

Illinois Valley Community College Greenhouse Collaboration

New in 2019, the Master Gardener Program collaborated with the Agriculture Department at Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC) for a large scale plant growing project. Master Gardeners donated seeds to an agriculture club led by Agriculture Instructor Willard Mott. Mr. Mott donated space in the campus greenhouse, where his students, with the help of Master Gardener volunteers, planted seeds and tended the resultant plants. A total of nearly 1200 plants were grown. At the conclusion of the project, some plants were sold by IVCC to raise money for the Agriculture program. Remaining plants were used for various Unit projects, including adding additional plants to the Marseilles Elementary School Seeds to Harvest garden, and starting a raised garden at the PADS Homeless Shelter in Ottawa. Additionally, over 800 remaining plants were donated to local food pantries. These plants were distributed to participating food pantries by University of Illinois Extension INEP staff on May 21st and 22nd. Approximately 800 plants were given away at five locations so fresh produce could be enjoyed by clients throughout the growing season. We plan to continue this project yearly.



Above left: IVCC Agriculture club members and Master Gardener Volunteer Paul Marincic plant seeds in the donated greenhouse space.

Above: Master Gardener volunteer Paul Marincic, Program Coordinator Meg Overocker, and IVCC Professor Willard Mott pose in front of plants grown in the IVCC Greenhouse.

Left: INEP Staff at Hall Township food pantry assist a client with selecting plants.