

Community Groups to Offer Vegetable Garden Workshops

Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) is partnering with Pepperfield Project, Iowa State University (ISU) Extension, County Public Health offices, County Economic Development offices and other members of the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative (FFI) to help support new vegetable gardeners in Northeast Iowa. This partnership is one of the results of the NE Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative, funded by a W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant. Northeast Iowa is one of nine communities nationwide selected to participate and this effort covers Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek counties.

Too many people in our counties currently suffer from the effects of poor diet and physical inactivity, especially in low-income neighborhoods. The goal of this grant is to create vibrant communities that support access to locally grown, healthy and affordable food and safe places for physical activity and play - for everyone. The community coalition will focus on promoting changes so that eating healthy and being active becomes easy for everyone.

One focus of the grant is to seek policy changes that improve our local food system and increase the affordability and convenience of locally grown, healthy food. Coalition members began having discussions about the importance of fresh fruits and vegetables for a fit community and the increased interest in people growing their own food. With our increased community awareness of the need for good, fresh produce and the growing economic stress, many area families are looking more and more to their own garden produce for part of the solution. Organizations in the community are experiencing increased calls for basic gardening education. The Food and Fitness Initiative formed a sub-committee and collaboratively have planned a season of garden workshops to help support these new gardeners.

Some of the initial workshops will be offered by Seed Savers Exchange and the new Pepperfield Project. Interested gardeners need to pre-register for each workshop with the organization where the workshop is held. All workshops will focus on vegetable gardening with an organic sustainable focus.

For more information or to get involved in the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative visit: www.iowafoodandfitness.org

| <p align="center">Pepperfield Project Workshops</p> <p align="center">Please pre-register by calling 382-8833 or mailing registration information and check to: Pepperfield Project, 1575 Manawa Trail, Decorah, IA 52101 www.pepperfieldproject.org will be up and running soon!</p> | | | |
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| Date | Workshop | Cost | Location |
| June 27 9:00 – 12:00 | An Introduction to Food Preservation | \$10 | Pepperfield Farm |
| Home Vegetable Garden Support Series | | \$30 for all 3 | Pepperfield Farm |
| June 12 9:00 – 12:00 | Session I: Early season planting, spacing, weeds and mulching. | \$15 | Pepperfield Farm |
| July 11 9:00 – 12:00 | Session II: Summer weeds, pest and disease control, summer harvesting, second plantings | \$15 | Pepperfield Farm |
| August 29 9:00 – 12:00 | Session III: Fall Harvest, seed saving, garden cleanup | \$15 | Pepperfield Farm |
| Establishing a Kitchen Garden | | | |
| A six session, season-long series of intense instruction in planning, design, conversion, planting, management, pest control and harvest. The course is designed for experienced gardeners who are interested in doing volunteer community service to help educate others. The series will meet on Saturdays, 9:00 – 4:00 at Pepperfield Cost is \$300 | | | |

| <p align="center">Seed Savers Exchange Workshops</p> <p align="center">Please pre-register by calling 382-5990 or mailing registration information and check to: SSE, 3094 North Winn Rd, Decorah, IA 52101 www.seedsavers.org for complete descriptions</p> | | | |
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| Date | Workshop | Cost | Location |
| March 14 9:00 - 11:00 | Basic Vegetable Garden Planning | \$10 | Winneshiek Medical Center Conference Room |
| March 21 9:00 -11:00 | Starting Vegetable Seeds Indoors | \$10 | Seed Savers Exchange Office Conference Room |
| August 8 9:00 -12:00 | The Basics of Saving Seeds | \$10 | Seed Savers Exchange Office |