



June 2022

Planting ginger in caterpillar tunnel

Unit horticulture educator Ken Johnson, unit Master Gardeners, and horticulture educator Chris Enroth (Macomb) planted ginger in the caterpillar tunnel at the Lukeman Garden and Education Center in Jacksonville. Three ten-foot rows of ginger were planted. Additionally, a row of turmeric and a row of galangal, which grow similarly to ginger, were also planted.

Specialty crop growers in the United States have begun to consider ginger in their crop rotation due to client demand and as a way to break disease cycles. Fresh, locally grown ginger commands a higher price per pound and presents a far more sustainably grown product than conventional ginger produced on the other side of the planet.

As part of an Illinois Specialty Crop Grant, University of Illinois Extension educators from Macomb, Jacksonville, Quincy, and Murphysboro are collaborating with project partners including faculty of Western Illinois University and two specialty crop farmers from Galesburg to better assess ginger's production potential for Illinois specialty growers.

The team is growing varieties of ginger utilizing different growing methods suitable for Illinois, including high tunnels and caterpillar tunnels to determine the best varieties and protected culture methods, with the goal of producing a ginger crop profile for Illinois growers.



For more information, contact Ken Johnson at kjohnso@illinois.edu or call 217.243.7424