

## Spring is coming...eventually! Get Ready with Rutgers Home Gardeners School @Home

*Horticulture experts to offer a variety of engaging lectures for gardeners of all interests and skill levels*

**NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J.:** — Registration is open for the 46th annual Rutgers Home Gardeners School @Home, which will be held as a virtual conference over Zoom on Sat., Feb. 26, 2022, from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

The 2022 conference, “Gardening For Everyone,” is made up of 15 individual workshop sessions that cover a wide array of horticultural topics. On the day of the event, attendees will be able to choose one of five possible classes in each of the three workshop slots, for a total of three different lectures. This format allows attendees to select the workshops that are most relevant to their gardening interests and create their own personalized schedule for a fun day of learning. The speakers include experts from the horticultural, ecological and landscape design industry, faculty from Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and experienced home gardeners with unique skill sets.

While many avid gardeners love and miss the in-person event that was held each March at the Rutgers-New Brunswick campus prior to COVID-19, enthusiasts have come to appreciate the convenience and other benefits of the “@Home” online version, which Rutgers initiated in 2020 and continued in 2021. “I felt like the teachers were able to answer many more attendee questions in the virtual format,” wrote Michelle Tuorto-Collins about the 2021 program. “I left the day’s classes with a lot of actionable information for this year’s gardening.”

Rutgers has planned several new features for this year’s event, including a keynote speech by former *Organic Gardening* editor and radio host, Mike McGrath, a garden trivia game, and a break period for when attendees may choose to take a break from their computers. A “Garden Beginners” workshop track has been organized, and includes “Introduction to Perennial Garden Plants,” “Soil Health for the Home Gardener,” and “The Basics of Butterfly Gardening.” Similarly, an “Advanced Grower” track is set, with “Planning Your Vegetable Garden for a Season Long Harvest,” “Color Throughout the Year,” and “Advanced Composting and Soil Building Techniques.” While the tracks are there to help orient attendees to workshops suitable to their experience, any attendee is free to join any workshop they like. A benefit of the virtual environment is that there is plenty of room for everyone—the “breakout rooms” won’t fill up!

According to Amy Cook, the Rutgers program coordinator who is organizing this year’s event, a number of brand new workshops will be debuted in this year’s Rutgers home gardeners School, such as “Growing Mushrooms at Home,” “Fruits for the Small Garden,” and “Bending is for Chumps,” a talk on how to continue gardening without the aches and pains of older age. “I really wanted to offer workshops that would appeal to a wide variety of gardeners,” says Cook. “We read through the past years’ evaluations and asked ourselves, ‘What do our attendees want to see in 2022?’ We’re offering more advanced topics that the Master Gardeners will enjoy, as well as sessions that beginning and intermediate gardeners will appreciate.”



New Jersey Agricultural  
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The registration fee for this event is \$80.00. A discounted fee of \$75.00 is available for Master Gardeners upon proof of certificate. Gift certificates to the conference as holiday presents are also available.

For more information or to register for Rutgers Home Gardeners School, visit [www.cpe.rutgers.edu/hgs](http://www.cpe.rutgers.edu/hgs) or call the Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education at 848-932-9271.

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