



Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension  
Rockland County

# School Garden Network

*Cultivate Socially, Physically and Emotionally Healthy  
Children & Youth through the Garden Experience*



10 Patriot Hills Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980 • Phone: (845) 429-7085 • Fax: (845) 429-8667 • Web: [www.rocklandcce.org](http://www.rocklandcce.org)

Fall 2011

## From the Editor

Welcome to the new school year 2011-2012! In this issue, you will find information on dividing and transplanting perennials in your garden, which would be a nice introduction to a math lesson focusing on multiplication and division. Students will love to raise their own red-wigglers in a Vermi-composting bin, while learning how to recycle food scraps from lunch and snack time. Looking to start a garden with your students this September but just don't know how to fit it into your daily lesson planning? Enroll in our online course this fall, "Teaching and Learning in the School Garden: Theory into Practice" and collaborate with other educators and gardening experts, while earning 3.5 CEU from Cornell University. Learn how you can bring your curriculum alive with Inquiry-based learning from the school garden, at our October 5 School Garden Network Workshop at the Education Center in Stony Point. Hope you have a wonderful school year, and hope to see you in October.



Photo by Donna Cooke

*Keep Growing! ~ Donna*

## What's New at CCE Rockland FOR TEACHERS

This fall, CCE Rockland and Cornell's Garden-Based Learning program will be offering a 9 week online course called Teaching and Learning in the School Garden: Theory Into Practice. This course focuses on the foundations and teaching strategies of garden-based learning (GBL), and will provide the tools and resources that classroom teachers and educators need to develop school gardening programs that can easily integrate into the school curriculum. Educational theory will be put into practice through practicum, small group work, lesson plan assignments, and a final e-portfolio project of classroom lessons that teachers can use with their students. Cornell is working on offering credits for this course. If you are interested, contact

Donna Alese Cooke  
at [dmc72@cornell.edu](mailto:dmc72@cornell.edu)  
or (845) 429-7085, ext. 108.



## Vermicomposting: Indoor Container Composting

Worms play an important role in decomposing organic waste into compost. Worms eat plant remains and soil, and convert them into nutrient rich castings. One worm eats up to its body weight each day! The worms best suited to vermicomposting are redworms — they thrive in warm, decaying organic matter. Redworms need to live in a bin—the bin could be a Styrofoam cooler, plastic bin with lid or a wooden box. The worms need bedding of shredded black and white newspaper to burrow into and provide a place where you will bury kitchen scraps. Locate your bin where the temperature remains above 55 and below 78 degrees F.

Worm castings contain nitrogen and other nutrients necessary for plant growth. When added to soil, worm compost (a mixture of castings, decomposing organic material and microorganisms) improves nutrient availability, soil structure and drainage. Worms in a small worm bin can produce 4 pounds of castings in one month — just from kitchen waste. At home, school or work, vermicomposting is easy and takes just 10 to 15 minutes per week.

*...continued on page 2*

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Please contact Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland if you have any special needs.*



# Vermicomposting: Indoor Container Composting Continued..



Vermicomposting has many benefits. Every four months, the worm bin will be filled with a nutrient -rich soil conditioner — for free! Worms composting kitchen waste cause fewer odors and attract fewer pests than garbage in the wastebasket. Vermicomposting can be done year round, even in an apartment, because the worm composting bin works indoors as well as an outdoor compost bin at temperatures above freezing. A worm composting bin is inexpensive and requires very little space, labor or maintenance. Recycling kitchen scraps by composting reduces garbage sent to landfills. Vermicomposting saves landfill space, does not pollute and creates a valuable product.

## Setting up a Redworm Vermicomposting Bin System

It is easy to make a worm composting bin. This do-it-yourself system will recycle 3 to 4 pounds of food waste per week — the average kitchen waste for a small household. If you prefer, there are commercially made bins available from garden supply companies. To recycle a larger amount of kitchen waste, increase the bin size, amount of bedding and water and the amount of worms.

### Supplies:

- 1 pound redworms (~1000 worms) preferable. Avoid earthworms and worms from fishing stores.
- Shallow box about 2 feet by 2 feet by 8 inches (Styrofoam cooler, wooden box, plastic bin)
- Light-weight screening to cover air holes
- 4 pounds of dry bedding (shredded black and white newspaper, peat moss or decaying leaves)
- 1½ to 2 gallons water
- Rubber gloves for handling compost
- Spray bottle to add moisture as needed

1. Use a shallow box with a lid. Make 10 holes ½ inch in diameter in the bottom of the bin. Place bin on a plastic tray. Make 3 to 4 holes on each side of the bin and cover them with screen.
2. Find a good location: (a) indoors such as garage, basement, kitchen or (b) outdoors in warm weather but not in direct sunlight. The best temperature range is 55 to 77 degrees F.
3. Place the bedding in a bucket and add enough water to dampen it to feel of a wrung out sponge.
4. Place the bedding in the worm bin and add the worms. Leave the lid off for an hour. The worms will work themselves down into the bedding and away from light.
5. Add vegetable and fruit kitchen scraps. Dig a hole in the bedding, place scraps in the hole and cover the hole with bedding. Add to a different area or quadrant of the bin each time. Kitchen scraps may be added daily, but once or twice a week is fine, too. Place a sheet of plastic over the bedding to help retain moisture in the system. If flies are a problem, place some bedding over the scraps.
6. The worms eat the garbage and bedding and turn them into a soil-like material. In 3 to 4 months, the bedding begins to look like rich soil. Push all the bedding, kitchen scraps and worms to one side of the bin, and add new dampened bedding to the empty side. Start adding kitchen scraps to the new bedding only. Within one month the worms will crawl over to the new bedding and scraps, and there will be finished compost on the “old” side. Remove this compost and replace it with new, dampened bedding. Now, add new kitchen scraps to both sides. In 2 to 3 months, repeat the process.

## Worm Foods

Chop vegetable and fruit scraps into small pieces. Feed about two times per week.

### Suitable Foods

Fruit and vegetable scraps  
Breads and grains  
Coffee grinds and filters

Tea bags

Egg shells

Decaying leaves

### Do Not Feed Worms

Watermelon rind, citrus, onions and garlic  
Bananas due to toxic chemicals on peel  
Meat, fish, bones, cheese, butter, greasy foods  
Pet waste  
Grass clippings and yard waste with chemicals  
Metal, plastic, rubber or glass

## Troubleshooting:

1. Odor is due to the overabundance of wet waste from nitrogen combining with hydrogen to form ammonia. To neutralize, add shredded paper to absorb extra moisture and stop feeding until food waste is consumed. Give worms only enough food to satisfy their needs for a few days, and only food items suited to worms. Mix up the bedding to increase air spaces.
2. Fruit or vinegar flies may get into the bin. Cut down feeding rate. Bury food waste in the bedding. Cover the bedding with moist newspaper or a dark plastic sheet. Vinegar flies do not harm the worms.

## Uses:

1. mix worm compost into your garden soil
2. top dress lawn to a depth of ¼ inch or trees and shrubs to a depth of about ½ inch
3. mix 1 part dried worm castings with potting soil
4. use it around garden plants

## Caution:

Pure worm compost may contain high concentrations of salts. Do not use worm castings for sprouting tender seeds. Do not mix it with potting soil for your houseplants.

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*The information on pest management for New York State contained in this publication is dated May2011. The user is responsible for obtaining the most up-to-date pest management information. Contact any Cornell Cooperative Extension county office or PMEP (<http://pmep.cce.cornell.edu/>), the Cornell Cooperative Extension pesticide information website. The information herein is no substitute for pesticide labeling. The user is solely responsible for reading and following manufacturer's labeling and instructions.*

# Dividing and Transplanting Perennials

Most perennials grow larger every year, usually spreading by underground stems or roots. Many benefit from division after three or four years. If flowers become sparse and smaller, this often indicates that the perennial needs to be divided.

The appropriate time to divide perennials depends on each plant. However, a general rule of thumb for the Rockland growing area is to divide spring and summer blooming perennials in late summer or fall, and to divide fall blooming perennials in early spring.

## II. Method of Division

Dig up a large root ball of the perennial and determine where the stems originate from the roots. If it is difficult to see the area, hose the soil off of the root ball with a strong stream of water. Use a sharp knife to cut down between the stems and through the root ball. Each division should contain several stems (with numerous roots attached) in order to make a nice showing of flowers the following year. The old center of the clump, which often doesn't contain stems, should be discarded.

Some large clump-forming perennials have very vigorous root systems. After lifting the clump from the ground, insert two spading forks, back to back, and pry the clump apart. Tough roots like those of daylily, hosta and ornamental grasses may require a hatchet or saw to cut the roots apart.

Water new divisions regularly (at least weekly if the soil is dry), until they are well established. A light, organic mulch, no more than one or two inches deep, will help to retain moisture and cool the soil. If leaves begin to wilt after plants are moved, provide some shade for a few days. You may use burlap, lath or propped up pots or boxes to provide temporary shade.

## III. Transplanting

Your plants may benefit from the addition of organic matter, such as compost. If necessary, add one shovelful of compost to every two shovelfuls of garden soil. Be careful not to add too much: some perennials, such as coreopsis, ornamental herbs, sedum and yarrow do best in soil that is low in fertility.

Some perennials prefer to be left alone, especially those with a deep, central root. Resist transplanting the following: Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra*), Delphinium, shrubby types of Lenten Rose (*Hellebore*), Lupine, Poppy and Russian Sage (*Perovskia*) suggestions for division of selected perennials:

**Aster:** Divide in spring before the shoots begin to lengthen. Pinch the new shoots back once or twice before early July to create bushy growth. Space plants one and one-half to three feet apart.

**Astilbe:** Divide in spring or early fall. Astilbe prefers moist, rich soil with plenty of organic matter. Divide every three to four years to promote vigorous growth and flowering. Space plants one and one-half to three feet apart.

**Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia*):** Divide in spring when plants become crowded; discard old growth in the center of the clump. Space plants one and one-half to three feet apart.

**Blazing Star (*Liatris*):** Divide plants in early spring or fall. Do not disturb plants unless the center begins to die out. Space plants one foot apart.

**Canterbury Bells (*Campanula*):** Divide plants in early spring or early fall. Fast-spreading varieties may need to be split every two to three years to maintain vigor; other varieties may not need division for three to four years. Space plants one to two feet apart.

**Catmint (*Nepeta*):** Divide in spring or fall, whenever plants begin to lose their vigor. Space plants one to two feet apart.

**Chrysanthemum:** Divide hardy mums in spring before the shoots begin to lengthen. Pinch the new shoots back once or twice before early July to force the new growth into a bushy form. Space plants one and one-half to two feet apart.

**Coneflower (*Echinacea*):** Divide in spring or fall when plants become crowded; discard old growth in the center of the clump. Space plants one and one-half to two feet apart.

**Coral Bells (*Heuchera*):** Divide plants in spring, every four to five years, or when stems become tall and woody or crowded. Space plants one to three feet apart.

**Daisy (*Leucanthemum*):** Divide in spring every two to three years; discard old growth in the center of the clump. Space plants one to two feet apart.

**Daylily (*Hemerocallis*):** Divisions can be made in spring or fall. In spring, divide the plants just after the new growth has pushed through the ground. Daylilies may need to be divided every five to six years. Space plants one and one-half to three feet apart.

**Hosta:** Division can be done in spring or fall. Space plants one to six feet apart, depending on variety.

**Ferns:** Divide most ferns in early spring, just as new growth appears. Cinnamon or Royal ferns (*Osmunda*) may also be transplanted in early fall. Space plants one to three feet apart, depending on species and variety.

**Geranium:** Divide clumps in spring or fall, every two to three years, or when plants begin to lose their vigor. Space plants one to three feet apart.

**Iris:** It is best to divide iris right after it flowers. Many gardeners reduce the foliage height by half, cutting the leaves into a fan shape to conform to their usual appearance; this looks neat, but is not necessary. Set the fans in triangles of three, facing the same direction, 10-12 inches apart; in groups one to one and one-half feet apart. The shoulder (or top) of the rhizome should be only slightly covered with soil.

**Ornamental Grasses:** Cut back old foliage and divide in the early spring, before new growth appears. Replant sedges one and one half to two feet apart. Space other grasses one to five feet apart depending on species and variety.

**Peony:** Peonies may be left undisturbed for years without sacrificing bloom quality. They are best divided and transplanted in the fall. Select divisions with three to five...

...continued on page 5.

## Integrating a Garden into the School Curriculum

School gardens are living laboratories for learning!  
There are many different ways to integrate a garden into the school curriculum.

### LANGUAGE ARTS

- ✓ Read & write seasonal stories and poems
- ✓ Make a garden scrap book
- ✓ Produce a school garden newsletter

### MATH

- ✓ Count the number of seeds, plants, and flowers per plant
- ✓ Use fractions & percentages to calculate the number of seeds that germinate
- ✓ Measure plant heights
- ✓ Collect rainfall measurements

### SCIENCE

- ✓ Investigate what plants need in order to grow
- ✓ Observe the life cycle of a plant
- ✓ Watch and record changes in the garden through the seasons
- ✓ Create beneficial habitats for wildlife and monitor the results
- ✓ Make weather observations through the seasons

### GEOGRAPHY

- ✓ Study the water cycle
- ✓ Make different scale drawings and maps of the garden

### COMPUTERS

- ✓ Use data collected in math and science class to produce graphs and charts on the computer
- ✓ Investigate garden topics on the Internet
- ✓ Upload gardening news onto the school website

### SOCIAL STUDIES

- ✓ Interview older gardeners to find out how gardening practices have changed
- ✓ Cook different kinds of traditional foods from the garden harvest

### ART

- ✓ Make collages using natural materials
- ✓ Draw & paint the garden at different stages
- ✓ Create posters to publicize the garden for fundraising
- ✓ Photograph the gardening year

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- ✓ Get exercise through weeding and harvesting
- ✓ Try new fruits and vegetables and learn about healthy eating

### HISTORY

- ✓ Study plants and their traditional uses as food, medicine, dyes, etc.
- ✓ Study gardening through history (i.e. victory gardens)

\*Adapted from [www.gardeningwithchildren.co.uk](http://www.gardeningwithchildren.co.uk)

## Web-based Curriculum Resources

<http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/>

**Dig Art! Cultivating Creativity in the Garden** Over 20 adaptable activities that integrate gardening with the arts. Teach ecological literacy while exploring mosaics, printmaking, gourd crafting, weaving and dyeing, photography, drawing and painting, growing an art garden, and more.

**Living Sculpture** Art made with plants! This project includes both simple and in-depth activities, including topiary, woven branch art, sod sculpture, crop art, and more.

**Seed to Salad** Youth grow small salad gardens, with emphasis on decision-making and a multidisciplinary approach, including nutrition, physical activity, math, and literacy. This project uses minimal gardening space, and salads can be harvested in June before school is out.

**Discovering the Food System** Youth explore the people and processes that shape our food system. Rooted in the places we live, eat, work, learn, and play, youth build an understanding of what the food system means to them and how it affects their community.

**Children's Garden Consultants** Becoming experts in children's garden design and programming, youth critically compare a variety of gardens and explore ways to improve them.

**Plants and Textiles** Using past and present technologies that convert plants into products, youth can make their own paper, knotted nets, ropes, woven mats, and dye with indigo.

**One Seed at a Time: Fighting Climate Change in the Garden** Monitor, alleviate, and mitigate the impact of climate change in the garden. Activities serve as a springboard for youth community action projects that help to fight climate change.

**The Three Sisters: Exploring an Iroquois Garden** These activities link human culture and horticulture through foods, customs, and stories of the Iroquois' corn-bean-squash plantings.



## Green Gardener Certificate Program Overview

The Green Gardener Certificate Program is a non-credit, adult education program offered to gardening enthusiasts, professionals and aspiring entrepreneurs in Rockland County. Students have the option of earning certification over the course of one or two terms.

### Learning Objectives and Student Outcomes

The Green Gardener Certificate Program is based on the latest research-based information from Cornell University, providing students with a practical approach to environmental stewardship. Taught by Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Educators, Master Gardeners and local horticultural experts, this series of lecture presentations, interactive workshops and outdoor gardening practicums offers an in-depth, environmentally sound gardening experience.

### Certificate Requirements

To Become a “Green Gardener” students must successfully complete all five required courses, six hours of garden practicum, plus four elective credits of choice.

### Cost

Students have the option of paying for each session as they go, or save up to \$80 by paying the \$300 tuition in full at time of registration. Additional material fees may apply (where indicated).

**For more information visit our website at:**

**[www.rocklandcce.org](http://www.rocklandcce.org)  
or call 845-429-7085**

## Dividing and Transplanting Perennials continued

*(continued from page 3)*

...eyes (the pink buds on top of the clump) and discard old woody sections. Replant the clumps so that the eyes are no more than one and one half inches below the soil surface. Space plants two to three feet apart.

**Phlox:** Phlox may be divided in spring or fall, but autumn is better. Divide when centers begin to die out; possibly every two to three years. Plant phlox in a sunny location, one to four feet apart to allow good air circulation. This will help reduce incidence of powdery mildew.

**Sedum:** Most sedums do not require regular division. If plants are very crowded, they may be split at any time during the growing season that they are not in flower. Space plants one to three feet apart.

**Yarrow (*Achillea*):** Divide in spring or early fall when plants become crowded; discard old growth in the center of the clump. Space plants one and one-half to two feet apart.



### Farm to You Fest,

October 3-9, 2011, celebrates New York State farm products in our schools and community. Each school and community creates their own way to highlight their gardens and local farms. Check out what Rockland County schools can do at the Rockland County Health Department: <http://www.rockland-steps.org/farm-to-school> or call 845-364-2360 more information.



Photos courtesy of Donna Alese Cooke.



# 4-H Choose Health Action Teens (CHAT)

## Do You Like To ...

- Play with younger kids?
- Lead games and activities?
- Make and eat healthy snacks?
- Help others learn?
- Practice leadership skills?
- Make a difference?

## Are You ...

- 15-19 years old?
- Looking for ways to build your skills and your resume?
- Available after school?



## What Does a Choose Health Action Teen Do?

- Attend an eight-hour fun training session with other teens where you'll learn how to help younger kids have fun while they learn about health, nutrition, and fitness!
- Teach about healthy eating and active play in after-school or other programs (with an adult partner)
- Lead active games with kids
- Make (and eat) healthy snacks with kids
- Help kids think about what they eat (sugar in drinks, fat in fast foods, and more!)
- Have fun and learn leadership skills!

**Date:** February 4 & February 11, 2012  
**Time:** 9:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
**Cost:** \$75.00  
**Location:** Cornell Cooperative Extension,  
 10 Patriot Hills Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980  
 (845) 425-7085

### For registration information contact:

Pat Hubbard  
 at (845) 429-7085, ext. 103  
 or email  
 pp40@cornell.edu.



## School Garden Network Workshops 2011-2012



Rockland County schools that are enrolled in the CCE Rockland School Garden Network are invited to attend two workshops that are being held at the Education Center in Stony Point. In addition, the Master Gardeners and Cornell University Garden Based Learning educators are available to present a 90-minute teacher/staff training and/or school garden site visit at each enrolled school. These off-site trainings book quickly, so we are asking enrolled schools to contact Donna Alese Cooke to schedule a site visit and/or training for the 2011-2012 school year.

### The workshops held at CCE Rockland are:

4:30-6:30pm, Wednesday, October 5, 2011  
**Teaching and Learning in the School Garden: Bring your Curriculum Alive with Inquiry-Based Learning from the School Garden.**

6:00pm-8:00pm, Wednesday, March 14, 2012  
**Spring into Gardening! Start a Successful School Gardening Program & Keep it Growing.**

Workshops are held at the Cornell Cooperative Extension Education Center, 10 Patriot Hills Drive, Stony Point, New York

For a brochure visit [www.rocklandcce.org](http://www.rocklandcce.org) and to register, contact Cooperative Extension at 845-429-7085, ext. 117 weekdays, fax a request to 429-8667, or e-mail to [etc46@cornell.edu](mailto:etc46@cornell.edu).

Free for teachers, parents, volunteers and staff from any school enrolled in the School Garden Network (SGN).

\$10 pp for participants not enrolled in the SGN.

For more information, please contact Donna Alese Cooke at 429-7085, ext 108, or email [dmc72@cornell.edu](mailto:dmc72@cornell.edu).

Demonstration Gardens  
are open all year!



## 2011 FREE GARDEN TOUR

Take a guided tour the last Sunday of each month from April through October or explore the gardens anytime at your own pace. Each Sunday tour is approximately an hour long and starts at 1PM.

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September 25  
October 30

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Learn about the ever-changing display of plants native to our region; perennials, ornamental grasses, annuals, herbs, ferns, and more.

Children will enjoy activities hosted by our Master Gardeners.

### **Directions:**

East off Exit 14 on Palisades Parkway to the first traffic light. Turn left on Patriot Hills Drive.

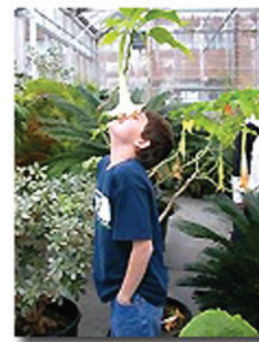
**Master Gardeners** of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland County plan and maintain the Demonstration Gardens, trying out new and different plants to determine their suitability for our area. Some of the plants are selected for drought tolerance or deer resistance. Others for size, blooming time, or winter interest. Maintenance follows Cornell's Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This approach encourages the minimal use of toxic pesticides.

## "Kids Growing Food" School Garden Program Overview

The main goals of Kids Growing Food are to increase appreciation and understanding of agriculture, nutrition and the food system by getting students involved in food gardening at school and to create "garden classrooms" that provide authentic experiences and help educators meet state and national Learning Standards.

### **Kids Growing Food participants agree to:**

- Make links to agriculture, food systems and good nutrition
- Integrate the garden into the core curriculum
- Grow mostly food-producing plants
- Involve the school and community
- Attend one Spring workshop
- Publicize the garden
- Produce a Final Report
- Actively participate in the KGF Network



### **What's Involved?**

Annually, teachers are invited to submit garden mini-grant proposals. Schools receive a cash award to help them establish or maintain a food garden. Additionally, grant recipients are offered workshops at two or three sites each year. They are provided education and gardening materials and become part of the Kids Growing Food Network. Schools are welcome to join the network without receiving a grant.

Now in its 12th year, Kids Growing Food has awarded over 300 garden grants in New York. It is estimated that Kids Growing Food teachers involved over 50,000 students in hands-on food gardening educational experiences in 2005. Funding sources currently include New York Ag in the Classroom funds through the NYS Department of Ag & Markets, the Ag Tech Prep Program, private donations, and specialty agriculture license plate fees.

### **For more information, visit:**

[http://www.nyaged.org/aic/programs/kids\\_growing.htm](http://www.nyaged.org/aic/programs/kids_growing.htm)



# Ask a Master Gardener

By Kathy Dowd  
Master Gardener

**Q:** What is a CSA?

**A:** CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) is an agricultural system that allows people in the community to directly connect to farmers and receive local, freshly harvested produce. The CSA movement began in Japan in 1965; named Teikei (translated as partnership or cooperation) it was initiated by a group of women who were concerned about the use of pesticides and the quality of the produce available on the market. Around the same time biodynamic farming, based on Rudolph Steiner's principle that all living organisms are dependent on one another, was introduced in Europe, where the first CSAs were created in Germany and Switzerland. The concept was brought to North America in 1984 by Jan Vander Tuin, who founded the first CSA in South Egremont, Ma. In 1991, Roxbury Farm, a CSA located in the Hudson Valley began bringing their produce to the Union Square greenmarket in NYC. Its founder, Jean Paul Cortens, helped Just Food, an organization devoted to connecting local farms to communities, to start 100 CSA sites by matching city groups with farmers. According to a 2009 study of the University of Massachusetts, there are currently over 1000 CSAs in the US and Canada and more than 150,000 members. Some farmers group together to transport their particular specialty such as organic vegetables and fruits, granola, eggs, cheese, milk etc.

The foods are harvested and distributed weekly during the growing season, usually from June to October. Members buy shares into the CSA early in the year. These funds provide working capital for the farmers. During the growing season, the members of a CSA have the opportunity to work together to harvest and distribute the produce. Children and adults may learn through CSA involvement how to grow food, good nutrition habits and environmental stewardship; last but not least, they build stronger communities, through the relationship with the farmers and among the working members. Many people enjoy pesticide-free, seasonal produce directly from the farmer, and the exercise they get when they help bring the crops to harvest.

By Jonathan Arginteanu  
Master Gardener

**Q:** I want to increase my favorite houseplants and give them to relatives and friends. Can you tell me how?

**A:** You need to propagate your houseplants. It's easy as long as you use the technique suited to your particular plants. Have your new pots ready along with your potting soil or mix. Products from the garden center or supermarket are good.

Determine what sort of plant you have. If the plant has stems with leaves such as philodendron, peperomia or coleus cut an actively growing section. Remove the first 2 or 3 leaves at the bottom and keep 3 or 4 at the tip of the stem. Place the stem in water and pot after roots have formed, usually 1 – 3 weeks, or dip the end without leaves in rooting hormone (from the garden center) and plant directly in moist potting mix.

Root individual leaves with stems attached on plants such as African Violets or Begonias. Remove a leaf and stem and plant in your potting mix with or without rooting hormone.

Bushy or tightly packed plants such as ferns can easily be divided. Remove the plant from its pot and cut it into 2 new plants and pot them with new soil around the existing roots.

Aloes and agaves produce new small plantlets or offsets near the base of the main plant. Carefully separate the offset with roots attached and pot in fresh mix.

Remember to fertilize (lightly) and keep your new plants moist (but not soaked).

There is a correct propagation method for any houseplant. Research your particular situation if necessary. The Department of Agriculture at Cornell University is a comprehensive resource. Visit <http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/houseplants/index.html> for a wealth of information



Photo by Maribeth Ramos

## Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland County

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Photo by Donna Alese Cooke

If you have a question for our Master Gardener Volunteers,  
please call or email Donna Alese Cooke at  
(845)429-7085, ext. 108 or [dmc72@cornell.edu](mailto:dmc72@cornell.edu)