"I CAN GROW A GARDEN"

PROJECT

University of Florida – IFAS
Flagler County Extension – Family Nutrition Program
2009 Florida School Garden Competition
ENTRY FORM

School BUNNELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Teacher(s) & Grade(s) involved in garden program
RICHARD DUPONT - PRINCIPAL  KINDERGARTEN & 1ST GRADE TEACHERS
21ST CENTURY AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM - GRADES 3, 4, 5
Contact Person KATHLEEN FISHER
Time contact person can be reached MONDAY - FRIDAY 8-5
Phone (386) 437-7444  Fax (386) 586-2102
Address (please include city and zip code) BUNNELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
305 N. PALMETTO STREET, BUNNELL, FL 32110

Email address KFISHER@UFL.EDU

CATEGORY (Please mark only one)

_____ SINGLE CLASS GARDEN (Garden used by one class only)
   Number of students in class and grade _____

_____ MULTIPLE CLASS GARDEN (Garden used by more than one class or grade,
   but not by the entire school)
   Number of students involved in the garden and grades __________

/  ENTIRE SCHOOL GARDEN (Garden that is used by all grade levels at the
   school)
   Number of students involved in the garden and grade 105

TYPE of school garden that you use with your students. (Please mark only one)
1. Please mark all the activities that your students participate in prior to gardening.

- Planning the garden
- Designing the garden
- Preparing the garden
- Choosing plants
- Other, ____________________________

2. Please mark all the activities that your students participate in while in the garden.

- Planting
- Observing
- Recording
- Experimenting
- Watering
- Recording
- Sitting
- Other, ____________________________
- Weeding
- Harvesting
- Fertilizing

3. Please indicate the percentage of time, on average, that you used the garden as an instructional tool in your classroom. ___%

4. Please mark the subject area(s) into which you have incorporated school gardening. Check all that apply.

- Math
- History
- Music
- Ethics (responsibility and nurturing)
- Science
- Health/Nutrition
- Physical Ed.
- Other, please specify ____________________________
- Social Studies
- Language Arts
- Environmental Ed.

5. Please indicate the number of years that a school garden has been part of your curriculum. ___

6. Please indicate the types of volunteers that have helped you and your students with the garden.

- Master Gardeners
- Senior citizens
- Parents
- University students
- Garden club members
- 4-H members
- High school students
- FFA
- Older students at your school
- Other, please specify ____________________________
7. Please indicate the source(s) of information used to assist in the incorporation of school gardening into your school's curriculum. Check all that apply.

- County Extension service
- Teacher in-service training
- Personal knowledge
- Educational journals/publications
- National Gardening Association's Growlab/Growing ideas newsletter
- Other, please specify

8. Please indicate the types of educational material(s) used in the classroom to support the use of school gardening in the curriculum.

- Library books
- Internet
- Filmstrips
- Textbooks
- Trade books
- Newspapers
- Other, please specify

- Computer software
- Videos
- Personal books
- Experiments
- Gardening magazines and catalogs

***Please read and sign below***

By submitting the same you acknowledge and agree that the University of Florida (and Walt Disney World Co.) may reproduce the same, and all materials may be displayed (in part or in whole) at the 2010 Epcot® International Flower and Garden Festival and for other promotional materials. Such presentation materials (and School Garden packets) will NOT be returned to you (they will become the property of the University of Florida and Walt Disney World Co.) Finally, you acknowledge and agree that should your school be selected as a winner under the competition, then to the extent any of the photographs or materials submitted contain the names of likeness of students, teachers and/or others, you will be required to have adult individuals sign (and the parents/guardians of such students) sign consent/release forms provided by us so that we can display those photographs or materials concerning your winning garden. Such requirement would be a condition of your accepting the award.

I have read and understand the above.


Signature

Date
EDUCATIONAL RELEVANCE

The goal of the garden project is to foster learning through gardening. The larger mission is to encourage an understanding of the interdependency of all life and how nature sustains it. Between the garden, the kitchen and the classroom, a strong understanding of sound ecological principles grows along with an appreciation for the nutritional value of wholesome foods.

The lessons from the garden adventure encompass all areas of learning. Our students begin their garden journey thinking they would plant a few seeds and pull a few weeds. They soon find learning to be fun and challenging. They learn the importance of teamwork and that a garden requires patience. They get a chance to try new foods and to take healthy food home to their family. Garden-based educators are acutely aware that children connect with nature. It allows them the opportunity to make discoveries and solve problems.

Florida-Ag-in-the-Classroom educational materials are used as well as the “Got Dirt” curriculum. Many Sunshine Standards Benchmarks are addressed through the program. Language skills are enhanced by learning new vocabulary. Math and charting skills are emphasized and, of course, there are many Science lessons taught in addition to nutrition, the founding idea for our project.

Good nutrition is an essential element in every aspect of daily life. As program assistants in the University of Florida – IFAS, Flagler County Extension Family Nutrition Program, our job is to go into the community and into the schools to bring the message of the importance of good nutrition. The Family Nutrition Program (FNP) at the University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service, in collaboration with the Florida Department of Children and Families.

The barriers to accessing fresh fruit and vegetables are both financial and cultural. Many children are unaccustomed to eating fruits and vegetables. Through various methods, FNP works to bring new food experiences to them and teach the importance of eating a varied diet.

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

Contributors are Jungle Growth Potting Soil Company, Flagler County Soil and Water Conservation District, Florida Ag-in-the-Classroom, NGA Healthy Sprouts, local Lowe’s, Beachside Tile, Home Depot and Walmart and the Flagler County Master Gardeners. The entire school staff, including teachers, support employees and the Twenty-First Century Program Faculty contributes to the garden success. The Flagler County Agriculture Extension Agent, Mark Warren, has agreed to meet with the students to talk about Florida farming. Ruth Micieli, the Flagler County Horticulture Program Assistant and Louise Liester, the Flagler
Water and Environmental Program Coordinator serve as technical advisors for the project.

GARDEN QUALITY

The "I Can Grow a Garden" Project is located on the campus of Bunnell Elementary School. Presently, it consists of forty three 4' x 6' raised garden boxes in which a variety of produce is grown. The crops include corn, squash, beans, tomatoes, potatoes, cucumbers, bananas and citrus. It also contains companion plants such as garlic chives, marigolds and citron scented geraniums for natural pest control. This is the first year that a fall garden will be planted. Along with Florida fall crops, such as cabbage, broccoli, lettuce and strawberries, the garden expansion for the spring will include a Heritage Garden of heirloom vegetables and a Three Sisters Garden, based on the method commonly utilized by early Native Americans.

The project began under the direction of Krista Busey, Family Nutrition Program Assistant, in 2003 in a small garden area. Because of school expansion needs, buildings were constructed on the original site. The garden was moved and has continued to grow. It is our hope to have all students participate actively in the food growing and campus beautification endeavor at Bunnell Elementary School.

The children help with setting up the garden boxes as well growing the plants. They perform all garden tasks including tilling, planting, watering, fertilizing and harvesting. The teachers schedule weekly garden time with their classes. The children are encouraged to make recommendations for what we grow and, when possible, their ideas are incorporated into the garden. For example, a child asked for bananas so we added banana plants. We spoke about pineapples so the top portion of a pineapple was planted and we learned about bromeliads. The garden design allows for much flexibility.

The program recently expanded to incorporate lessons on water conservation with the implementation of rain barrels. The integration of composting into the program will allow for lessons on soil conservation and recycling. A worm farm was newly added.
On Tuesday, Bunnell Elementary School Third Grader Jay Karty, 9, holds up his winning cabbage. Karty is one of 170 students involved in a garden-based nutrition program at the school. Lowe's Home Improvement Palm Coast Store Manager James Bayer (pictured in the background) helped get the program off the ground by donating materials.

Growing healthy gardens and habits

By DAVID WRIGHT

BUNNELL — In February, the spot was just a small nondescript sliver of land on the southwest side of Bunnell Elementary School. Now, the land is alive with colorful vegetables, flowers and fruits, all planted by students as part of a garden-based education program by the University of Florida. This year, Busey and others were able to start the program again.

"This is the best way we know to teach children about nutrition and healthy living," Busey said.

Kathleen Fisher, a family nutrition program assistant for the Flagler County extension who helps run the program for UF, is thrilled at how involved...
GREEN: Let's Get Your Garden Growing

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Jay's secret for growing a large, leafy cabbage?
"I watered it very good," he said.
Busey said the garden is used for more than just growing yummy treats.
"Not only is this a garden, it's socialization they're getting too," she said. "They learn how to take care of each other. Kids who may not bond in the classroom may bond out here."

While older students tend the large garden, kindergartners have their own small plot where teacher Annette Thompson said she brings the garden into the classroom.
"We talk about each plant and various parts of the plant," she said.
First-grader Zyannah O'Neal, 7, said she doesn't mind digging in the dirt. "It's fun," she said. "We get to pick stuff and we get to eat it."

"They learn how to take care of each other. Kids who may not bond in the classroom may bond out here."

KRISTA BUSEY
Family Nutrition Program extension agent

more of them than previously thought, Busey said.
"A lot of times they will taste things they've never tasted before," she said. "If they're out here in the garden and they taste what they've grown, they'll eat it."

Gardening and sampling fruits and vegetables gets a thumbs up from first-grader David Silva, 8. Just don't ask him to eat a tomato, he said.
"They taste nasty," he said.

Jourdan Waas, 8, shows Emily Cleveland, 7, a pepper she picked in the school garden. Emily spent part of her garden time looking at a book about farmer's markets.

Chyna Phillips, 6, shows her teacher Amy Biletto the produce she picked in the Bunnell Elementary school garden.

While planting may be first-grader Zoe Liverman's favorite gardening activity, eating comes a close second, she said.
"I like when (plants) get really big because then you get to pick them," she said.
Students are encouraged to try the fruits and vegetables they grow and discover they like.
gardeners get a taste for working in the soil

the help of Kathy Fisher at Bunnell Elementary. The students have been growing and tasting their own
ance of the Flagler County Extension Service.

LITTLE GREEN THUMBS

By KENYA WOODARD
STAFF WRITER

BUNNELL — Tucked away in the
city is a bountiful garden
bursting with juicy squash, fat
cabbages, crisp peppers and fragrant
flowers — all grown by people under 4
feet tall.

Since March, Bunnell Elementary
School students have been working
plots of earth behind their school,
seeding an assortment of vegetables,
fruits and herbs from the dirt. The
pesticide-free garden is a six-year pro-
ject between the school and Universi-
ty of Florida’s Flagler County
Extension Service that exposes stu-
dents in kindergarten through third
grade to gardening, good nutrition
and exercise habits, said Krista Bu-
sy, who heads the service’s Family
Nutrition Program.

This year’s bounty from the Bun-
nell Elementary Nutrition Garden
will include zucchini, cucumbers, po-
tatoes, tomatoes, radishes, pole beans
and sunflowers, said program assis-
tant Kathy Fisher, whom students
call “The Garden Lady.”

There’s even sugarcane, lemon
glass, a banana tree, Key limes and
pomegranate, Fisher said.

The program introduces students to
gardening basics and teaches them
the importance of healthier eating,
Busey said. They’re also taught how
to develop their own green thumbs.

That’s a lesson that fourth-grader
Jay Karty, 9, took to heart.

Jay and other third-graders com-
peted in a contest sponsored by Bon-
nie Plant Farm of Union Springs, Ala.,
that challenged contenders to grow
the largest cabbage. Jay’s cabbage
measured a whopping 32 inches
across and he will now go on to com-
pete for a $1,000 scholarship, Fisher
said.

SEE GREEN, PAGE 4A

kenya.woodard@news-jrnl.com
The Bunnell Elementary School Nutrition Garden was developed through the University of Florida – Family Nutrition Program, Flagler County Extension Service.

All great things begin small...
With lots of love and care, the garden begins to thrive...

- The garden mission is to encourage an understanding of the interdependency of all life and how nature sustains it. Between the garden, the kitchen and the classroom, a strong understanding of sound ecological principles grows along with an appreciation for the nutritional value of wholesome foods.
There are many lessons to learn along the way.

LESSON PLANS
The children’s enthusiasm and love for gardening continues at home, which can lead to healthier eating for the whole family.
Mr. DuPont, school principal, and the entire school staff, including teachers, support employees and the Twenty-First Century After-school Program Faculty contributed in many ways to the garden success.
Community Spirit

It truly took the support and sponsorship of many community businesses and school staff who helped in many ways to make the garden miracle happen.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU to Lowe’s Home Improvement Store and the Jungle Growth Potting Soil Company for their generous contributions and promises of future support.