

Garden Update

Week of December 13, 2021

Kathleen Cue, Nebraska Extension Horticulture Educator in Dodge County

Nation Nourishment Food Sovereignty Program

People in medicine have long understood that what we eat has both short- and long-term impacts to our health, with some physicians prescribing fresh fruits and vegetables, along with medication, to patients. Food sovereignty is the right of access to nourishing and culturally significant food that is locally sourced, whether it is grown with your own two hands or by a local grower. Unlike purveyors of fast food, food sovereignty is about the dialogue between those who eat and local producers. This communication ensures food production strengthens human and environmental health while fostering community and cultural connections.

Like many cultures in the United States, the connection to gardening knowledge has been lost with the passing of grandparents and relatives who knew plants and how to grow them. The Nation Nourishment Food Sovereignty Program began in the spring of 2021 to educate the tribal communities of UmoNhoN, Winnebago, and Santee in a broad range of food-related topics, including gardening, foraging, food preparation, and canning.

The Nation Nourishment Food Sovereignty Program is a collaborative effort, partnering the University of Nebraska Extension and the Center for Rural Affairs. The program has fostered a similar project at UNL's East Campus, providing gardening classes to indigenous high school youth. In the spirit of paying things forward, the Nation Nourishment Indigenous Food Program has launched a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/nationnourishment> to encourage commentary and celebrate stories surrounding issues of food sovereignty among indigenous people.

The Nebraska Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program

Those interested in joining the 2022 Nebraska Extension Master Gardener Internship Program can attend an informational meeting on January 4th, 2022, 5:30 p.m., at the Dodge County Extension Office, 1206 West 23rd Street, Fremont, Nebraska. (A zoom link can be provided if attending in person is not possible.) Would-be applicants will learn about the volunteer requirements, the application and interview process, as well as the slate of classes. Extensive gardening experience is not a prerequisite for joining the program. Good communication skills, the ability to volunteer, and an interest in learning are traits Nebraska Extension is looking for. Attendance of the informational meeting is a requirement for those who'd like to apply, with applications made available at the meeting. Registration in advance is not required. If you have questions, please contact me, Kathleen Cue, at kcue2@unl.edu or 402.727.2775.