



MANATEE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM 2010 SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING



*Individual Garden Sponsorship
Come See, Come Save*

*Team/Club Garden Sponsorship
Manatee River Soil Water Conservation Service*

The 4-H Spring Vegetable Gardening Program and Competition is administered through the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments of the Manatee County Cooperative Extension Service. The majority of the plants in the garden must be vegetables. Two garden divisions are available: Individual and Team/Club. A team is defined as at least two or more members.

GROWING SEASON – The growing season for this **competition runs from January 1 through April 30**. Evaluation of the gardens should take place when the gardens are producing and **at or near their peak**, but no later than April 30.

COMPETITION REGISTRATION – All participants must be at least eight years old (as of September 1, 2009), have an enrollment form on file with the 4-H Office **and are enrolled in the Horticulture Project no later than December 31, 2009**. This complies with the 60-day requirement for member participation in competitive events as stated in the Manatee County 4-H Program Policies.

REGISTER FOR COMPETITION – All participants must register for the competition **by calling the 4-H Office 722-4524 between January 4, and March 1, 2010**. Gardens should be planted between January 1 and March 1, 2010. This allows sufficient growing time for judging to take place before April 30.

BEFORE PLANTING – When you are ready to plant your garden, it is recommended that you take a **sampling (at least ½ pint) of the soil** from different locations in the planting area (at least 4 inches deep) to the Extension Office to have the PH checked. The Extension Office is located at the Agriculture Center, 1303 17th Street West, Palmetto. Tell the receptionist that this is for the 4-H Spring Vegetable Gardening Competition and there will be no charge for the test. It is also recommended that you wait until you receive the test results before you begin planting. The results will tell you if the soil PH needs to be adjusted and what to use.

WHEN IT'S TIME TO PLANT

- ❖ Make sure that your garden plot is at least 100 square feet. All areas should be documented.
- ❖ If square foot or container gardening is used, the total gardening area should be at least 100 square feet. All container surface areas should be measured. Different sizes and shapes of containers may be used but they must look organized and meet the square footage requirements.
- ❖ Gardens may be mixed (a combination of traditional, square foot, raised beds, and/or containers).
- ❖ A **variety of vegetables** (of your choice) may be planted.
- ❖ Use age **appropriate gardening project record** for recording your progress.

- Cloverbud (ages 5-7) and Junior (ages 8-10) will use the "**4-H Spring Vegetable Gardening Record.**"
- Intermediate (ages 11-13) and Senior (ages 14-18) will use "**4-H Horticulture Record**" (#332).
- AND complete a copy of the "**4-H Special Interest Record Book.**" Submit these records at the same time that you submit your other record books for judging. You must complete your gardening book and submit it for evaluation in order to be eligible for an award. (NOTE: If spring gardening is the only project/activity you are submitting your record book in, you must complete a project record instead of a special interest record book.)

❖ The **role of the parent** in the planting and care of the garden should be that of an advisor to the 4-H'er.

WHEN YOUR GARDEN IS READY TO BE JUDGED call the **Extension Office (722-4524)** and speak with Mr. Ervin Shannon. He will arrange a time when the judging team can come to your site. It is helpful if you can be there at judging, although it's not absolutely necessary.

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS will take place at the 4-H Awards Program in May. Certificates (top three winners) and monetary awards (first place winner) in each division (Individual and Team/Club Gardens) will be presented at that time.

GARDENING TIPS – When the judges come to your garden site, they will be looking at the following:

1. **Site Location** - Sunny location, away from trees if possible, near a water source.
2. **Sanitation** - Are vegetables harvested or disposed of when necessary and not left on the vine to rot?
3. **Weed Control** - Is garden free of weeds?
4. **Disease Control** - Are plants generally healthy and free of disease?
5. **Insect Control** - Are plants free of insects?
6. **Varieties** - A variety of vegetables is desirable. Varieties which are adaptable for this climatic area are used.
7. **General Appearance** - This includes overall neatness, plant spacing and arrangement.



GOOD LUCK
and
HAPPY GARDENING

Revised August 24, 2009

4-H programs are open to youth ages 5-18 without regard to race, creed, color, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin.