

2022 Cultivating School Gardens Conference Online - July 20, 2022

8:00 – 8:10am – Welcome and directions for the day

8:10– 9:20 am – Keynote: Benefits of Plants for Youth Education and Well-Being, Speaker: Dr. Charlie Hall, Professor, Ellison Chair in International Floriculture, Texas A&M Department of Horticulture – A growing mountain of research continues to document the specific benefits a connection with plants and nature provides for youth learning and testing success, emotional and mental health, social life skills, and much more. Come and be enlightened and inspired in just how important your work in school gardening is to your students.

Split into concurrent tracks – choose your path

Track 1: Hands in the Dirt: Garden How-To

Track 2: Administration & Support: Funding, Resource Development, Curricula

TRACK 1: HANDS IN THE DIRT: GARDEN HOW-TO

9:25 – 10:25am – Location & Design Options, Speaker: William Isbell, Harris County Master Gardener (confirmed) - How do you choose the right location and design layout for your space? Will your garden be accessible to those with disabilities and/or for various age groups? We will explore traditional, raised beds, container gardens, and cost estimates associated for each.

10:25am – 10:35am – Break

10:35am – 11:35am – Get Growing! Soil, Seeds & Plants, Speaker: Skip Richter, CEA-Horticulture, Brazos County AgriLife Extension – What makes great gardening soil? What are the secrets to starting seeds in the garden or growing healthy transplants indoors? Learn all this and more, as well as how to incorporate math and science in the process.

11:35am – 12:35pm – Vegetables for Fall & Spring Gardens, Speaker: Ginger Easton-Smith, CEA-ANR, Aransas County AgriLife Extension – When to grow what, and when to harvest them - expanding the harvest with cool and warm season vegetables, interplanting, succession planting, and veggies that might be ‘new’ to students like Bok choy, daikon, edamame, etc.,

12:35pm – 1:00pm – Lunch

1:00 – 2:00pm – Just Add Water: Irrigation Considerations, Speaker: Boone Holladay, CEA-Horticulture, Fort Bend County AgriLife Extension – Learn how to identify existing plumbing, methodology of watering, common types of irrigation, designing and installation, water scheduling, and rainwater capture (harvesting).

2:00 - 3:00pm – Good Guys in the Garden: Knowing and Attracting Beneficial Insects, Speaker: Paul Winski, CEA-Horticulture, Harris County AgriLife Extension – Attracting beneficial insects and pollinators to the garden not only helps control pest populations but also adds additional interest. Learn who the “Good Guys” are and how to keep them in your garden.

3:00 – 3:10pm – Break

3:10 – 4:10pm – Planning A Well-Tended Garden, Speaker: Stephen Brueggerhoff, CEA-Horticulture, Galveston County AgriLife Extension – Maintaining developed gardens is key to a sustainable garden. Explore maintenance topics such as watering, weeding and mulching, and review tips for scheduling summer maintenance.

TRACK 2: ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT: FUNDING, RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, CURRICULA

9:25 – 10:25am – Building A Supportive Team: Partners & Partnerships, Speaker: Brandi Keller, CEA-Horticulture, Harris County AgriLife Extension - School gardens are more likely to succeed with a strong plan and committed team/volunteers. Learn how to build a garden committee and recruit support in the local community for long-lasting success.

10:25-10:35 – Break

10:35-11:35 - Student Management in the Garden, Speakers: Martha McLeod, Fulton Learning Center, Aransas County - Utilizing gardening and natural environments to enhance learning; integrating poultry, and developing habitat - and how to connect it all to TEA standards

11:35am – 12:35pm – Strategies for Funding Your Garden, Speaker: Randy Seagraves - Explore budgets, grants, resources, and fundraisers to grow sustainability for new and existing gardens.

12:35-1:00 – Lunch

1:00-2:00 - STEM & Literature in the Garden, Speaker: Lisa Whittlesey, Senior Extension Program Specialist, Junior Master Gardener Program – School gardens offer more than just producing food and flowers. They are excellent outdoor learning environments for teaching academic subjects in an applied, hands-on format! Learn how to utilize your garden to creatively teach STEM, stimulate reading and writing, and cultivate an environment of inquiry-based learning for children.

2:00-3:00 - Success Stories from School Gardens, Speakers: – Garden tours of several school gardens. We will look at their garden successes and hear how they overcame challenges.

3:00 – 3:10pm – Break

3:10 – 4:10pm - Health & Wellness: The Nutrition Connection, Speakers: LGEG team member, Caren Walton - Engaging kids in tasting what they've grown and cooking the harvest to launch them into a lifetime of healthy eating.

4:10 – 4:30pm – Closing remarks and door prizes; CPE reminder; information on accessing video recording and additional resources

4:30pm – Adjourn