January 12, 2018

Testimony @ the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education (SBARE)

My name is Pat Weinberg and I am here to support NDSU Extension Services-and more specifically the Horticulture, and Family and Community Wellness Programs of which I have personal experience.

Through the Extension Service I became a Master Gardener and was required to provide hours of service to the community. My son, Luke, has Down Syndrome, and his health and nutrition declined once he started living on his own. I knew that gardening, and concepts from Horticulture therapy programs would be great ways to improve his overall health and nutrition. Thus the creation of G.R.O.W., Gardening Recreational Opportunity With Friends, whose purpose is “Creating connections through gardening as an inclusive, healthy, social, and recreational opportunity.”

In four years our Program has grown from 5 to 24 gardeners with developmental disabilities, 4-16 volunteer mentors, 1 to 4 community garden plots and a FACS teacher who teaches a monthly cooking class.

GROW is a seed to table program with emphasis on growing healthy food, learning better nutrition, increasing daily servings of fruits and vegetables, learning new ways to prepare food, and using recipes with reduced fat, salt and sugar.

The Extension office has been a wonderful resource from providing food and plant publications, to identifying plants and pests in the garden, to lending educational materials, and offering ongoing training to me, as a Master Gardener and consumer that I can pass on to our GROW family.

The knowledge that I have from being a Master Gardener has gone beyond our GROW Program. I’ve taken the concepts I learned from the Family Community Wellness and Horticulture programs and shared them with other gardeners, set up displays at a fitness center, and the Buddy Walk, spoke at a recent health conference, and brought hands-on educational opportunities to 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders.

Nutrition education and horticulture subjects should continue to be a priority for the Extension. They connect the ‘How to-s’ in gardening to the healthy nutrition that one receives from their efforts.

This journey started with Extension Services and the Master Gardening Program, but the benefits continue to grow, multiply, and enhance people’s lives.
Eating the harvest is a joy for gardeners

Grow friendships and so much more!

"I love meeting new people and making new friends..."

Gardeners Share the Best Things about Grow....

"Hanging out with everyone."
"Cooking and eating!"
"Planting seeds in the garden."
"I like to dig up the potatoes."

GROW Thanks our Sponsors

with funding support provided by

under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act

Come GROW With Us

"A garden is beautiful only when it is filled with people; they determine its beauty."

-Seth Adam Smith

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GARDENING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITY WITH FRIENDS

Creating connections through gardening as an inclusive, healthy, social and recreational opportunity for adults with disabilities.
MENTORS

You can't make it ready to work, ask questions, call it about 2 hours each.

- Attend 4 monthly cooking classes each month.
- Work in the garden at least 1 day each week for 1 to 2 hours.
- Bring water, tools, shoes, jeans, hat and sunscreen.
- Show up ready to work – wear close.-supplies and GROW c-shirt.

GARDENERS

What can you expect if you are part of GROW?

Be a Part of GROW

GROW offers its Team members

- many opportunities.
- Recreational opportunities.
- Gardening, grow your own fruits.
- Seed to Table Program and workshops, and learn about the garden.
- Gardening, get active and move.
- Recreational - Spend time outdoors, get active and move.

Growing hobbies.

- GARDENING - one of the easiest hobbies to try.
- Garden from May through September.
- Commit to being part of the Garden.

CULTIVATORS

- Team cultivate the harvest together.
- Develop friendships and be part of a team.
- Meet new people.
- Give back to the community.
- Learn how to cook, save money by eating what you grow.
- Improve health and nutrition.

Everyone will participate in a monthly cooking nutrition class.

Each cooking class incorporates a recipe from LookCookEat.com.

Learn more at www.LookCookEat.com.