



Agricultural Experiment Station (AES)



University of the District of Columbia

Community Outreach and Extension Services

September 2009

Sustainable Agriculture Research Program

Special point of interest:

This research project involves conducting applied research ... with the specific aim of increasing food production in urban gardens without the need for using toxic chemicals ...”



Dr. James R. Allen examining red amaranth plants at Muirkirk Research Farm in Beltsville, Maryland.

Program Emphasis

The research program involves conducting applied research in urban horticulture with the specific aim of increasing food production in urban gardens without the need for using toxic chemicals such as soil amendments and pesticides. The production system used in this research is now known as sustainable agriculture. Sustainable agriculture as defined by the 1990 Farm Bill:

An integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site specific application that will, over the long term: (a) Satisfy human food and fiber needs; (b) Enhance environmental quality; (c) Make the most efficient use of non-renewable resources; and (d) integrate, where possible, Natural bio cycles and control.

Sustainable Agriculture Research Program

The research program involves five projects all funded by the United States Department of Agriculture. These projects include: (a) Sustainable Agricultural Program for Urban Gardens; (b) Herbs and Spices Production as Niche Crops for Urban Markets; (c) Intercropping Herbs and Spices with other Vegetable Crops for Maximum Productivity; (d) Implementation of Techniques for Extending the Growing Season of Specialty Crops in the District of Columbia; and (e) Production of Mushrooms as a Niche Crop for the Urban Gardens of the District of Columbia.

About Dr. James R. Allen

Dr. Allen's interests and expertise are in the field of Crop Agronomy with special emphasis on using sustainable agricultural techniques in producing vegetables, herbs and spices in the urban gardens of the District of Columbia. He received his Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in Crop Physiology from Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Allen earned his B.S. degree in Agronomy from Tuskegee University. In 1989, Dr. Allen joined the University of the District of Columbia as the Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station. After serving as Director for the DC AES for eight years, Dr. Allen switched gears in 1997 to concentrate on his true passion, Sustainable Agriculture Research. Currently, he serves as the lead researcher for sustainable agriculture initiatives in the Station and has been awarded nearly \$500,000 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for Specialty Crops research. Dr. Allen has more than 50 publications consisting of local, national, and international sources.

For further information, contact Dr. Allen at (202) 274-7140; email: jallen@udc.edu

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