

Kids Can Grow

An Experiential Youth Gardening Program

What: A Train the Trainer Program for UMaine Extension Staff and Volunteers who wish to consider launching a pilot program in your region in 2010.

Where: UMaine Extension, Hancock County Office, 63 Boggy Brook Road, Ellsworth, ME

When: December 1, 2009, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Pre-registration Required: Contact Joyce Fortier at the Hancock County office at (207) 667-8212 or 800-287-1479 (in Maine) or E-mail: jfortier@umext.maine.edu



Are you interested in learning about a new program model for youth gardening? No – it's not a gardening curriculum – Kids Can Grow is an experiential youth gardening program model developed by University of Maine Cooperative Extension in York County in 1999. Through this five-month comprehensive gardening program designed for children ages 7 – 12, youth learn how to grow nutritious vegetables, herbs and beautiful flowers for their families in their own 3 x 5 foot raised bed gardens at home using intensive square foot gardening techniques. The kids participate in a series of "hands on" gardening classes at a central location, and then repeat what they learn at home using materials we supply, and home visit help from a Master Gardener or 4-H Volunteer mentor to assist and inspire them.

The Kids Can Grow secret to success is this experience of the children designing their own home garden and successfully raising vegetables, flowers, and herbs of their choices that builds their self-esteem and starts them on a journey of what we hope will become a life long gardening hobby. Food safety and good nutrition are also incorporated into the program.

The goal of this training will be to present the Kids Can Grow program model, gauge interest in starting new programs at new sites, and develop a support network to help make that happen. We will be seeking grant funds to pay for a pilot project at each new program site. New Kids Can Grow pilot programs were launched in Waldo and Oxford Counties in 2009 through a Maine Community Foundation Grant; and the program has been adapted in Strafford County, NH by UNH Extension where they have been running successful a program for the past five years.