



MANATEE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM 2017 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 units of the 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 they are at or near their peak, but no later than April 30.

COMPETITION REGISTRATION - All participants must be 8 by September 1, 2016 and have an enrollment form completed online **and be enrolled in the Plant Sciences project no later than December 31, 2016**. 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 - by **calling the 4-H Office** (941.722.4524) **between January 3, and March 1, 2017**. Gardens can be planted between January 1 and March 1, 2017. Allow 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 attendant 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 IS TIME TO PLANT

- Make sure that your garden plot is at least 100 square feet
- A **variety of vegetables** (of your choice) may be planted

- Use **age-appropriate project record** and special interest record book for recording your progress
 - Cloverbuds (age 5-7) and Juniors (age 8-10) use the “**4-H Spring Vegetable Gardening Record**”
 - Intermediates (age 11-13) and Seniors (age 14-18) 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 for evaluation in order to be eligible for an award.

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 (941.722.4524) and speak to the Vegetable Extension Agent. She will arrange a time when the judging team can come to your site. It will be helpful if you can be there at judging, although it's not absolutely necessary.

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS will take place at the County 4-H Awards Program. Certificates (top three winners) and monetary award (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:

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

GOOD LUCK AND HAPPY GARDENING

Revised August 2, 2016

