



This newsletter is provided by the S.C. Department of Agriculture

*School Garden Workshop Report* 1

*Grants Awarded to 5 Schools* 1

*Plant A Row with Harvest Hope* 2

*Planting the Seeds of the Future; Heathwood Hall* 2

*New Garden at Pauline Glenn Springs* 3

*New Vegetable Garden at the White House* 3

*The USDA Peoples Garden* 4

Upcoming Events:

- Midlands Plant & Flower Show , April 2-5, Columbia State Farmers Market.
- Heathwood Hall Herb Plant Sale, April 22, 2009. More info at: [www.Heathwood.org](http://www.Heathwood.org)
- Upstate Plant & flower Show, May 1-3, Greenville State Farmers Market.
- Pee Dee Plant & Flower Show, April 17-19, Pee Dee State Farmers Market, Florence, SC.

*School Garden Workshop Report. By Allison Schuam .*

On Thursday, January 29, the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP) held its first school garden workshop. Nevitt Forest Elementary School in Anderson was the host site of the workshop. Attendees hailed from all over the state and included community garden volunteers, child nutrition directors, nutritionists and non-profit organizers.

“Nevitt Forest Elementary was the ideal location for this workshop because they have placed a tremendous emphasis on the benefits of eating locally grown, nutritious foods by planting a school garden, participating in Grow with Me (Anderson’s farm to school program) and holding many food taste tests with locally grown food,” said Allison Schuam, agricultural consultant for Anderson County. “I didn’t know what to expect from

the workshop but ASAP and Anderson County made the workshop very easy to understand and to put my action plan into place! I will be looking forward to working with Anderson County in the near future and to show off our school garden,” said Jack Johnson, Child Nutrition Director for Barnwell School District 19. Johnson went on to say that many Barnwell children are at a socioeconomic disadvantage so making sure all children have healthy eating habits is a priority. Last year the school served soup comprised of vegetables grown in the school garden to over 136 parents and students.

Such ideas are what Molly Nicholie, Growing Minds Program Coordinator, touched on in the school garden workshop. “School gardens are a wonderful opportunity to meet cur-



*Happy Gardeners in Anderson.*

riculum objectives while building positive experiences with healthy food.”

For more information on school gardens, please visit ASAP’s website at: [www.growing-minds.org/](http://www.growing-minds.org/) or calling them at 828-236-1282. The National Farm to Cafeteria conference will be held on March 19-21 in Portland, Oregon and you may find more information at [www.farmtoschool.org](http://www.farmtoschool.org)

*Grants Awarded to 5 Schools Across the State.*

Five schools in South Carolina have been selected to receive \$1,000 to implement or improve a garden site on their school grounds as part of the Eat Smart, It’s In the Garden grant program. The recipients include: Mellichamp Elementary, Orangeburg County, Pauline-Glenn Springs, Spartanburg County, Pontiac Elementary, Richland County, Central Child Education Center, York County and Richland County. The program initiated by Eat Smart, Move More

SC and the South Carolina Department of Agriculture, supports efforts to offer a unique space in the school environment in which children of all abilities can achieve goals. Eat Smart, Move More SC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of healthy eating and active living throughout South Carolina. Hugh Weathers, Commissioner of Agriculture, said “This program provides teachers with a tool to incorporate hands-on learning with their students. The gardening experience also

helps to instill good eating habits at an early age, provides children with physical activity and develops great appreciation for the diversity of food that can be grown in South Carolina.” At the end of the grant period recipients will share their success stories and ideas for sustaining their gardening projects into the future. For more information, please visit School Gardens at: [www.agriculture.sc.gov](http://www.agriculture.sc.gov)

## *Plant a Row with Harvest Hope!* By Ryan Nevius

The students are participating in a service learning opportunity that will teach them about hunger, gardening and volunteering for a cause.

Harvest Hope announces its *Plant A Row for the Hungry* program designed to help feed the growing number of hungry individuals in our communities. This new campaign is a grass roots effort that asks all home and community gardeners to pledge to grow a little extra and deliver their harvest to the closest agency that serves the hungry.

SC Master Gardener Associations, in many of the 20 counties that Harvest Hope serves, will lead the efforts to enlist pledges from local gardeners. Master Gardeners will have *Plant A Row* information at the regional SC Department of Agriculture Spring Plant and Flower Festivals. They also encourage churches and businesses to conduct pledge drives. Non gardeners can

participate by donating non perishable food or by making a cash donation. Harvest Hope turns every dollar donated into 10 pounds of food.

The first pledge in this campaign was made by a partnership of Richland County Master Gardeners' Association and the University of South Carolina. Students in the "Ethics of Food" class, under the guidance of the Master Gardeners, have built a raised bed garden in front of Harvest Hope's headquarters on Shop Road in Columbia. The students are participating in a service learning opportunity that will teach them about hunger, gardening and volunteering for a cause.

Heathwood Episcopal School, the first school to be certified in the SC Department of Agriculture "Certified SC Grown"

program, has also pledged to *Plant A Row for the Hungry* and bring their harvest to the Harvest Hope Food Pantry on Shop Road. Program details and a list of local drop off points can be found at [www.harvesthope.org](http://www.harvesthope.org). Let's make this happen in South Carolina. Join us, download your pledge card from [harvesthope.org](http://harvesthope.org) and mail it in today!

*Plant A Row is a national program launched by the Garden Writers Foundation. Last year North American gardeners donated more than 1.4 million pounds of food to feed the hungry. Nationwide there are more than 600 volunteer committees with an average of 45 people involved in each program, totaling 27,000 volunteers!*



### *Planting the Seeds of the Future, Heathwood Hall Episcopal School.*

By Jim Morris

The annual Spring Plant Sale is a long-standing tradition at Heathwood Hall Episcopal School, a nursery school through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, co-ed, independent, college preparatory school in Columbia, S.C. Each spring semester the sophomore class, under the guidance of biology teacher Jim Morris, joins with "biology buddies" from the pre-school program to germinate seeds and cultivate a variety of herbs and vegetable plants in Heathwood Hall's very own 2,500 sq. ft. Robert Clark Greenhouse. The Robert Clark Greenhouse, named in honor of an alumnus, serves as a Heathwood Hall classroom, plant science research laboratory and a center for student and parent volunteer service. Starting from

seeds planted in early January, the sophomores, their biology buddies and their parent helpers plant, water and watch as green shoots emerge from the soil and gradually produce young plants ready for transplanting. By the end of February, the greenhouse looks less like a classroom experiment and more like a commercial garden center. Green bell peppers, celebrity tomatoes, Park's whopper tomatoes, Italian basil, oregano, thyme, spearmint, peppermint, dill, chives, cilantro, lemon balm-, and English lavender, all thrive under the SunSystem grow lights, automated sprinklers, fertilizer injector, and the watchful eye of Mr. Morris. March and April are busy months for the students as

they transplant the thousands of seedlings into variety of 4-inch pots, nursery containers, decorative ceramic and terra cotta pots and planters and market their plants to friends, family and neighbors throughout the Columbia metro area. Purchased plants are available for pickup at the school on **Earth Day, April 22, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.** More than a desire for scientific knowledge and good biology grades motivates our students. Proceeds from our annual Spring Plant Sale help to fund the class service-learning project in May of their senior year. Prior to graduation, all Heathwood Hall seniors travel Johns Island, S.C. to work with low-income families repairing and rehabilitating homes.

## Heathwood Hall cont.

Heathwood Hall was the first school in the Midlands to include 80 hours of community service as a graduation requirement. It is a belief shared by Heathwood Hall families, faculty and friends that service to the community promotes a broader perspective on the world, enhances awareness of the needs of others and our own capacity to help others. In this spirit, the sophomore class and their biology buddies contribute to the outreach efforts by using the proceeds

from the Spring Plant Sale to defray the costs of construction materials.

This year, in addition to the student-grown plants, the Spring Plant Sale will include a variety of bedding plants, tropicals, floral hanging baskets, empty decorative pots, garden ornaments, pine straw and a few jars of homemade herb jellies.

**To guarantee quantities and reserve your plants, please download and**

**mail a Plant Sale Order Form from the Heathwood Hall website, [www.Heathwood.org](http://www.Heathwood.org), before Friday, April 17, 2009. For more information, call 803-765-2309.**



## New Garden at Pauline-Glenn Springs Elementary

Pauline-Glenn Springs Elementary broke ground on their school garden on February 13, 2009. The designated area, that will hold a raised garden, measures 28 x 28 feet. Top soil has been laid! In order to make the project a community affair, a School Improvement Council meeting was held to inform everyone of the "Eat Smart, It's in the Garden" grant. Parents, teachers, the school's principal, a master-gardener, and guests from local garden companies were in at-

tendance. From this meeting, the school was able to gain support, advice, and resources. In order to get students involved and excited about the garden, the school has integrated relevant curriculum into the classroom. Activities, such as charting seedling growth over time, has been fun way for children to become part of the process, while also meeting curriculum requirements. To see this growth first hand, each grade level picked a different vegetable to start in the classroom. Squash, zucchini, spin-

ach, lettuces, radishes, and carrots were among the chosen. Not only are science classes involved, but art classes have also participated, by designing and painting markers for the garden to identify each plot. We look forward to the continued growth and success of



## New Vegetable Garden at the White House!!

Like many of the schools here in South Carolina, the new President and the First Lady are excited about putting in a new vegetable garden! Earlier this month, First Lady Michelle Obama assisted 5th graders from the local Bancroft Elementary School in Washington, with the ground breaking of a

new vegetable garden on the South Lawn of the White House. Mrs. Obama has stated that while the garden will be providing fresh produce for the Obama family and guests of the White House, the garden should also serve as an educational tool for children to learn about and appreciate,

healthy, locally grown fruits and vegetables, and how a healthy diet can help address the growing epidemic of obesity and diabetes in children throughout the U.S. The students from the local elementary school will also help maintain, harvest and prepare produce from the garden.



*First Lady Michelle Obama at the new vegetable garden at the White House.*

## South Carolina Department of Agriculture

Wade Hampton Building  
P.O. Box 11280  
Columbia, SC 29211-1280

Phone: 803-734-2210  
Fax: 803-734-2192  
E-mail: [bcrocker@sda.sc.gov](mailto:bcrocker@sda.sc.gov)

---

We're on the Web!

[www.agriculture.sc.gov](http://www.agriculture.sc.gov)

---

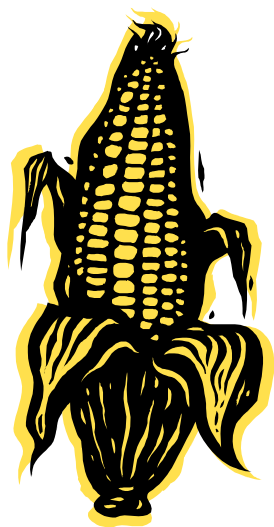


## S.C. Department of Agriculture

---

*The South Carolina Department of Agriculture started the School Garden initiative to provide schools and communities alike with the opportunity to learn healthy eating habits, as well as providing an effective and fun way to instill the appreciation for local agriculture and food production in our children and everyone else involved in the garden. Incorporating the health benefits of gardening activity with the educational process of development reinforces the Department of Agriculture's goals related to promoting the consumption of locally grown products.*

*For more information about the S.C. School Gardens program and to share information about your school garden program, please contact Beth Crocker at (803) 734-2193 or [bcrocker@sda.sc.gov](mailto:bcrocker@sda.sc.gov)*



### *The USDA People's Garden*

Recently, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, broke pavement to start the USDA People's Garden outside of the USDA headquarters in Washington, D.C. Secretary Vilsack started the garden to commemorate the bicentennial of President Abraham Lincoln and has pledged this to be only a first step in celebrating Lincoln's life and accomplishments. Vilsack has also pledged that he would like to see a community garden at every USDA facility throughout the world. He hopes that these community garden might include a variety of projects

such as water and soil conservation, window boxes, using roof gardens and energy conservation practices, tree planting, using native plants and water retention practices.

The new garden space at the USDA headquarters is in addition to the already existing ornamental garden, and will showcase conservation practices that all Americans can use in their own backyards. In addition, the new garden will emphasize the importance of creating a pollinator friendly habitat for bees and butterflies, and helping to educate everyone on the important role that

these species play in all types of agricultural production crops including food, fiber and other natural resources. The garden space replaces approximately 1250 feet of pavement located near the headquarters, and will be accessible from the USDA Farmers Market. For more information on the People's Garden and other programs offered by the USDA, please visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).