



Ulster County
10 Westbrook Lane
Kingston, NY 12401-2928

Tel: 845 340-3990
Fax: 845 340-3993
E-mail: ulster@cornell.edu
Web: www.cce.cornell.edu/ulster

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Contact: Lisa M. Berger
845-340-3990

Ulster County Master Gardeners Strive to Stem Hunger

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County's Master Gardener Program is striving to stem hunger this growing season by looking for gardeners to help with a new project to help feed the hungry in Ulster County. **Plant a Row For the Hungry (PAR)** is a people-helping-people program designed to assist in feeding the hungry in local communities. The concept is simple. Home gardeners are asked to plant one extra row of vegetables. The food from the extra row, or even excess from your garden, will be donated to Ulster County food banks and soup kitchens. Those participating in the program will take their harvested food to drop off locations in Ellenville, Kingston and New Paltz. Master Gardeners and other volunteers will then distribute the fresh, home grown produce to food banks, soup kitchens and food pantries throughout Ulster County. Some of the food will also be used by our nutrition education programs, which provide education to low-income individuals, families and youth, as they go out to teach.

There are over 70 million gardeners in the U.S. alone, many of which plant vegetables and harvest more than they can consume. If every gardener plants one extra row of vegetables and donates their surplus a significant impact can be made on reducing hunger. Food agencies will have access to fresh produce, funds earmarked for produce can be redirected to other needed items and the hungry of America will have more and better food than is presently available. Launched in 1995, this national program developed by the Garden Writer's Association of America, has been successful in communities throughout the country.

Now you can help those who are hungry right here in Ulster County. Join Cornell Cooperative Extension's Plant A Row Project by planting a little extra, or sharing the extra you have. Home gardeners participating in the program will receive an information packet containing seeds, a free "Plant a Row" veggie marker, and special advice from Master Gardeners about what to grow and how to plant. To register call, 340-3478(DIRT) or visit our website: www.cce.cornell.edu/ulster.

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