

Welcome to...

Food for Thought!

a quarterly e-newsletter to promote agricultural, environmental, and garden-based learning enrichment for youth and families in El Dorado County.

Please share this newsletter with anyone that might be interested! Subscribe by emailing Wendy West at University of California Cooperative Extension at wkwest@ucdavis.edu.

In this issue:

1. Grants Available for School Garden Programs
2. Locally Produced School Garden Curriculum Available
3. UC Master Gardeners Offer Consulting for Garden-based Learning Programs
4. School Garden Survey – Where are school garden programs in EDC?
5. Butterflies and Ladybugs Kits --- Available Free!
6. El Dorado County Fair Art and Writing Contests
7. Farm Day May 10, 2007

1. School Garden Program Grants – Application Available!

Grant applications are available for school garden programs at the California Department of Education website: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/af>. Once at the website, scroll down to and click on California Instructional School Garden 2006-07 Grant.

Here are several highlights:

- These grants are non-competitive!
- Applications are due by April 20, 2007
- School districts must complete the application on behalf of the school sites within their district
- Grants range from \$2500 - \$5000 depending on school site enrollment
- Funding is available for equipment, supplies and/or professional development (it is NOT an allowable expense to cover a stipend for a garden coordinator or consultant; we had hoped that coordinator funding would be included but alas, it was nixed)

Sources for information regarding preparing your school and district's proposal:

- California School Garden Network at <http://www.csgn.org> --- including how to order "Gardens for Learning – Creating and Sustaining Your School Garden Program".
- School Garden Network of El Dorado County at <http://ceeldorado.ucdavis.edu>.

2. Garden Curriculum Available --- Developed in El Dorado County!

The Garden of Learning Program at Schnell School in Placerville has been coordinated by Kelli Wessman for a number of years and is a highly successful, award winning program. Kelli's curriculum is now available for purchase! Lesson plans, an outline of systems for organizing and operating a school-wide program and other garden materials

including Farmer's Market, Worm Motel and Garden Math, are each sold separately. As your program grows you can purchase what you need. Utilizing these resources is an easy way to start or expand a garden-based learning program and is "home grown" in El Dorado County! Visit the Garden of Learning website at www.gardenoflearningk6.com or contact Kelli Wessman by email at gardenoflearningk6@earthlink.net.

3. Local Master Gardeners Offer Assistance to School Garden Programs

The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Master Gardeners are pleased to announce the Youth Garden Consultants program. If you are interested in planning and starting a school garden, or maintaining an existing garden at your school, trained Master Gardeners are available to assist you.

In addition to helping you plan, start and maintain a school garden, your youth garden consultant can develop a self-sustaining strategy for the garden. Contact the UCCE Master Gardeners by calling (530)621-5512 or go to the Youth Garden Consultants web page at: <http://ucanr.org/mgyouthgarden> to request assistance.

4. School Garden Survey – Where are school garden programs in EDC?

The School Garden Network of El Dorado County (SGNEDC) will be sending a survey to all school principals to gather details regarding the current status of programs in our local area. Does your school site currently not have a school garden program? Do you have a garden site but does your program need some revitalization or CPR? Is your school's program functioning well and ready to go to the next step? By documenting where programs are (and aren't!) and the needs of our community the SCNEDC can evaluate and formulate a plan to assist in building and expanding programs in our area.

The School Garden Network of El Dorado County is a local group of garden-based learning supporters and experts. The group includes the El Dorado County Farm Bureau, El Dorado County Office of Education, Ag in the Classroom, University of California Cooperative Extension and garden-based learning professionals. For more information contact Wendy West, UCCE (530)621-5533 or email at wkwest@ucdavis.edu.

5. Butterflies and Ladybugs Kits --- Available Free!

These intriguing springtime project kits let kids observe the life cycles of butterflies or ladybugs as they develop before their very eyes! The kits are designed for grades K-3 and include an enclosed habitat, curriculum activity guide, poster and a certificate to order the live larvae. We have a limited number of these kits available FREE, due to the generosity of the Jeanne Woods Family Foundation, with additional support from Ms. Lorraine Finch. First come, first served! ---email Wendy West, UC Cooperative Extension at wkwest@ucdavis.edu or call (530) 621-5533 today!

6. El Dorado County Fair to Feature Agriculture Poetry and Poster Contest

The El Dorado County Fair will be featuring youth creative writing and art contests based around local agriculture themes. Watch for more details!

7. Farm Day May 10, 2007

Over 700 3rd grade students from around El Dorado County will be attending Farm Day

on Thursday, May 10 at the El Dorado County Fairgrounds. Sponsored by El Dorado County Agriculture in the Classroom (see information at <http://www.edcfb.com/site>), this action packed day includes a variety of learning stations (from milking a cow to making compost for the garden) for local students. Would you like to volunteer? Email info@edcfb.com or call (530)622-7773 for more information.

Please pass this e-newsletter along to anyone that might be interest!

If you would like to be added or deleted from this e-newsletter list please contact Wendy West at University of California Cooperative Extension at wkwest@ucdavis.edu or call (530)621-5533.