



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Hardin County Extension News Release

For Further Information Contact:

Mark Badertscher

Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Educator

Phone – 419-767-6037

E-Mail – badertscher.4@osu.edu

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Ohio Victory Gardens Offers Free Seeds

Hardin County – It's time once again to get your hands dirty and start growing! The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) and Ohio State University Extension offices are kicking off the third year of the Ohio Victory Gardens program. Due to high demand, the program is expanding to include 42 counties, up from 25 counties last year. Thousands of seed sample kits will be available for free to the public to get people planting.

“In the third year of our Victory Gardens program, we are proud of the ground we have covered in reigniting Ohioans’ love for backyard gardening, while lifting people’s spirits and re-teaching an important life skill of growing your own food,” said Dorothy Pelanda, Director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture. “We’ve gone from distributing 3,000 seed kits in six counties in 2020 to distributing more than 20,000 free seed kits in 42 counties across the state this year. Next year, we plan to expand again to reach even more Ohioans who want to grow a Victory Garden.”

“Whether it’s growing a large backyard garden, a few potted plants on a kitchen windowsill, or a smaller container garden on your porch, the Ohio Victory Gardens program has something to offer everyone,” said Cathann A. Kress, Ohio State’s vice president for agricultural administration and dean of The Ohio State University’s College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES). “We are excited to partner again with the Ohio Department of Agriculture to enrich Ohioans’ appreciation for growing food for their households.”

OSU Extension is the community-based outreach arm of CFAES, with programming that addresses agriculture and natural resources, community development, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H youth development. Extension professionals throughout the state bring people and ideas together to help CFAES sustain life.

“We are thrilled to once again be part of the Ohio Victory Gardens program and help many of the citizens we reach become enthusiastic growers of their own food,” said Jackie Kirby Wilkins, associate dean in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, and director, OSU Extension. “Each year, we reach more than 2.5 million learners throughout Ohio.” Extension’s educational outreach is enhanced by more than 3,200 Master Gardener Volunteers, who support the Ohio Victory Gardens program by providing gardening advice, helping with community gardens, and promoting local food production among their neighbors throughout the state.

Specific days and times for each office are available on the Ohio Victory Gardens website, as well as planting resources and information. Hardin County OSU Extension will make Ohio Victory Garden seed packets containing a combination of carrots, cucumber, lettuce, or sunflowers at its annual Master Gardener Volunteers Plant Sale being held Saturday, May 14 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm in the Friendship Gardens of Hardin County located at 960 W Kohler Street in Kenton. Seeds will also be available after this date at selected Hardin County public libraries and the Hardin County OSU Extension Office, 1021 W Lima Street in Kenton.

Victory Gardens originated during World War I, as an answer to a severe food shortage at the time. The idea was wildly successful, growing an army of amateur gardeners and serving to boost morale and patriotism. ODA and OSU Extension revived the effort and are, once again, encouraging people to plant seeds, realize the fruits of their labor, and share their harvest with others if inspired.

The Victory Gardens Program offers a full website with details on seed distribution, advice, and resources on every aspect of planting and harvesting produce at <https://u.osu.edu/ohiovictorygardens/> online. All Victory Gardens participants will be eligible to win a free starter gardening toolkit by completing a short online survey to enter.

Article written by Ohio Department of Agriculture and edited by Mark Badertscher-OSU Extension, Hardin County