



Boots-2-Bushels: Boot Camp for Market Gardeners & Farmers

January - September 2020

Coordinator Information

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General Information

Description

Through classroom instruction and hands-on learning, participants will acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities required to successfully grow produce for small-scale private or commercial fruit & vegetable production. All participants will receive classes and training on soil health, crop planning, fruit & vegetable production, integrated pest management, harvest & storage, safe food handling, marketing/branding, farm business/economics, and tool & equipment maintenance & safety. Instruction and raised-bed growing will take place at the VA Togus Campus using the existing garden bed space located in Augusta, ME. Products grown will be available for personal consumption, as vegetable/fruit shares or provided to the Mainers-feeding-Mainers program. Participants who attend all classes and participate in the growing program will earn a Certificate of Completion and Letter of Recommendation.

Course Objectives

- Understand and implement best practices to promote long-term productivity and efficiency of soil health.
- Understand and implement best practices for crop planning
- Understand and implement best practices for various vegetable & fruit variety production to include pest management and cultural practices that optimize high-quality harvests
- Know how to develop marketing and branding strategies
- Understand the need and use of a farm business plan
- Learn the business skills required to run a successful farm business

Course Information

Materials required

- Personal garden work gloves, season-appropriate clothing for outdoor field work to include head and footwear.

Required Readings

- <https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/2037e/>
- Other reading and materials to be provided



Location

VA Hospital Togus, 1 VA Center, Augusta, ME 04330. Classroom to be announced

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Time	Topic	Reading	Instructor
Week 1	13 Jan	9-12	Soil Health	Tab A	Frank Wertheim
Week 2	27 Jan	9-12	Crop Planning	Tab B	Mark Hutton
Week 3	10 Feb	9-12	Small Fruit Production Safe Food Handling	Tab C	David Handley
Week 4	24 Feb	9-12	Vegetable Production (Leaf, Cucurbit, and Nightshade Vegetables)	Tab D1	Dave Colson
Week 5	9 Mar	9-12	Vegetable Production (Root, Bulb, and Cole Crops)	Tab D2	Caleb Goossen
Week 6	23 Mar	1-4	Business planning, Bookkeeping & Taxes, Marketing/Branding	Tab E	Tori Jackson
Week 7	6 April	9-12	Field work: Seedling Production		TBD
Week 8	27 April	1-3	Harvest and Storage	Tab F	Brian Smith
Week 9	4 May	9-12	Integrated Pest Management	Tab G	Alicyn Smart Clay Kirby
Week 10	18 May	1-4	Tools & Equipment maintenance and safety		Jason Lilley Matthew Wallhead
Weeks 10-30	25 May - 30 Sep	TBD	Raised bed garden Work		Caragh Fitzgerald & staff

Attendance Policy

Participants with 100% attendance to the classroom instruction and weekly participation in the growing season will receive a Certificate of Completion and Letter of Recommendation. Every effort will be made to accommodate illness, inclement weather, or any other unforeseen situation that might preclude class attendance. Recordings and instructors will be available for make-up classes.



Field work: The field work in the raised gardens is an opportunity to apply classroom and theoretical learning into production of fruits and vegetables. You will be actively involved and responsible for your assigned raised garden beds, to include raising your fruits and vegetables for market-quality sale.