



What Does Your Garden Grow

This fun garden planning activity is the creation of a student of the Sustainable Agriculture Program at the University of Kentucky. Try it yourself this season.

By Karri Sandino

photo by Karri Sandino "What does YOUR garden grow?" is an activity designed to get the kids involved, but adults beware: You will be enticed.

Adults may wish they were kids again when it comes to some of the activities in the children's area at the Bluegrass GreenExpo, held recently in Lexington, Ky.:Live compost "layer cake" demonstration Mini wind turbine construction "What does YOUR garden grow?" (using recycled seed catalogs)

Yep! That last one offers yet another use for last season's discarded seed catalogs.

Garden Activity Instructions

Grab a scissors, paper, glue and a stack of the most colorful catalogs you can find. Then create the garden of your dreams.

Jessica Ballard, who created the project, is enrolled in the Sustainable Agriculture Program at the University of Kentucky; the booth was sponsored by the program.

Her project is simple:Take a bunch of old seed catalogs and magazines with pictures of flowers and veggies

Pick your favorites, cut out the pictures and design a garden

Use bean and seeds to embellish your "gardens"

Grab crayons, markers, construction paper--glue it all together!

"Lots of folks got quite creative," says Ballard.

"I even had a lady tell me that she did something like this when she was deciding on how she would landscape her yard. She took a bunch of pictures of shrubs, flowers that she wanted and tried out her design on paper first. Lotta fun."

Studying Sustainable Agriculture in School

Ballard's career goals reflect her passion: She says, "I'm interested in owning and operating my own self-sustaining farm in the future with veggies, livestock, and perennial crops."

At the moment, Ballard educates young people (and the public) about local food, local food programs, and organic gardening and farming.

She says, "I would most love to offer hands on learning experiences in the garden by possibly helping to establish some classroom gardens or working in community gardens. I am also interested in getting involved with agritourism efforts."

University of Kentucky College of Agriculture Sustainable Agriculture Program. The degree focuses on three pillars of sustainable agriculture: Environmental stewardship Social health of communities Economic profitability

The goal is to promote systems that integrate all three. Students may also have an interest in local food production through minimal impact or organic farming systems, and raising social awareness of environmental and economic costs associated with many conventional agricultural practices.

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