

Cooperative Extension Service

The Center for Sustainability



Cooperative Extension Educators
are on the move throughout the
District – Improving the Quality of
Life for All Residents



UNIVERSITY OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, URBAN SUSTAINABILITY
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Building Community Strength

Linking Growers and Consumers

Farmers Markets/DC Market Maker

DC residents benefit from the variety, quality, and value of fruits, vegetables and other products conveniently available in their neighborhoods through Farmers Markets and the DC Market Maker Program.

Calvin Lewis, Research Associate, with the initiative of Dean Gloria Wyche-Moore, started the CAUSES Farmers Market on the UDC campus in 2009 with one vendor. The Market now averages 5-6 farmers and other vendors weekly, including bakers, hot food providers and clothes retailers. Average buying attendance increased from 172 in 2009 to over 349 in 2010. In fall 2011, UDC partnered with other organizations to launch the Parkside-Kenilworth Farmers Market in a designated “food desert” neighborhood in southeast DC.

Calvin Lewis also administers DC MarketMaker, an interactive, web-based marketing resource with the largest collection of searchable food industry-related data in the country. This program reaches out to Mid-Atlantic minority farmers in the region to help them market and sell their products directly to the consumer. Market Maker allows small, local farming operations to succeed and grow by expanding access to distributors, retailers and consumers.

“We are the only true urban, agriculture-based Market Maker location in the U.S.,” he explains. Twenty-six farmers markets in the District of Columbia were added to the Market Maker, identifying them to new channels of distribution and new avenues of profitability.



Jose Luis Lopez, shown at his produce stand with his sister Andrea, was among the first vendors to participate in the UDC Farmers Market.

Sustainability Successes

The UDC/Farmers Market Economic Development Business Incubation Project has helped to launch three local businesses and gave new vendors an opportunity to develop their marketing and customer service skills.



What world-famous celebrity visited the UDC Farmers Market? See this and other photos on the Center website! www.udc.edu/cfs/market.htm

Finding Solutions Together

Cooperative Education

Did you know that cooperatives are a significant part of the District's economic landscape, second only to New York City in the number of total limited equity cooperatives? Cooperatives are voluntary organizations formed to meet community needs, such as housing, health care, financial services, food marketing, and more. Through cooperative efforts, citizens can leverage their economic power and independence.

"By plowing profits back into the business, cooperatives can operate on narrower margins. This helps drive down unfair prices and sets a competitive range of goods and services," explains Calvin Lewis.

Located at UDC's Learning Resources Division, the C.H. Kirkman, Jr. Resource Library for Cooperatives is a one-stop source for the training and development of cooperatives. Its reference information and other materials cover all aspects related to the study and practical application of this relevant economic model. The collection is linked to information resources of eight major cooperatives across the country. Kirkman Library titles may also be accessed through the UDC Library ALADIN system. The Kirkman Library is open to all DC residents.



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Sustainability Successes

Cooperative Extension educators conducted four focus group meetings and eight trainings with residents in cooperative housing to raise awareness of their legal rights as owners. Students from the UDC David Clarke Law School provided legal representation. Through these efforts, residents were able to defend their rights of tenancy and save their building from developers.



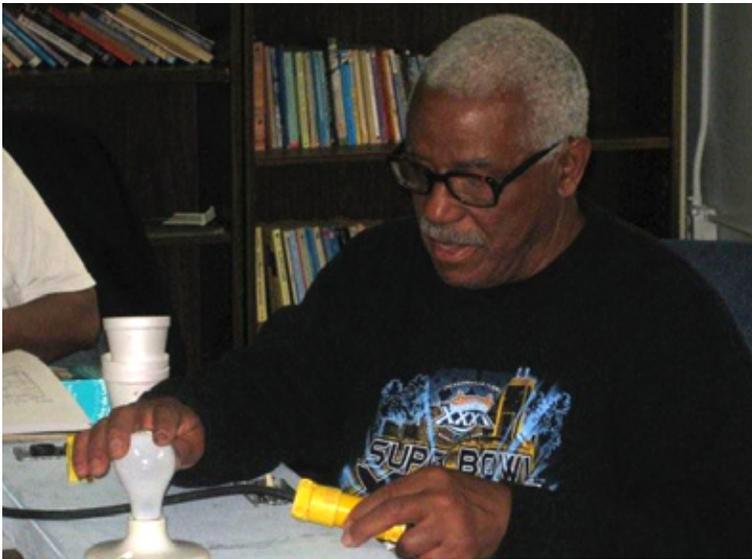
Learn about the birth and growth of coops in the nation's capital in the CFS publication, "Understanding Cooperatives" www.udc.edu/cfs/ce.htm

Empowering People

Saving Energy and Money in Your Home

Energy Efficiency & Home Repair

Reducing energy consumption and waste is a key component of sustainability. Through the Energy Efficiency and Home Repair Program, DC residents gain useful “do-it-yourself” skills to increase the comfort and safety of their homes. Hands-on practice in using tools means savings on utility bills and avoiding expensive repair problems. “There are so many innovations in home equipment, from sensors in faucets to water-saving features in toilets,” notes program coordinator Charles Brown. With the knowledge about home heating, plumbing and electrical systems that participants gain, homeowners and tenants can negotiate more confidently for successful outcomes with contractors concerning needed repairs.



District residents learn basic wiring and plumbing techniques.



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Sustainability Successes

Over 1,100 District residents have attended the general information sessions on energy-efficient tips, receiving free energy-saving bulbs. More than 200 (18%) participants finished the home repair portion of the program and received certificates identifying their ability to make these minor adjustments in their homes. Ten individuals (~1.0%) reported that they were able to keep contractors from taking advantage of them for the repair work contracted. Their estimated savings: over \$2,000 each, or a total of \$20,000.



Take the Center's Home Repair Audit and find out how our programs can help.
www.udc.edu/cfs/ee.htm

Claiming Your Rights as an Informed Consumer

Financial Literacy

The financial shock of 2008 has made financial literacy more important than ever before. Preparing District youth to become fiscally responsible adults is a major goal of the High School Financial Literacy program. Starting in the 9th grade, students are introduced to basic financial topics in 10 instructor-led training modules. The curriculum begins with a description of deposits and credit services offered by financial institutions, progressing to topics such as: choosing and maintaining a checking account, budgeting, the importance of saving, and how to obtain and use credit effectively.

The Basic Financial Planning Program for adults serves participants ranging from freshman college students to senior citizens, ex-offenders, and individuals with special needs. Participants develop the knowledge, skills, and motivation to build and maintain financial security. The program focuses on behavioral change as well as methods to identify and avoid consumer finance problems such as debt, financial scams and predatory lending.

“The number one reason people get into financial trouble is lack of knowledge,” according to Cooperative Extension Service Educator, Rodney Gill. “This program provides free, accessible, solid information for the public that makes a difference in their lives.”



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Films, videos, and real-life examples enable learners to attain a stable financial future.

Sustainability Successes

More than 777 District residents have completed the Financial Planning Program. Sixty-four percent established a bank account – many for the first time – and filed income taxes, changed their economic conditions and started a savings plan. Their training enabled them to take advantage of new federal matching funds for home purchases.



**Are you on a tight budget?
Here are ten easy ways to get
started on saving now!**
www.udc.edu/cfs/fl.htm

Empowering People

A “Green Job” Opportunity that Protects Residents from Lead Hazards

Lead Abatement Training Program

The legacy of lead paint in older houses and other buildings, and its presence in soil, water and dust, presents a potential threat to public health. The Lead Abatement Program offers classes that range from basic lead awareness to certification for lead abatement remediation, inspection and risk assessment. Successful completion of the required courses can lead to advancement in the growing Lead Abatement service field.

More than 80 residents have participated in the Mini Lead Awareness Workshops. All received pre- and post-evaluations. The evaluations indicated a 70% increase in knowledge of lead awareness. Learning how to protect their families from, and identify the hazards of, lead exposure is a key objective of the Mini Lead Awareness Workshops. The knowledge gained can help to decrease the number of children and adults affected by lead poisoning.

“There are a wide range of ways that lead enters our homes, offices, and other buildings,” Program Coordinator Carolyn Haye explains. “Residents can learn simple steps to protect their families from lead threats.”



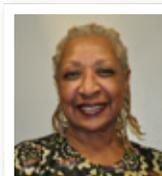
A new mobile unit for testing lead in paint started in Fall 2011! To find out how to schedule a visit to your neighborhood, contact the Lead Abatement Training Program Coordinator.

Sustainability Successes

During 2011, the Lead Abatement Program trained and certified more than 31 lead workers and eight lead inspectors. All have found employment in the lead construction industry.



View Lead Fact Tips for simple ways to assess home lead threats.
www.udc.edu/cfs/lead.htm



Carolyn Haye

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Promoting Stewardship of Natural Resources

Building a Community Resource of Gardeners

DC Master Gardeners

DC Master Gardeners, revitalized in 2002, is a volunteer program affiliated with land-grant universities. Volunteers utilize research-based information to educate the public on best practices in horticulture and environmental stewardship. Active in all 50 states and Canada, the program was established to assist Cooperative Extension in reaching the consumer horticulture public. The program provides interested individuals with extensive training in topics such as plant pathology, entomology, urban soils, and plant propagation and pruning. In return, participants are required to dedicate volunteer time to demonstrate horticultural practices; answer questions, provide information, and speak at public events; and participate in community gardening programs.

“Washington, D.C. and Baltimore City are the only two urban Master Gardener Programs in a metropolitan city on the east coast of the U.S.,” Ms. Bandier points out. “This makes the UDC program unique in serving the residents of the District. DC Master Gardeners provide unbiased, research-based educational assistance and programs in horticulture and environmental issues to the gardening public.”

Sustainability Successes

More than 400 DC residents have been trained in the Master Gardener program since the program was revitalized in 2002. Nationally, Master Gardeners volunteered more than 5 million hours in 2009. In 2010, 187 active Master Gardeners gave a total of 9,350 hours valued at \$306,119. Currently, there are a total of 226 active Master Gardeners in the District of Columbia.



DC Master Gardener class starts January 31, 2012!
Applications are taken year-round. Information at www.udc.edu/cfs/dcmg.htm



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Master Gardener participants teamed with the New Community for Children organization to work with children in the Shaw-Howard neighborhood. Together they produced this model vegetable and herb organic garden.



New Community for Children Master Gardeners project

Promoting Stewardship of Natural Resources

Providing New Food Varieties to Diverse Populations

Ethnic Crops

The Ethnic Crops program exists to meet the needs of the rapidly changing ethnic makeup of the region's consumers. Working with area community gardeners, Ethnic Crop Development Specialist Yao Afantchao advises residents on how to grow and cook a variety of healthy and flavorful international menu options. He also introduces commercial growers to expanding ethnic produce marketing opportunities. "Ethnic produce presents a significant opportunity for Mid-Atlantic farmers as high-value alternative crops and an excellent source of income," Mr. Afantchao points out.

Ongoing research in plant varieties and cultivation techniques is also a part of the Ethnic Crops program. Two vegetable species have been chosen for study in the program's research plot: garden eggs, a kind of eggplant, and a hot pepper known as Scotch Bonnet.

According to Mr. Afantchao, ethnic foods products in North America account for more than 12% of all retail food sales, and are projected to grow 5% annually. "For some consumers, ethnic produce is not only a source of food and fiber but also a source of cultural values."



Garden egg, also known as African eggplant, is widely used in West African cuisine. Scotch Bonnet is among the most intensely hot of all peppers. They are grown in the Caribbean and throughout Latin America.

Sustainability Successes

In 2010, an estimated 155,000 DC residents were exposed to ethnic crops planted in 11 community gardens and eight recreation centers. Residents enjoyed sampling a variety of African plants at community "tasting" events throughout the District.



Access tasty and nutritious recipes for African crops at the Center website!
<http://www.udc.edu/cfs/esc.htm>



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Preserving the District's Tree Canopy

Urban Forestry

Forest Outreach relays the importance and many benefits of city trees and the aesthetic, environmental, and food resources they provide. Residents are educated about care of trees in an urban setting, forestry niche crops and controlling invasive species that threaten the ecosystem. Outreach methods include education materials, demonstrations, technical assistance, site visits, phone consultations and workshops.

"I have enjoyed training and working with volunteers to properly identify and remove invasive plant species in the District," says Outreach Coordinator Mary Farrah. "Through the hard work and motivation of our volunteers from Casey Trees' Citizen Foresters, City Year, Master Gardeners, as well as UDC staff and students, we have been able provide invasive plant abatement on the UDC Van Ness Campus and in Rock Creek Park. Most importantly, our volunteers can share the knowledge they've gained to increase public awareness about the problems invasive species create and what can be done to prevent their spread. That alone makes all the cases of poison ivy I've had worthwhile!"



Volunteers save trees by removing invasive plants.

Sustainability Successes

The Forestry Outreach Program distributed 14,500 fact sheets that identified the threat of invasive species to the District's trees. Through a partnership with Casey Trees, a local non-profit whose mission is to "re-tree DC," the Forestry Outreach co-taught an invasive species class with at Rock Creek Park. The class was the first made available to Casey Trees' thousands- strong volunteer base, the Citizen Foresters.



View the new Center publication on the identification and abatement of invasive plant species in DC. www.udc.edu/cfs/urban_forestry.htm



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Promoting Stewardship of Natural Resources

Supporting Food Access and Better Nutrition Throughout the District

Urban Community Gardening

Low-income and minority neighborhoods in the District continue to suffer from scarcity of full service grocery stores. Lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables contribute to higher obesity and Type Two diabetes rates among youth as well as older residents. The Urban Community Gardening program provides District residents with information about establishing small garden plots, with special emphasis on the challenges and advantages of gardening in an urban setting.

“Residents have really enjoyed harvesting from the demonstration gardens,” notes Mary Farrah who, with Yao Afantchao, carries out the Urban Community Gardening Program. “They tell me what a great idea it is to grow food in public spaces. It adds a personal touch to their parks.”



New Community for Children Master Gardeners project

A young gardener proudly displays his harvest.

Sustainability Successes

The Urban Community Gardening program partnered with District Department of Parks and Recreation to install and maintain eight new gardens in recreation centers throughout the city. Resident volunteers, including many children, participated in building, cultivating and harvesting 24 different varieties of produce on the site.



“Let’s Get Growing!” is a practical guide to starting and maintaining a garden
www.udc.edu/cfs/urban_forestry.htm



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Valuing a Vital Resource

Water Quality Education Program

Through the Water Quality Education Program, DC residents increase their awareness of the importance of clean surface, ground and drinking water to health and quality of life. The Water Quality Education Program conducts workshops for DC adults and for teachers and students in DC public, charter and private schools. The program also promotes water conservation at faith-based organizations, health fairs, recreation centers and youth events. The program has established demonstration rain gardens and green roofs in the District as tools to manage storm water runoff. Adults learn methods to prevent heavy metal, bacterial, and other sources of water contamination and pollution, as well as how to conserve water and minimize water bills.

Students explore educational and career options in biology, chemistry and physics by measuring water pH and water conductivity and observing streams and rivers around their schools. Students also study the impact of climate change on the water cycle. "Learning about water develops kids' critical thinking," Wellela Hirpassa, Program Coordinator, observes. "It raises awareness of how ordinary people can help control water pollution."



Students learn how to test water and record data.

Sustainability Successes

The Water Quality Education Program co-created "Dive into Drinking Water," the first regional curriculum for K-12 students that explores the sources, types, processes and issues concerning the water we depend on.

Students learn about global water access, investigate watershed characteristics on the Web, and play an online water competition game. The curriculum, developed with regional education partners, complies with science Standards of Learning in the District, Maryland and Virginia.



See a poster outline of the innovative "Dive into Drinking Water" curriculum www.udc.edu/cfs/wqe.htm



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The Center for Sustainability

What is Sustainability?

Sustainability is an economic, social, and ecological concept. It is intended to be a means of configuring civilization and human activity so that society and its members are able to meet their needs and express their greatest potential in the present, while preserving biodiversity and natural ecosystems, and planning and acting for the ability to maintain these ideals indefinitely. Sustainability affects every level of organization, from the local neighborhood to the entire globe.*

The Center for Sustainability (CFS) at UDC combines the expertise and experience of Cooperative Extension educators to support, expand, and nourish the capabilities of DC residents to thrive. As part of the UDC College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability, and Environmental Science, the Center's programs use both formal and non-formal education to foster practical skills as well as maintain the District's natural well-being. Our mission reflects the University's commitment to building healthy, vibrant, and livable communities in Washington, DC.

Mark Your Calendars For These Coming Events And Classes!

- The Master Gardener course begins January 31, 2012
- 2012 is the International Year for Cooperatives! The Center is planning new events and opportunities
- The Financial Literacy program observes "America Saves" week, February 19-25, 2012. Learn how to reduce debt and avoid consumer finance traps

CFS offers fee-based and free, non-credit educational programs, workshops, demonstrations and technical assistance to all District of Columbia residents. Contact the Cooperative Extension educators in this publication to learn how our programs can serve your individual and institutional needs.

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According to the UDC Sustainability Task Force Report, "UDC will serve as a **SUSTAINABILITY LEADER** among institutions of higher education and as a national model for urban sustainability in both campus operations and **EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS.**"

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