



Newsletter provided by the
SC Department of Agriculture

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New School Garden Toolkit Available!!!!

On June 21, 2010, at the School Gardens Workshop in Columbia, the South Carolina Department of Agriculture unveiled the new School Gardens Toolkit developed as part of a partnership with Eat Smart, Move More South Carolina.

This toolkit was developed based on the lessons learned from the Eat Smart...it's in the Garden grantees. It was designed to serve as a guide to help SC teachers and other school staff create, maintain, and sustain vegetable and fruit gardens in their own schools.



Not every school garden in South Carolina has to become an Eat Smart...it's in the Garden site, but for a more successful, long-term sustainable effort, consider this model as you start the process of implementing a garden at your school.

For more information about the South Carolina School Gardens program and to download your copy of the toolkit, visit

www.agriculture.sc.gov

or contact

Beth Crocker

bcrocker@scda.sc.gov

803-734-2193

Upcoming Events

- **SC State Fair—**
October 13-24, 2010.
Come see the School Garden exhibit in the Cantey Building!!!
- **Grant Opportunities!!!**
Check out our blog at www.scschoolgardens.blogspot.com for information on a number of different grants currently available.
- **Fall Festival at Clemson Sandhills** in NE Columbia, SC. Oct. 29—Nov. 2 http://www.clemson.edu/public/rec/sandhill/special_events/index.html

Carolina Children's Garden in Columbia, SC

The Carolina Children's Garden is located at the Clemson University Sandhill Research and Education Center (REC) in northeast Columbia.

Since its debut in October 1997 the Carolina Children's Garden (CCG) at the Clemson University Sandhill Research and Education Center (REC) in northeast Columbia has been a retreat for families to connect with nature, each other, and the eco-challenges facing homeowners in a burgeoning suburban environment. Situated on a two-acre site the twelve theme gardens inspire, educate and motivate the public to garden with children at home and in the community.

Each garden offers imaginative contexts for playing among plants while demonstrating earth-friendly practices. From inception the CCG has been overseen by a committee of community volunteers. Today Master Gardeners supervise and support the garden in countless ways including maintaining the gardens and website, publicizing the garden to media and the public, assisting with teaching and managing education programs, procuring funds and donations, and recruiting volunteers. Since the CCG is one of many long-term Master Gardener volunteer responsibilities, the pool of human resources is finite. Whereas volunteers are an essential adjunct to all public gardens, no sustainable children's garden can operate solely with volunteers. In addition to offering a self-guided adventure with nature, the CCG has, over the years, provided environmental education programs targeting children, families, and teachers.

Exhibits of interest include:

Mr. McGregor's Garden is a page from Beatrix Potter's *Tale of Peter Rabbit*.

The Butterfly Garden is a brewery and nursery for butterflies.

An ABC Garden grows flowers in alphabetical order along a white picket fence.

Pooh's Corner is abuzz with the adventures of Pooh and pals in 100 acre wood.

Tea Olive Room is an evergreen hideaway for reading favorite books al fresco.

Mesozoic Memories is a flashback to days of a dinosaur dynasty.

Three Bears Homestead is a country estate for papa, mama and baby bear.

Carolina Fence displays a collage of natural history artifacts of the state.

Old MacDonald's Farm grows historic crops of South Carolina.



Bird Garden attracts native and migratory species for food, shelter and nesting.

Growing Healthy gets children eating fruits and vegetables by growing their own.

The Rain Garden diverts stormwater runoff to a green plant filtering system.

Carolina Children's Garden Upcoming Events!!



Fall is the perfect time to visit the Clemson Sandhill Research and Education Center in northeast Columbia, 900 Clemson Road. Families will enjoy walking the trails as they wind through forests and past ponds, creeks, and fields. Be sure to pause at the Carolina Children's Garden to peek inside Old MacDonald's farmhouse, and watch out for dinosaurs in Mesozoic

Memories! Before you leave, stroll through the Conservation Station to learn more about South Carolina's natural resources. Also check out the fall education program schedule--there's something for everyone! \$2 child. Advanced registration required at: 803-459-3212, e-mail carolinachildrengarden@gmail.com.

September 22, 10-11 am Little Leaves: Autumn Arrives! Fall themed story time, craft, and nature walk. Recommended for ages 3-8.

October 22, 3:30-4:30 pm, Wildlife: Animal Spoor. What is "spoor" and what does it tell us about local wildlife? Make-and-take craft included. Recommended for ages 6-12.

October 23, 9-11 am Garden Chemistry Quick! What does pH mean? Explore the concept of pH with a fun chemistry experiment and discover what pH has to do with gardening. Recommended for ages 6-12..



November 5, 3:30-4:30 pm Soil Conservation What's the "dirt" on dirt? Build a soil profile, explore erosion and soil conservation techniques, and classify soils based on their characteristics. Recommended for ages 6-12.

(Continued on back cover)

Farming Update from Legare Farms *by Helen Legare-Floyd*



Every month, Helen writes a monthly update talking about all of the going-ons at her family farm, Legare Farms in Johns Island, SC. Check out these excerpts from her monthly newsletter.

July: We are in the midst of the second week of summer camp. We're bush-hogging pasture to keep the unwanted weeds out. We're getting up tomatoes stakes and string and pulling the black plastic mulch out of the vegetable fields. Once the plastic is up then we'll disk plow the fields to turn under the old vegetable bushes and any weeds. The first week of August we'll start putting out fertilizer and then lay new plastic mulch and plant seeds for the fall crop. We already have some tomato and pepper seed started in the greenhouse. We are still picking okra, peppers, and eggplant. We'll cut the pepper and eggplant bushes back to about 2 feet tall, then they will flush new growth with the help of a side-dressing of fertilizer. We'll pick more peppers and eggplants for the fall from the new growth. We'll also do this with the okra plants but not until sometime in August

because we are at the peak of production now. Okra will keep bearing until the first frost. I've been studying the seed catalogs trying to make wise choices for the fall plantings. It really is tricky to make sure not to plant too early but also to get the crop planted in time to harvest within the six weeks of the CSA deliveries.

I think winter squash is the toughest one because they don't really like the hot humid weather of late summer but are a long season crop taking 90 days to mature. I wish everything was as easy to grown as radishes. They almost always turn out well and do it really quick with a mature time of 20 days.

History of the Farm

Our farm is called Hanscombe Point. This property was a King's grant to Thomas Hanscombe. He left the property to our great great grandfather because he didn't have any children of his own. Thomas Hanscombe also gave the property for the Johns Island Presbyterian Church which was built in 1719. The church was established in 1710 and is celebrating their 300th anniversary this year. Our family has been members there most of that time and 5 generations of Legares are buried in the churchyard. The farm is called the Point because it has water on 3 sides. There is only 300 acres of the property, but when you're paying

taxes on it, that's a lot. Our family has grown a lot of things over the years and always been willing to change with the times. We have always grown beef cattle and chickens. Sheep have come and gone at the Point. Our great grandfather had a real love for sheep but my grandfather didn't have that love so he sold all the sheep as soon as his father passed away. We brought sheep back to the farm about 6 years ago. Our family has also grown cotton, indigo, soybeans, corn, potatoes, and of coarse vegetables. In the 1980's when tradition farming was looking very bleak, our father started growing sod. He and his partner were some of the first farmers in SC to try sod. The sod business was very good to us for several years. We started growing nursery crops in the late 80's after I came back home to the farm. We have learned to diversify and change with the times. Hopefully that will keep us going for another nine generations.

August: We are planting Fall vegetables this month. We are really enjoying the rain everyday but could do with less heat. We're still picking okra which loves the heat. The pumpkin plants are coming along really well. We're keeping our fingers crossed that we won't have any disease or insect problems this year. I think we have a chance to make one of the best pumpkin crops in a long time.

We've already booked a few Pumpkin Patch field trips for October and hope to book a lot more. The eggplant and peppers are flushing out nicely after we cut them back. We should have a good fall crop from them. The tomatoes look good just hope we don't get an early frost. I'm looking forward to the first collards of the season. We've been busy making okra pickles and the salsas are all finished and ready for purchase. I've been doing quality control on the corn salsa. Nothing better than Fritos Scoops and corn or peach salsa. Somebody has to make sure it's good enough to sell. We've really had to pay special attention to the animals in this heat. It almost takes someone full time to make sure everybody has water. It always amazes me how much water a pig can drink. Pigs like to lay in the water as much as they like to drink it. The cows seem to find water on their own. They will walk past a watering trough of fresh clean water to drink out of a mud puddle every time. I love to watch the cows on a hot day when they wade down into the pond and all you can see is their heads. They know how to cool off at the swimming hole just like we do. Chickens drink a lot in this heat also. They don't seem to eat as much but they sure suck up the water. They unfortunately don't lay as many eggs in the heat either.

Summit Drive Elementary Garden Update *by Allison Walker*

At Summit Drive Elementary in Greenville, we are preparing for our fall growing and resting season. The kids are planting broccoli, cabbage, onions and garlic. They are also growing mustard greens for the unofficial school mascot iguana, Mr. Iggy. The rest of the raised beds will be put to rest for the winter with heavy mulching. Since we received the Eat Smart...It's in the Garden Mini Grant, we have seen a huge increase in the use of the garden by the teachers and staff. We dug and mulched a path, built 4 large benches and purchased a storage bin so we can keep all our tools outside. We (parents) are conducting a Nature Zone Experience on Thursday afternoons with some of the late-stay kids and

other Summit students. The after school director is now taking the students out to the garden herself almost every Friday. Their next project, besides weeding, is to rebuild our scare crow.

The K4, K5, first grade and one special needs class at Summit Drive lost their science lab time due to budget cuts. Our administration is being very creative and is trying to offer science education (outside the classroom) once per month. We used the garden for our science lab for two days this week and helped approximately 175 kids dig, compost and water the plants. We even had an added bonus of Monarch caterpillars in our milkweed.

The Summit Drive teachers are beginning to see the garden as an outdoor classroom.

One second grade class is doing their creative writing assignment in the garden – the benches are really useful! The kindergarteners are not-so-patiently waiting for the peppers to get large enough to eat. The stay-late students are getting exercise and learning gardening skills. The Challenge class is planning on constructing a bridge in the garden. We're selling our pumpkins at our upcoming Fall Festival. We see endless possibilities for our garden at Summit Drive. The grant we received has really helped us along in our plans for a living, breathing outdoor classroom.



"We see endless possibilities for our garden at Summit Drive. The grant we received has really helped us along in our plans for a living, breathing outdoor classroom."

- Allison Walker,
Garden Manager &
Parent



Students at the Summit Drive Elementary School Garden

USC Herbarium *by Chandra Cooper*

The University of South Carolina Herbarium, located at the University's Columbia Campus, houses South Carolina's largest collection of dried plant specimens preserved for scientific study. Founded in 1907 by Dr. Andrew Charles Moore, and formally named in his honor in 1986, the original holdings have grown to include over 100,000 specimens of vascular and nonvascular plant material. Researchers and visitors to the Herbarium can browse a comprehensive collection of Southeastern flora, including the Henry W. Ravenel Collection of Con-

verse College, a collection of 19th century scientist and botanist Henry William Ravenel. Now over 100 years old, the University of South Carolina Herbarium is active in research, teaching, and public outreach.

The Herbarium offers free plant identification services to the public (including to schools interested in identifying native and cultivated plants in their schoolyards and classroom gardens) and participates in several science education initiatives. On occasion, Herbarium staff members are able to make presentations about South Carolina

flora, botany, and the functions and importance of herbaria. Additionally, a world-famous superhero named Plantman frequents the Herbarium and has been known to make appearances at local events. Although Plantman is a mysterious superhero, one who has a very busy schedule, he is occasionally available to visit schools. If you are a teacher and would like to schedule an appearance, contact Dr. John Nelson, Curator of the Herbarium, at 803-777-8196. Perhaps he can communicate with Plantman and set something up...!



USC
HERBARIUM

www.herbarium.org

South Carolina Department of Agriculture



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We're on the Web!

www.agriculture.sc.gov
www.scschoolgardens.blogspot.com

School Gardens Program

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, contact:

Beth Crocker, (803) 734-2193, bcrocker@scda.sc.gov.

Carolina Children's Garden Events cont.

November 20, 9-11 am
Resources and Recycling
Everyone knows that recycling is important, but why? Participants will study the science of recycling, then explore creative ways to recycle everyday items. Recommended for ages 6-12.

December 4, 2-4 pm
Wreath-Making Workshop
(for Children and Adults!)
Make wreaths from natural materials and decorate them for the holidays using objects found in nature. Take one home and create a second to donate. \$2 per person.

Space is limited for most of these events, so please register in advance. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 803-459-3212, e-mail carolinachildrengarden@gmail.com, or visit our website at **December 18, 2-4 pm**

Holiday Celebration
FREE family event to celebrate the holidays. Enjoy crafts, games, and a winter walk through the Children's Garden. Drop-ins welcome.

December 21, 2-4 pm.
Welcome, Winter! Can you explain the reason for the seasons? Make a fruit model of the solar system and learn how other cultures, both modern and historical, commemorate the arrival of winter. \$2 per child; recommended for ages 6-12. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

All events are hosted at the Carolina Children's Garden, 900 Clemson Rd. www.carolinachildrengarden.org. All events are hosted at the Carolina Children's Garden, located at 900 Clemson Rd.

Sandhill 2010
FALL FESTIVAL
October 26 - November 2
NIGHTLY

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY
SANDHILL RESEARCH & EDUCATION CENTER
900 Clemson Road, Columbia, South Carolina
(Across from the Village at Sandhill)

CORN MAZE
CARNIVAL RIDES HAYRIDES
PUMPKIN PATCH LIVE MUSIC
HAUNTED HOUSE