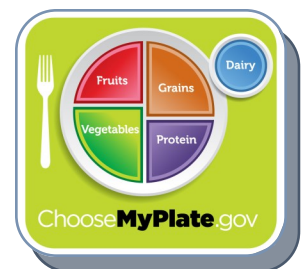
Do you live in a home built in the 60's, 70's or before? Learn the causes and complications of lead poisoning for children and families and how regular meals and good nutrition may help lower lead absorption.

Family Meals-- Anytime, Anyplace

How important is family mealtime and what can you do to make sure family mealtime takes place—anytime, anyplace? The class includes practical tips for making family meals happen along with some simple meal ideas you can start using today.

MyPlate Makeovers

Is your plate healthy? This class compares your daily intake to the recommendations of researchers and USDA and is a great class for parents, teachers, and community groups.



FAD DIETS: Are You Hoping for a Magic Cure?

If a diet or product sounds too good to be true, it probably is. There are no foods or pills that magically burn fat. No super foods will alter your genetic code. No products will miraculously melt fat while you watch TV or sleep. Some ingredients in supplements and herbal products can be dangerous and even deadly for some people. Steer clear of any diet plans, pills and products that make the following claims:

Rapid Weight Loss: Instead choose a meal plan that allows for slow, steady weight loss which will more likely last than dramatic weight changes. Healthy plans aim for a loss of no more than ½ pound to 1 pound per week. If you lose weight quickly, you'll lose muscle, bone and water. You also will be more likely to regain the pounds quickly afterwards.

Quantities and Limitations: Instead, ditch diets that allow unlimited quantities of any food, such as grapefruit and cabbage soup. It's boring to eat the same thing over and over and hard to stick with monotonous plans. Avoid any diet that eliminates or severely restricts entire food groups, such as carbohydrates. Even if you take a multivitamin, you'll still miss some critical nutrients.

Specific Food Combinations: Instead of combining certain foods or eating foods at specific times of day, will not help with weight loss. Eating the "wrong" combinations of food doesn't cause them to turn to fat immediately or to produce toxins in your intestines, as some plans claim.

Rigid Menus: Limiting food choices or following rigid meal plans can be an overwhelming, distasteful task. With any new diet, always ask yourself: "Can I eat this way for the rest of my life?" If the answer is no, the plan is not for you.

No Need to Exercise: Regular physical activity is essential for good health and healthy weight management. The key to success is to find physical activities that you enjoy and then aim for 30 to 60 minutes of activity on most days of the week.

Losing weight is possible by following a lifestyle that includes healthy food, physical activity and enough sleep. For a personalized plan tailored to your lifestyle and food preferences, consult a registered dietitian nutritionist with expertise in weight management. An RDN can help you find a realistic, flexible eating style that helps you feel and be your best. For more information see: www.eatright.org



2.4.2016



Celebrate National Nutrition Month with Rutgers Cooperative Extension

A nutrition education and information campaign sponsored annually by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, National Nutrition Month®, held annually in March, focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. The Academy's National Nutrition Month® press releases feature information for the media on activities and messages that the Academy highlights every March, along with events and initiatives around Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day, also celebrated in March.



Practical Health Tips for 2016

Dedicate yourself to a healthy lifestyle in 2016 with these food, nutrition and exercise tips.

- 1. Eat Breakfast:** There's no better way to start your morning than with a healthy breakfast. Include lean protein, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Try oatmeal cooked with low-fat milk, sliced almonds and berries, or top a toaster waffle with low-fat yogurt and fruit. Find more quick breakfast ideas at www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets.
- 2. Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables:** Fruits and veggies add color, flavor and texture plus vitamins, minerals and fiber to your plate. Make 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables your daily goal. Don't let cost stop you from enjoying produce. Frozen and canned are great alternatives. See "20 Ways to Enjoy More Fruits and Vegetables" at www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets.
- 3. Watch Portion Sizes:** Do you know if you're eating the proper portion size? Get out the measuring cups and see how close your portions are to the recommended serving size. Use half your plate for fruits and vegetables and the other half for grains and lean meat, poultry, seafood or beans. To complete the meal, add a glass of fat-free or low-fat milk or a serving of fat-free yogurt for dessert. Visit www.choosemyplate.gov
- 4. Be Active:** Regular physical activity lowers blood pressure and helps your body control stress and weight. Start by doing what exercise you can for at least 10 minutes at a time. Children and teens should get 60 or more minutes of physical activity per day, and adults should get two hours and 30 minutes per week. You don't have to hit the gym—take a walk after dinner or play a game of catch or basketball.
- 5. Fix Healthy Snacks:** Healthy snacks can sustain your energy levels between meals. Whenever possible, make your snacks combination snacks. Choose from two or more of the MyPlate food groups: whole grains, fruits, vegetables, low-fat or fat-free dairy, lean protein or nuts. Try low-fat yogurt with fruit, or a small portion of nuts with an apple or banana. For more snack ideas, see "25 Healthy Snacks for Kids" and "Smart Snacking for Adults and Teens" at www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets.

6. Get to Know Food Labels: Ever wonder about what the numbers in the Nutrition Facts panel really mean? Or, the difference between “reduced fat” and “low fat”? The Food and Drug Administration has strict guidelines on how food label terms can be used. To learn more about food labels, see “Shop Smart – Get the Facts on Food Labels” at www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets.

7. Follow Food Safety Guidelines: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that roughly one in six Americans gets sick from foodborne disease each year. Reduce your chances of getting sick by practicing proper hand washing. Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from ready-to-eat foods like bread and vegetables. Use a food thermometer to make sure food is properly cooked. Refrigerate food quickly at a proper temperature to slow bacteria growth. Learn more about home food safety at <http://homefoodsafety.org>.

8. Get Cooking: Cooking at home can be healthy, rewarding and cost-effective. Resolve to learn some cooking and kitchen basics, like how to dice an onion or how to store herbs and spices. The collection of How do I... videos at www.eatright.org/howdoi will get you started.

9. Dine Out without Going Overboard: You can dine at a restaurant and stick to your healthy eating plan! The key is to plan ahead, ask questions and choose foods carefully. Think about nutritious items you can add to your plate—fruits, veggies, lean meat, poultry or fish—and look for grilled, baked, broiled or steamed items. See “Healthy Eating on the Run” at www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets.



10. Enact Family Meal Time: Research shows that family meals promote healthier eating. Plan to eat as a family most days when possible in 2016. Set a regular mealtime. Turn off the TV, phones and other electronic devices to encourage mealtime talk. Get kids involved in meal planning and cooking and use this time to teach them about good nutrition. For more family mealtime tips, visit www.kidseatright.org.

Spring Rain Garden/ Green Infrastructure Training and Tour

This spring -

Rutgers Cooperative Extension will help local residents and municipalities make their landscapes more sustainable by providing a training on rain gardens. Rain gardens are beautiful, low maintenance, and inexpensive gardens you can install at home to reduce

rainwater runoff. When it rains, the roof, driveway, or street runoff is directed into the rain garden. These gardens help reduce flooding and pollution in local rivers and streams. They can also be installed in parking lots, at municipal complexes, schools, or anywhere where there is a lot of pavement that does not allow rainwater to soak into the ground.

The training will teach participants how to design, build, and install a rain garden. We will also tour local rain gardens within the county and visit other green infrastructure projects such as permeable pavement parking lots, and cisterns designed to collect rainwater for car washing. Stay tuned for dates and location information or contact Michele Bakacs, County Environmental Agent, at bakacs@njaes.rutgers.edu or [\(732\) 398-5274](tel:7323985274).





26th Annual Spring Garden Fair & Plant Sale at Trailside Nature & Science Center

In the Watchung Reservation
at the corner of New Providence Rd & Coles Ave
Mountainside New Jersey

SUNDAY ~ MAY 15, 2016

12:00 to 4:00p.m. Rain or Shine!

FREE Admission • FREE Parking

A Large Variety of Plants for Sale

Gardening Book Sale • Café & Bake Sale

Odds & Ends Sale • Crafts Sale

Soil Test Kits for Sale • FREE Rutgers Fact Sheets

Children's Activities • 4-H • Garden Lectures

Demonstration, Vegetable, & Herb Garden Tours

Plant & Insect Problems Clinic

Rain Barrel, Rain Garden & Square Foot Gardening Displays

Bureau of Mosquito Control

No Credit Cards Accepted • No Pets Please • Please Bring Your Own Wagon

Presented in Cooperation With:

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New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station

Union County Board of
Chosen Freeholders

Visit us on the web at: <http://www.mastergardeners-uc.org>

**RUTGERS MASTER GARDENER
OF UNION COUNTY
“VOLUNTEER HELPLINE”
908-654-9852**

Voicemail messages are returned

ON-SITE

Visit our Helpline office at
300 North Avenue East
Colleen Fraser Building 2nd floor
in Westfield

Spring and Summer Hours:

Monday –Thursday 9am - 3pm

Friday 9am - 1pm

Winter Hours:

Monday & Wednesday 9am - 3pm

Friday 9am – 1pm



Visit a Jersey Fresh Farm

To find Jersey Fresh near you, check
out the site below, for Roadside
Markets, Pick Your Own, and
Community Farmers Markets go to:

<http://www.jerseyfresh.nj.gov/>



Plant & Insect samples can be
brought to the Helpline Office
located on the second floor in
Westfield for identification

**BUG/INSECT SAMPLES
SHOULD BE IN A SEALED JAR
OR**

**CONTAINER FOR TRANSPORTING
THRU THE BUILDING**

Call the Helpline if you are unsure



**EMAIL your garden
questions to:**

mastergardeners@ucnj.org

Soil Test Kits - \$20 each

Call the Helpline for
information about the many benefits of having
your soil tested.



2016/17 Master Gardener Class forming soon!



Classes are held on Tuesday mornings
from 10:00AM–12:30 PM

Located at Rutgers Meeting Room
located on the 2nd floor of
The Union County Colleen Fraser Bldg
300 North Ave East
Westfield, NJ

The Class of 2016/17 will begin on
a Tuesday in early October 2016 (exact
date TBD) and run through May 2017

**Some topics that will be presented by
the Rutgers Cooperative Extension
staff and faculty are:**

- Basic Botany
- Entomology
- Flower Gardening
- Integrated Pest Management
- Pesticide Safety
- Plant Pathology
- Soil Testing & Fertilizers
- Tree Pruning and Maintenance
- Turf Management
- Vegetable Gardening
- Wildlife Management



**For more information or to receive an
application call**

Judi Laganga @ (908) 654-9854 option "2"

**OR e-mail jlaganga@ucnj.org (use Master
Gardener" as the subject line)**

**COMPLETED APPLICATIONS MUST BE
RECEIVED BY**

AUGUST 31, 2016

Adults Needed to Help 4-H'ers

(one time only)



Friday, April 29
6:30 to 9:00 PM

Union County Vo/Tech School
1776 Raritan Road, Scotch Plains

If you are a good listener, please consider volunteering for this satisfying evening of uplifting kids and promoting 4-H accomplishments.

VOLUNTEER JUDGES are needed to listen to 4-H'ers give 3-8 minute presentations in a classroom setting, using a simple non-competitive Danish System rating sheet which allows for each participant a chance to rate "Excellent". There will be a 30-minute orientation training for new volunteers date TBD.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension, 2nd fl meeting room
300 North Avenue E, in Westfield.



To volunteer or for more information contact Jim Nichnadowicz or Judi Laganga at the 4-H office: 908-654-9854, or email:
JNichnadowicz@ucnj.org OR
JLaganga@ucnj.org

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Yes, I would like to volunteer as a 4-H presentations judge on April 29.

I have volunteered in the past. ☐

RETURN BY MARCH 31st

Please let me know about the orientation training. ☐.

Name _____

Address _____ Town _____

Phone Number _____ Email: _____

Union County 4-H CLUBS

SEPT 23, 2016
















Registration for new members taken at Open House **ONLY**

Mark Your Calendar!!!

This is the **only time** during the 4-H Club Year (Sept—June) that we take new member enrollment!

Clubs are open to 1st Grade through 1 year past High School

 Variety Clubs: 1st & 2nd Graders/3rd—5th Graders/Middle School
 Community Service  STEM  Anime  Archery  Cooking
 Dog Lovers  Engineering  Horticulture  Lego Robotics
 Living History  Sewing  a variety of Science & Tech Clubs

For more information contact James Nichnadowicz, Union County 4-H Agent: 908-654-9854 or e-mail jnichnadowicz@ucnj.org OR RCE Admin Asst, Judi Laganga jlaganga@ucnj.org

CONTACT US TO BE ADDED TO THE MAILING LIST FOR YOUR OPEN HOUSE INVITATION



4-H Master Tree Stewards Graduate

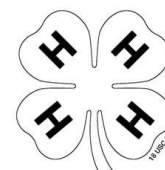
In December 2015, for the 24th year in a row, the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Union County 4-H Program graduated a class of 4-H Master Tree Stewards. Master Tree Stewards are volunteers trained in tree identification, biology and ecology. Once trained they share this knowledge with youth by visiting 4th graders at schools throughout Union County, doing a one hour tree show for them.

Our 2015 graduates are; Maria Adler of Westfield; Kathy Miller of Stirling; Rick Ostberg of Summit; Debra Stuart of Rahway; James Williams of Mountainside; and John Zarelli of Scotch Plains.

Our Tree Stewards commitment is SHORT term, but importance and impact is LONG term.

Classes meet every Wednesday from September to December. Field trips are an integral part of the program. You receive a teaching kit containing materials and supplies to teach at least eight 1-hour classes to fourth graders on Wednesday afternoons, from January to May following your graduation. The teaching schedule calendar is developed according to the availability of each Master Tree Steward.

For more information about joining the 4-H Master Tree Steward Program please contact 4-H Agent Jim Nichnadowicz at 908-654-9854 , email Nichnadowicz@njaes.rutgers.edu.



Don't keep us all to yourself ~
Share with a friend!

Want to get on our mailing list?

Prefer e-mail?

Either way; e-mail jlaganga@ucnj.org and let her
know regular mail or e-mail..... Put "County Visions"
in your subject line!