



## *The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station*

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*Founded 1875*

*Putting science to work for society*

### **PRESS RELEASE 23 APRIL 2009**

#### **SPRING OPEN HOUSE 2009** *Gardening in Connecticut*

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**PRESS RELEASE: The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station presents their Spring Open House 2009, *Gardening in Connecticut*, for Interested Citizens and Connecticut Media.**

New Haven, Conn., April 23, 2009 – The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) hosted interested citizens, legislators, and the media at their annual **Spring Open House**. This year's topic, *Gardening in Connecticut*, was selected to complement heightened interest in seeds and vegetable gardens. This public event showed Experiment Station resources that help novice and seasoned Connecticut gardeners grow their own vegetables in backyard or community gardens. As families pay more attention to eating a healthier diet, research by Station scientists helps them produce homegrown food using practical, environmentally responsible, sustainable methods. Home gardens also help Connecticut residents who are coping with today's financial challenges and looking for ways to stretch their food dollars.

Dr. Louis A. Magnarelli, Director of CAES, welcomed everyone to this yearly public event, which highlighted the resources that the Experiment Station offers to help first time, community, and seasoned Connecticut gardeners grow their own vegetables. "Since 1875, research at the Experiment Station has assisted Connecticut residents with all aspects of plants and agriculture and during these unsettling economic times, growing vegetables in backyard gardens is of particular importance to our stakeholders," said Dr. Magnarelli.

Attendees heard short presentations on "Environmentally Safe Methods for Vegetable Disease Control," "Unusual Vegetables to Grow in Your Garden," and "Identifying and Managing

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Weeds in the Garden.” Attendees of guided tours learned how to start vegetable transplants for the garden, heard an update on how American foulbrood is affecting honeybee colony health in Connecticut, and took a tour of the Food, Environment, and Product Safety Laboratory where products are analyzed for contaminants such as melamine. There were displays about the Station’s Vegetable Seed Testing Program and publications on gardening, including the CAES *New Crops Research Program* on exotic and ethnic crops such as Belgian endive, calabaza, vegetable amaranth, edamame, pak choi, jilo, and personal-sized watermelons. Experts also answered questions on plant identification and disease diagnosis, soil testing, and weed and insect identification—all important aspects of growing healthy vegetables.

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