



University of Nevada
Cooperative Extension

August 2015

Community Connection

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Southern Area

Doolittle Senior Center Community Garden

Oldest community garden in Las Vegas turns 20

The Doolittle Express is on the right track! For 10 years, Master Gardener Don Fabbi has been coordinating and educating the gardeners, volunteers and neighboring residents at the City of Las Vegas Doolittle Senior Center Community Garden.

“This community garden has been assisting the hungry in our community,” explained Fabbi. Whatever the gardener cannot use at harvest is donated to the City of Las Vegas Doolittle Senior Center Community. “That’s how we came up with the name, Doolittle Express,” he laughed.

You will find Fabbi tending the gardens every day by 7 a.m. Fabbi became a trained, certified University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Master Gardener volunteer in 1997. Including the Doolittle Senior Center Community Garden, Fabbi also assists four other community gardens logging over 19,250 volunteer hours.

The Garden is also proud of the association with National Plant a Row for the Hungry Program. This program, initiated at the garden in 2003, has donated over 6,500 pounds of surplus fruits and vegetables to the needy in the community.

The Doolittle Senior Center Community Garden Project located at 1200 Blankenship was formally dedicated on May 17, 1995. The garden is currently celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Divided into 51 individual beds with wide paths and raised beds allows for handicap accessibility. The gardeners, 50 percent Asian

and 50 percent African American, bring their own unique vegetables to grow. Currently growing and thriving throughout the gardens are cotton, peanuts, sugar beets, rice, amaranth, quinoa, sorghum, sugarcane and five varieties of heat-tolerant potatoes.



*Master Gardener Volunteer
Don Fabbi*

Michelle Yaras, community program specialist for the Doolittle Senior Center Recreation Center, commented that Don is the most generous and energetic person she knows.

“He loves to share his knowledge and the history of the garden. I have learned so much from Don—how to plant starts, how to untangle their roots, how to plant them in moist soil, how to use marigolds and hot peppers as natural pesticides,” Yaras added.

The Garden also serves, coincidentally, as the Linn Mills Demonstration Garden for crops

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We're on the Web

www.unce.unr.edu
www.unce.unr.edu/blogs/southernarea
www.YouTube.com/UNRextension

Community garden

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not normally considered to be easily grown in Las Vegas' Zone 9 climate zone.

"Eight varieties of fruit trees, herbs and a "pizza" garden are grown here," explained Fabbi, "with tomatoes, oregano, and basil and even the spring wheat for the pizza dough!"

"Even the cacti surrounding the outer fence produce edible fruit for our gardeners and local residents," stated Fabbi, "making the Garden 99 percent edible."

Local wildlife resides in and enjoys the garden, too. The Garden provides the four basic habitat elements needed for wildlife to thrive: food, water, cover, and places to raise young. Meeting these criteria is how the garden became a National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat in 2007.

"Since the Garden feeds the hungry, provides education and enjoyment to the local community and is a beautiful haven for wildlife," explained Yaras, "an application was sent in for the Southern Nevada Water Authority Lynn Mills Community Garden award." The winner will be announced in September. In 2010, the Garden was awarded the National Garden Clubs, Inc. First Place

President's Project Regional Winner, Pacific Region.

"There are so many community partners," added Fabbi, "including the City of Las Vegas, Cooperative Extension, Moon Valley Nursery, the Eagle Scouts and the Girl Scouts. It truly takes a community to raise a community garden!"

The Master Gardener program teaches sustainable desert gardening practices, including proper plant selection and care, disease and pest management and water-efficient gardening. To become a Master Gardener, an individual must complete 80 hours of horticultural instruction and volunteer 50 hours on community projects each year. The Master Gardener title can only be used when performing volunteer work on behalf of the University.

Master Gardeners are volunteers who teach, assist and work with community partners on projects across the Las Vegas valley. Projects are on-going at Acacia Park, the Springs Preserve, Doolittle and Lieburn Senior Center Community Gardens, the Research Center & Demonstration Orchard and Nellis AFB Environmental Grove. Additional program information is available at <http://www.facebook.com/MasterGardenersOfSouthernNevada>.

Marilyn Ming, Marketing/PR Specialist

Packing lunches to go



Meals that are carried to be eaten at school or on the job need to be prepared with food safety in mind. Following a few simple precautions now will save you and

your family a lot of grief later. First, cook food thoroughly. Second, make sure you and your kitchen are clean. Third, if it's meant to be hot, keep it hot. If it's meant to be cold, keep it cold. As a special treat, have your child help prepare his/her own lunch and at the same time educate him/her about food safety.

Why keep food cold? At warm temperatures, between 40°F and 140°F, bacteria begin to multiply and could cause illness. At summer temperatures of 80°F and above, they multiply very quickly. Food should not be held in this temperature zone for more than two hours, including preparation time. If the temperature is above 90°F, limit time out of refrigeration to one hour.

PACKING SAFE LUNCHES

- **Keep everything that touches food clean.**

Keep utensils and countertops used in preparing lunches clean, washing thoroughly with soap and hot water. The same goes for your hands. If you have cuts or sores, use gloves. Also, wash thermoses and rinse them with boiling water after each use. Use a utensil, rather than your hands, to mix meat, macaroni, eggs, tuna or green salads.

- **Why all this emphasis on clean hands?**

Your hands continually pick up bacteria and other germs, and these organisms dig in around the fingernails and in the skin creases of the hands. Only vigorous washing with warm, soapy water prepares hands to safely deal with food.

- **Cook food thoroughly.** For complete safety, raw meat, poultry and fish should be thoroughly cooked following package or cookbook directions.



- **Refrigerate lunch fixed the night before.** If your lunch contains perishables such as meat or poultry sandwiches, hard-cooked eggs, etc., pack your bag and refrigerate it.

KEEP YOUR LUNCH COLD

If possible, refrigerate your lunch again at work or school. If not possible, here are some other "cooling" tips:

- **Pack lunches in insulated carriers with a cold pack.**

- **Freeze your sandwiches.** This works best with coarse-textured breads that won't get soggy upon thawing. The sandwich thaws in time for lunch, and it keeps everything else cool in the meantime. NOTE: Hold the lettuce, tomato and mayonnaise. They don't freeze well. Pack them separately to add at lunchtime.

Following a few simple precautions now will save you and your family a lot of grief later.

- **Use a thermos** to keep milk or juice cold until lunchtime, or try 100% fruit juice

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Lunches

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boxes that need no refrigeration. Better yet, freeze the juice box to keep your child's lunch cold.

Whatever you do, keep your lunch in the coolest place possible. Never leave it in direct sun or on a warm heater.

SAFE TAKE-ALONG FOODS

Meats and poultry: Commercially cured and ready-to-eat meats usually keep very well. In fact, almost any meat or poultry can be used if it's cooked and handled properly. Make sure to keep them cold!



Fruits and vegetables: Fresh, firm fruits and vegetables travel well. Washing them before packing helps to remove soil you can see plus bacteria and viruses you can't see.

CARING FOR THE CARRIERS

If your child uses a lunch box or insulated tote, wash it out every night to keep bacteria from growing in seams and corners. A weekly wash out with baking soda should eliminate odors.

If your child is a **brown bagger**, use only new, clean bags. Don't reuse bags that have carried groceries. They can pass insects or bacteria from other food to the lunch. And **NEVER use a bag that's wet or stained.** It could be full of germs!



For food safety questions email or call the [USDA Meat and Poultry](#) Hotline for food safety facts at 1-888-674-6854. You can also visit the [USDA's food safety](#) website or call Cooperative Extension at 702-222-3130 between 8:00 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Susan Lednicki, Nutritionist

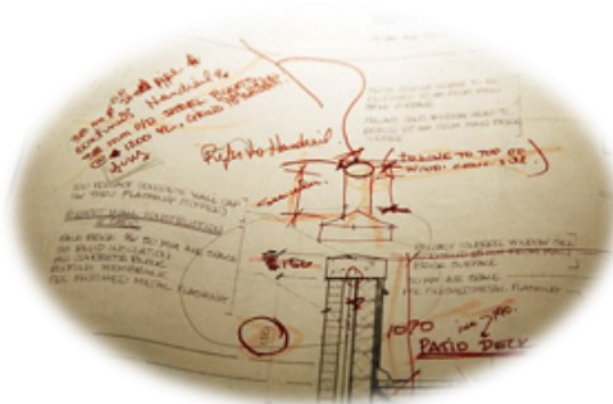


August gardening workshop scheduled

Join Cooperative Extension on Saturday, August 22 for a workshop on *Gardening in Small Places: landscape design* from 8 a.m. to noon.

Participants will leave this workshop with the basics to create their own practical landscape design to turn that small space into a dream space.

Let Master Gardener and 2010 SNWA Water Smart Landscape Award winner Denise McConnell teach you the tips for organizing your space and choosing size-appropriate plants to give the feeling of intimacy or create the illusion of more space.



Homeowners and other interested parties are welcome to attend. Class space is limited to 25 and pre-registration is required. There is a \$25 fee per class which covers class materials.

To register for the landscape design class held at the Lifelong Learning Center (8050 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, Nev.), [email](#) Elaine Fagin at or call 702-257-5573. To register online, visit [Eventbrite.com](#).

Upcoming Gardening in Small Places workshop dates are September 19, native plants; October 3, tree selection; and November 21, growing fruit at home.

Cooperative Extension Southern Area has offices and offers programming in Clark, Nye, Lincoln, Eureka and White Pine counties.

Office locations and phone numbers are:

Clark 702-222-3130

8050 Paradise Road

Las Vegas, 89123

Northeast Clark 702-397-2604

1897 N. Moapa Valley Blvd.

P.O. Box 126,

Logandale, 89021

Southern Clark 702-299-1333

55 Civic Way

Laughlin, 89029

Southern Nye 775-7274-5532

1651 E. Calvada Blvd

Pahrump, 89048

Northern Nye/Esmeralda 775-482-6794

P.O. Box 231

#1 Frankie St., Old Courthouse

Tonopah, 89049

Lincoln 775-726-3109

P.O. Box 728

360 Lincoln St.

Callente, 89008

Eureka 775-237-5326

P.O. Box 613

701 S. Main St.

Eureka, 89316

White Pine 775-293-6599

950 Campton St.

Ely, 89301

Cooperative Extension's mission:

Discover: by assessing community needs; understanding emerging issues; *Develop:* science-based programs to help resolve the needs of community residents; *Disseminate:* through evidence-based educational programs; classes and publications; *Preserve:* by publishing findings via curriculum and fact sheets and demonstrate knowledge to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of people.

Picnic perfect



Stop the "summer bug" caused by food-borne illnesses

Follow these food safety tips to help stop the bacteria that cause vomiting, diarrhea, and the other intestinal symptoms associated with food-borne illnesses:

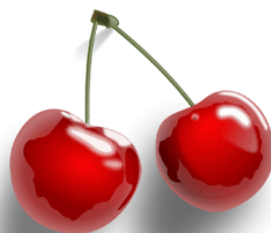
- **Discard any food that has been left out longer than two hours.** Bacteria begin to grow quickly after two hours.
- **Take just enough food** so you don't have to worry about leftovers.
- **Thoroughly chill any precooked foods** before you put them in a cooler.
- **Be extra careful with salads that use mayonnaise.** Cool cooked ingredients (like chicken, eggs, or potatoes) to 40° F before mixing with mayonnaise.
- **Eat take-out foods like fried chicken within two hours,** or buy them ahead of time and chill before putting in coolers.
- **Put the cooler inside your air-conditioned car, not the trunk.** Keep it in the shade at the picnic site. Pack foods that you plan to eat first on top to cut down on openings and closings. Use a separate cooler for drinks.
- **Never put cooked meat on a surface that held raw meat** unless the surface has been thoroughly washed with soap and water.
- **Cook meats to the proper temperature:** burgers (well-done), ribs, and hot dogs to 160° F; whole chicken to 180° F; ground poultry or chicken breasts to 170° F.

Sources: Iowa State University Extension Food Safety Project; National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse Hope Health ~ No. 10981



If you are interested in the 4-H Art's Camp, call 702-257-5538 or [email](mailto:karen.best@uncc.edu) Karen Best.

What's in season?



Cherries are a favorite summertime fruit. Sweet cherries contain vitamin C, potassium and fiber. One cup (about 20 cherries) has about 100 calories. Most cherries range in color from red to a dark purple that looks almost black. The Rainier cherry; however, has a golden skin with a touch of pink or light red stripes. When you find cherries at the store, choose ones that are fresh, firm, and bright. They should still have their stem attached. Handle the cherries gently and refrigerate as soon as possible. [Choose Cherries](#) is a Cooperative Extension publication that explains the benefits of eating cherries and offers a recipe on making dark, sweet cherry frozen yogurt.

Find other fruit and vegetable publications at: www.uncc.edu/publications

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