



RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

**Cooperative Extension
of Somerset County**

New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

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**Rutgers Master Gardeners of Somerset County Speakers Bureau
Current Presentation Offerings – 2024**

Jump Start Your Garden Indoors – Learn the benefits of indoor seed starting. Find out what materials are needed, how to select seeds, when to sow, how to manage seedling growth, and the process of hardening off young plants before moving them outdoors.

So, You Want to Have a Vegetable Garden – Do you want to turn a sunny patch of your lawn into a place to grow vegetables? Did you ever wonder what makes a vegetable garden successful? Well, it all begins with garden preparation and knowing what a plant needs to thrive. Topics include choosing the right site for vegetables, improving the soil, creating a garden plan, and advice on choosing plants and selecting tools.

Vegetable Gardening – From Planting to Harvest – Properly cared for productive vegetable plants will thrive and shower you with delicious vegetables all season long. This program will build on the other vegetable gardening presentations, providing information about planting your crops, maintaining them, inspecting and treating for problems, as well as harvesting for peak flavor.

Container Gardening – No space for an in-ground garden? Have clay, rocky, or contaminated soil in your yard? Don't like tilling and weeding? Or maybe you have limited mobility or trouble bending? Perhaps Container Gardening is for you! Container Gardening is a guide to homegrown vegetables and colorful flowers without expensive tools and back breaking labor. Make gardening fun again with the use of containers!

Herb Garden Basics – Herb Garden Basics will get you started on planning, locating and filling your herb garden, and successfully maintaining it for years of enjoyment. There are also plenty of tips on storing and using your herbal bounty, plus a close-up look at some of the most popular herbs.

Going Native in Your Garden – Native plants, those not brought with European settlers, have established complex relationships with other native plants, insects and animals, some of which are dependent on one another to thrive. Learn about New Jersey native plants, their care, and the advantages to the environment of growing native plants in your garden.

Composting – Did you know that you can remove 90% of the waste stream sent to landfills by recycling and composting? Do your part for the environment by learning how to mix the right proportions of the “browns and greens” to perfect your home composting skills.

Plant It and They Will Come – Butterflies and their caterpillars, like humans, have particular preferences for the food they will eat. If you plant what a critter likes, it will be delighted to find its favorite food in your garden. This beautiful presentation is a guide to attracting butterflies to your garden and keeping them there.

Attracting Native Pollinating Insects to Your Landscape – Did you know that pollinating insects are responsible for 75% of our food? Yet the majority of our landscapes provide little if no habitat for these essential insects. In this program you can learn how to change your backyard into a living habitat and encourage these native pollinators to thrive.

Attracting Pollinators – In this program you will learn about the variety of pollinator species such as hummingbirds, bats, bumblebees, native bees and more. Covered in this presentation are flowers to plant to attract butterflies and bees. You will also learn about pollinator decline, habitat loss and environmental issues affecting pollinators.

The Plight of the Monarch – Have you noticed a decrease in monarch butterflies? Well, you're right! In this wonderfully presented program from experienced monarch "propagators" you will learn the reason why this is happening. You will also learn about the life history and habitat of this majestic insect and what you can do to help this cause.

Garden Favorites that Deer (almost) Never Eat – Is your landscape a deer buffet? Are you tired of seeing stumps where you lovingly planted expensive plants? This program gives some strategies to make your yard less attractive to the herd and highlights some rarely nibbled specimens that will send them next door instead.

Knowing and Growing Chrysanthemums – A slide presentation illustrating the history of the premier fall flower, the chrysanthemum and its many varieties, and detailing its culture. See photos of the magnificent 1,000 bloom plants and other very special mums. Care and handling of garden mums and exhibition varieties, especially disbuds, will be explained and illustrated.

How to Grow House Plants – There are many reasons to grow plants in our home. They beautify your home, reduce stress and can reduce indoor pollutants. Indoor plants, like outdoor plants, require the appropriate amount of light, temperature range, humidity, water and nutrition. Some plants need lots of light, others not so much. In this program you will learn about a light test, watering frequency, humidity and other factors to improve success,

Your First Orchid... Now What? – Presented by a certified American Orchid Society judge. Interesting facts about orchids, pollination and the breadth of orchid varieties. Stunning photos of over 30 different orchids followed by practical information on how to take care of your new orchid, which includes potting with proper soil, watering, fertilization, and the best place for it in your home.

Roses – Learn important facts about roses, including rose varieties and selection as well as planting and caring for your new rosebush. Also discussed are proper soil mixture, watering, and fertilization. You will learn how to properly prune roses for maximum growth and flowers in addition to preparing plants for winter. There is an extensive discussion about identifying pests and diseases and how to best deal with them.

Lawn Care for the Homeowner – Whether you are new to lawn care or have been maintaining turfgrass for years, this program will provide information that will lead to a healthy and attractive lawn. The program will discuss the basics of lawn maintenance including mowing, watering, fertilizer, thatch management and aeration. Also discussed are weed management, diseases, grubs and more!

All About Tea – Hear about the history of tea and the tea trade. Learn how tea is grown, harvested and processed into the different types of tea. Explore the tea ceremonies and culture of tea from around the world. Learn the truths and tales of tea and answer the questions: What is High Tea? Is tea really picked by monkeys? Is drinking tea in America unpatriotic? What is the connection between tea and Hong Kong?

The Relationship of Plants and People – Plants are important to us for many things with our relationship evolving over thousands of years. The evolution of plant life on Earth is fundamental to the history of our planet. Topics include the importance of agriculture, how cotton built a global empire, the use of plants for medicine, the creation of biofuels and more. There were many surprises, interesting stories as well as tragic events explored including Tulip Mania and Plant Criminology.

In development: “Shade Garden”