

Cumberland County
Office



75 Clearwater Drive, Suite 104
Falmouth, ME 04105
Tel: 207.781.6099
Toll Free: 800.287.1471
Fax: 207.781.5983
extension.umaine.edu
E-mail: extension.cumberland@maine.edu

March 2017

Dear Tidewater Neighborhood Homeowner,

As the new gardening season approaches, I want to give you an update about what's been happening (and what is being planned) at the UMaine Gardens at Tidewater Farm.

For the past two seasons, I have been working with two part-time employees, Rich & Hedda, and Master Gardener Volunteers. We have all been very busy expanding garden areas in a variety of ways, including:

- The creation of a pollinator garden adjacent to the apiary.
- A Gathering area installed in June 2015. This site serves as the central meeting point for all the programs and events that we host at the gardens.
- Serving as one of the 200 Display Garden sites for All-America Selections (AAS) award winning plants. AAS is the oldest, independent testing organization of flower and edible varieties in North America. The AAS garden has been re-designed making it easier to visitors to access it.
- Installation of a "season extension" bed in the Norm Steele Harvest for Hunger plot. By having this space, we are able to start and grow greens early in the spring, thus allowing us to provide much needed fresh produce to local food pantries.
- Planting a small fruit orchard (peaches, plum, pears, and a cherry) in the area on the other side of the wetland towards the neighborhood.

Other activities at the Gardens have consisted of:

- Clearing out the invasive plants above the parking area
- Producing and donating over 1500 pounds of fresh, produce to people in need through local food pantries and community meal programs.
- Hosting a variety of events, field days, and hands-on workshops for children and adults, gardeners, farmers, beekeepers, schools and other community groups.

This season we plan to continue with our efforts and complete the following areas:

- We will install a granite bench and arbor to the Pollinator garden, as well as additional plants.
- We will add companion plants to the Orchard.
- Last summer, we did the site work for the Children's garden. This season we will finish the garden with the addition of a bean teepee, a 2-panel living wall, a tunnel for growing vines that the kids can walk or crawl through, a variety of plants, and other fun un-obtrusive structures. We hope this new garden area will serve as an exciting and intriguing outdoor "classroom" for both formal and self-guided education.

The mission of the UMaine Gardens at Tidewater Farm is to provide agricultural and horticultural educational opportunities to the community utilizing research-based, environmentally friendly and sustainable gardening practices.

The Gardens are self-funded. Our annual Taste of Tidewater fundraiser benefits the Gardens and helps ensure that children and adults can continue to learn how to grow their own food in a sustainable way. This year's event will be held on Thursday, August 24 from 5:30 – 8PM at St. Mary's Parish House on Foreside Road in Falmouth. Please visit the Gardens at Tidewater Farm website for more information about the event and updates on the Gardens

<https://extension.umaine.edu/cumberland/programs/horticulture/garden/>.

UMaine Extension values our relationship with the Tidewater residents as program volunteers, supporters and garden visitors. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at amy.witt@maine.edu.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Witt".

Amy Witt
Horticulturist
UMaine Extension