



"We pledge that we do not knowingly buy or sell genetically engineered seeds"



SET THE TABLE FROM YOUR GARDEN

E-Newsletter Archives

July 2013

### A School Garden Success Story

*Renee's Garden adopted the HWES Magnet School in Jonesboro, Arkansas for 2013 and invited our customers to join us in supporting Melinda Smith's excellent program. (see [Making Real Change](#)) Here's her update.*



The gardeners - all ready to get growing

Dear Friends and Supporters,

"These last few months have been like Christmas with packages of garden work gloves, a garden wagon, pairs of shears and a new rain barrel delivered and put into use, all thanks to the wonderful garden network made possible through Renee's Garden. We have received much-needed support from coast to coast.

One would think that in a rural town located in the fertile land of the Mississippi Delta, all children would know where food comes from. The reality, however, is that most children in our town of Jonesboro live in tight housing subdivisions with tiny lots or apartment complexes with zero soil and not a touch of green.

Health, Wellness and Environmental Studies Magnet school is in its 5th year of having three outdoor classrooms with 2 small greenhouses, 16 raised beds, and a student kitchen. In those 5 years we have seen a huge change in children's palate for fresh produce. The difference has been the children having ownership in the planting, watering, pampering and harvesting of THEIR garden. When the kids put in that much time and effort, tasting becomes part of the picture! Out of 107 second graders celebrating the spring harvest by preparing a mixed salad with our very own lettuce, radishes, onions and broccoli, 4 students didn't taste... In fact, most begged for seconds!

As I reflect over the past five years, I am reminded of our first planned garden lesson. I had an amazing lesson ready that involved hunting for parts of a plant in our new garden....seeds, leaves, roots, flowers and stems. Five minutes into the lesson (in Arkansas's August), some students were screaming because of bees and other insects. Other students were complaining of the heat. Some were worried about getting their clothes dirty. I quickly realized that the first lessons had to be acclimating the children to their new garden environment because it was actually very foreign to them. Today, these same students give garden "tours" for visitors to our school and knowledgeably use terms like perennial, annual, pollinators, herbs, propagate, and compost.

Along with the changes in students' knowledge and understanding of the environment have also come changes at their homes. Some of the kids' families are starting to grow in containers or homemade raised bed kits because their children really want to grow things at home! We have also seen a great increase in parent involvement with school events. We have an annual Grandparent's Day Breakfast in the Garden in the Fall and a Parent Appreciation Breakfast in the Garden in the Spring. The students spend the whole week prior to these events cooking breakfast items in their student kitchen and then get to serve them to their parents. It's the students who encourage their parents to come because THEY cooked the food.

This journey with 7, 8, 9 and 10 year olds has been a beautiful one. Thank you for your support and passion for connecting the kids with the joys and rewards of growing and loving a garden!" *Melinda Smith, Program Administrator*



5 years old and a going strong



Starting a new bed



Sowing seeds in the greenhouse



A radish provides a lesson in the parts of a plant



The garden in full production



Parent Appreciation Breakfast in the Garden



Melinda with the chefs

### July in the Trial Garden

by Lindsay Del Carlo, Trial Garden Manager



Calling all pollinators! We are growing a new fabulous flower mix formulated especially to attract pollinators to the garden. The *Phacelia tanacetifolia*, *Bachelor Buttons*, *Poppies* and *Tidy Tips* in the mix are now in full bloom and their blossoms are magnets for buzzing bees, syrphid flies and many other beneficial winged insects, and bright colored *Clarkia* flowers are proving to be real hummingbird favorites. There are 16 different varieties in this pollinator flower seed mix, with the tallest growing 3-4 feet high, in a wonderful color range that lights up the garden and feeds all of these wonderful creatures that are so important for pollination. We will introduce this Pollinator Wildflower Mix, packaged in one of our [Scatter Garden Canisters](#), this fall.



We're also trialing a new mix of vigorous Black Oil Seed Sunflowers that are now towering at 7 feet tall with big happy yellow faces. As the flower heads mature and the seeds ripen, the birds will have a wonderful time feasting on the large, highly nutritious black seeds and we have plenty to try and store for feeding songbirds over the winter. Renee is going to call this packet. "For the Birds," and it will be a new introduction next year.



We're pleased with our trial of Mini Climbing Watermelons, which are growing well and happily entwined onto a willow trellis. This very early variety produces palm-sized watermelons that are said to be both sweet and delicious. The fruit is small enough that it does not tug the vine off the trellis. We can't wait to try them!



### Time to Plant a Second Season Garden

Mid to late summer months are perfect for sowing seeds of short season varieties which tolerate cooler nights and shorter days and provide tasty fall harvests. We call this "Second Season Gardening." Read [Gardening for a Second Season](#) for planting information to extend your gardens' production this year. For fall planting suggestions, also refer to our [Kitchen Garden Plans](#) for both short and long season areas.



Cut and Come Again Mesclun



"Wasabi" Arugula

Vegetables and Herbs for Second Season Planting:



**"Neon Glow" Chard**



**"Crispy Colors Duo" Kohlrabi**

Herbs	Vegetables	
Arugula	Beets	Lettuce
Borage	Broccoli Raab	Mache
Chervil	Broccoli	Mesclun Mixes
Chives	Carrots	Pak Choi
Cilantro	Chard	Peas
Dill	Fennel, bulbing	Radishes
Parsley	Kale	Salad Greens
Watercress	Kohlrabi	Scallions
	Leeks	Spinach



**"Gourmet Golden" Heirloom Beets**



**Easter Egg Radishes**

**Come Visit Often!**

Please visit our [website](#) to view all of our [articles](#) and [online catalog](#). Ordering is quick, easy and secure. We look forward to hearing from you. Best Wishes, *Renee Shepherd*



**What's On Renee's Blog**  
**[Creating a Butterfly Garden](#)**



**Recipe of the Month**  
**[Ten Minute Zucchini Pizza](#)**



*A surefire way for kids (of all ages) to enjoy zucchini*

