

# Backyard Food Production

Katelyn Valdinger, District Technician



Carroll  
Soil and Water  
Conservation  
District

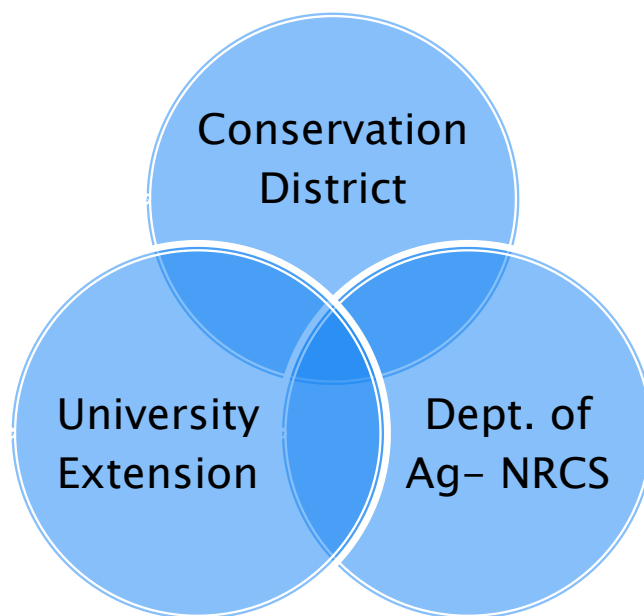
# Carroll Soil & Water Cons. District

- ▶ Carroll County, Ohio
- ▶ Population of 27,000
- ▶ Largely forested
- ▶ Pasture land utilized
- ▶ Small crop production
- ▶ 145 acres average



# Backyard Food Production Program

- ▶ Mission: to encourage the utilization of your backyard or unused green space for food production while creating wildlife habitat and conserving natural resources.



# Monthly Meetings



Indoor class  
(winter)



Class at community  
garden (summer)



Field trips  
(spring/fall)



# Indoor Classes

- ▶ One lengthy topic/process
  - Maple Syrup
  - Dairy Production
- ▶ Short talks on multiple topics
  - Landscaping topics: Mulch, Pruning Fruit, Edible Shrubs
  - Gardening: Starting seeds, selecting garden area, soil testing



# Community Garden Classes

- ▶ Talks based on time of season
  - Getting started for the year
  - Early crops: peas, lettuce, etc.
  - Berry production
  - Pollination beds
  
- ▶ Other interesting topics
  - Management: raised beds, watering, pest control
  - Homemade systems: rain barrels, irrigation, composting
  - Outside of growing season: low tunnels, cover crops





# Field Trips (think big)

- ▶ Always fun, even for adults!
  - Orchard during apple harvest
  - Vineyard during grape harvest
  - Small farm with greenhouse or high tunnel
  - Wooded area during mushroom season



# How do we find people?

- ▶ Newspaper
- ▶ Facebook
- ▶ Newsletters
- ▶ Mailing list
- ▶ Email List
- ▶ Flyers at Local Businesses
- ▶ Community Garden Display





# Carroll County Community Garden



# Finding a location

- ▶ Fairgrounds
- ▶ Park
- ▶ County Owned
- ▶ City Owned
- ▶ Prepare to do some work!





# Good Foundation

- ▶ How is the soil?
- ▶ Did you take soil tests?
- ▶ Raised beds
- ▶ Small plots
- ▶ One large area



# People, People, and People

It takes a community to grow a community garden!

- ▶ Employees
- ▶ Interns
- ▶ 4-H and FFA
- ▶ Scouts



# “Free to a good home” items!

- ▶ Mulch (cuts down on weeding/mowing)
  - Old bags from store
  - Part of truck load from landscaping company
  - Collect/make your own
- ▶ Seeds
  - From store at the end of season
  - Save from year to year
- ▶ Plants
  - From greenhouse at end of season
  - Extras from local gardeners
  - Dig up with permission





# From nothing to something:

- ▶ Three months after we started the project





# Things to think about...

- ▶ Do you have enough support to get this going?
- ▶ Who is going to maintain the garden?
- ▶ What are you going to do with the food?
- ▶ Who will pay for any expenses?
- ▶ Do grant deadlines match growing season?
- ▶ Will this be a long term or short term project?



# Ideas other than veggies?

Rebar + conduit + plastic = mini low tunnel

- ▶ Season extension
- ▶ Teaching tool
- ▶ Fundraiser?



# Ideas other than veggies?

A pond or a plastic pool surrounded by rocks?

- ▶ Used to teach water quality
- ▶ Can add plants
- ▶ Can add fish
- ▶ Electric for pump?





# Ideas other than veggies?

## Container gardening series

- ▶ Pallets
- ▶ Pots
- ▶ Troughs
- ▶ Tires
- ▶ Whatever you want!



# Younger Generations Effect







# Questions?

Katelyn Valdinger, District Technician  
Carroll Soil & Water Conservation District  
[katelyn.valdinger@carrollswcd.org](mailto:katelyn.valdinger@carrollswcd.org)  
330-627-9852 ext. 4092

