



GARDENER GAZETTE



*Special Issue of the Quarterly Newsletter of AJMPU Unit
Master Gardeners*

DOWNY MILDEW MONITORING PROGRAM VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Do you grow basil or cucumbers? Margaret Tuttle McGrath from Cornell University is looking for Master Gardeners to assist with two plant disease monitoring programs for downy mildews which expand their spread each year due to wind dispersed spores. Monitoring is being done by extension specialists and faculty who plant sentinel plots with the different crop types and scout production fields. Local knowledge of where this disease is occurring and on which crops is needed to forecast where the pathogen is likely to successfully spread. Data will also inform growers so they know when fungicide applications are warranted. Learn more by heading to respective monitoring program below.

Downy mildew of cucumber and other cucurbits
<https://cdm.ipmpipe.org/gardens-and-cdm/>

Downy mildew of basil
<https://basil.agpestmonitor.org/>

Master gardeners can be provided cucumber seeds by contacting Margaret at mtm3@cornell.edu. Earn up to 2 volunteer hours weekly for the time you spend monitoring these plant diseases. Please let Kim Rohling know that you intend on volunteering for this program at kimrohli@illinois.edu so she can add it to the VCMS so you can enter your monitoring hours.



Downy mildew can occur anywhere in the eastern United States. It has been detected in one garden with a single cucumber plant and no past occurrences. This pathogen spreads by wind-dispersed spores. It commonly affects cucumbers but it has been found on melon, squash, pumpkin and other cucurbit members depends on what strain(s) of the pathogen are present.

Illinois Extension

Questions?

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Master Gardener Coordinators for Alexander, Johnson, Massac, Pulaski, and Union Counties



GIVE BACK GARDENING: FOOD DONATION GARDENS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

This is a special volunteer hours allowance for 2021, since growing produce at your own home for donation is not usually allowed. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the need for fresh produce in food insecure communities. Before planting an extra area of your garden for food donation, inform your program coordinator (Erin or Kim) to indicate your participation. You may earn a maximum of up to 2 hours of gardening and harvesting time weekly. Volunteers must keep records to provide an accurate measure of weighed produce as well as when and where the produce was donated. Volunteer time can be earned when you deliver your produce to the food donation site and return home. Please record hours worked and delivered separately.

Read and follow all best practices related to Gardening and COVID-19 as indicated in this article: <https://extension.illinois.edu/news-releases/follow-safe-food-productionpractices-covid-19-facts-farms-markets-and-gardens>. For training we recommend you watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p38fHk32LKU>. Dedicate a section of your garden to be used for food donation crops. Identify your food donation site ahead of time. Contact them to be sure they can accept fresh produce and so you know their hours of operation. Use a luggage or bathroom scale to weigh produce. Make and post signage in your garden identifying you are a part of the Plant a Row Food Donation project. Email your signs to Kim at kimrohli@illinois.edu so she create a social media post on Facebook about this important service project.

Garden using all University of Illinois Master Gardener best practices. Pre-plan harvest to coordinate with food donation sites (ideally harvest day of donation). Follow safe harvesting practices. Weigh and record produce in poundage. Deliver harvest to donation site. While you will specifically be donating the produce from the designated food donation area of your garden, you MAY add extra produce from your regular garden but record that weight separately for our community impact statements.