PUBLIC EDUCATION STATISTICS:

TOTAL DIRECT CONTACTS: 1,720 adults  
465 children

FOOD DONATIONS:

TOTAL DONATED: 1,342 pounds

Demonstration gardens contributed 412 pounds of fresh produce, and Plant a Row efforts contributed 930 pounds.

DEMONSTRATION GARDENS:

Church of The Good Shepherd Community Garden  
Pawtucket, RI

Church of the Good Shepherd is in an urban neighborhood and is home to a 20-plot community garden. The mission of the community garden is to educate parishioners and neighbors about growing their own food within a small space. Led by Jeff and Cheryl Faria, with the help of a small crew of 3 Master Gardener (MG) volunteers and 5 other helpers, this community garden yielded about 100 pounds of produce that was shared among the community members.

Outreach activities attracted about 45 adults and 20 youth, and these activities included 1) Three demonstration talks where gardeners and novices were shown various techniques to follow throughout the season; and 2) Several site visits that act as Q&A sessions. Children were encouraged to pick seeds, choose plants, and shown how to plant both. During the growing season, they are encouraged to taste the fresh produce. Weed identification was also a focus of these sessions.

Sustainable gardening practices were also encouraged, which included the importance of planting flowers to attract pollinators to the garden, the importance of mulching for moisture retention and weed control, and the practice of successful composting and soil amendment.

After many years of leading this project, URIMGp will be stepping back in 2020 and will act as consultants, while the host assumes leadership.

Cumberland Library and Senior Center Gardens  
Cumberland, RI

This project includes perennial pollinator gardens at the Cumberland Monastery property, which houses the town library and senior center as well as outdoor space and trails. URI Master Gardener volunteers planted and maintained the gardens surrounding the gazebo and the front
of the adjoining Senior Center. Led by Mary Malouin, the team of 12 Master Gardeners met twice monthly to groom this garden; additional native plants were added this year.

To engage the public, soil pH testing and a kiosk are set up every third Saturday of the month throughout the season. A series of three public workshops were held in March and April at the Cumberland Library. Topics included: 1) Drip Irrigation; 2) Pruning; and 3) Bees, Herbs and Natural Sprays. These workshops were publicized as a free series through the Valley Breeze regional newspaper and were well attended, with about 90 adults attending in total. Additionally, another 60 adults visited the gardens and interacted with MGs over the course of the year.

For the upcoming year, the Town of Cumberland has received grant funding to re-shingle and reinforce the gazebo and plans to have a landscape architect design an expanded garden area, replanting the Gazebo perimeter, the Senior Center frontage and extending the garden throughout adjoining areas. With these changes, after 15 years as a project, MG involvement in maintaining the garden will cease; however the public workshops, monthly soil testing and kiosk will continue. The team also plans to provide vegetable plants and advice to the Senior Center gardeners who have raised beds in the back patio area of the Center.

**Daggett Farm**

Pawtucket, RI

This multi-season project is led by Sarah Horst and co-leader John Gaynor, working closely with host ARC of Blackstone Valley, where the garden and greenhouse are used as horticultural therapy for mentally and physically challenged adults. With a team of about twelve dedicated Master Gardener volunteers, the greenhouse work starts in February and March to help transplant plugs to get growing activities started. The work then moves outside for the remaining growing season, where a perennial and annual garden is maintained that has raised beds, in which some are raised to wheelchair height for accessibility.

This year, the project expanded to include the adjoining gazebo garden which required rejuvenation. Led by Master Gardener volunteers in partnership with the City of Pawtucket, this garden is being transformed. Several workdays were held this year to first to remove overgrown and non-native shrubs and then to weed, shape and plant the area with new native shrubs and perennials. The gazebo has been spruced up and painted by the city. This multi-year project is following a garden design planned by URI Master Gardener Karen Vincent.

In terms of outreach, there are frequent visitors to the garden via the small petting zoo nearby, as well as many informal conversations and tours happen. The major public engagement event was the second annual Open House held in May, organized by MGs who staffed a kiosk, soil pH testing (38 tests) and a very popular children’s activity table (131 children made paper pots and bouquets). MG activities were supplemented by those hosted by City of Pawtucket, who
distributed and raffled off 150 rain barrels to residents, the ARC of Blackstone Valley, the Worm Ladies, mushroom education, a bee table, and more. This year, 260 adults and 220 children learned from this garden.

**Glocester Heritage Gardens**

This demonstration project includes two heritage gardens: the Reuben Mason House medicinal garden, and the shopkeeper’s garden, which is being developed at the Job Armstrong building in downtown Chepachet. Both properties share a common host – the Glocester Heritage Commission.

At the Reuben Mason House, the garden is period-specific, and leader Pat DiLorenzo and her team of 15 URI Master Gardener volunteers led monthly “Show and Tells” within the garden in 2019, focusing on medicinal plant identification and usage, as well as pollinator education. There was also an Open House held in the spring. Overall, outreach efforts engaged about 55 adults and 10 youth in 2019. The Job Armstrong garden is just developing and will be led by MG Karen Lambe in 2020. Karen has ambitious plans to transform this large area into one reminiscent of a colonial shopkeeper’s garden.

This team has identified a few noteworthy tips to for raising awareness of demonstration gardens and public engagement. At the Reuben Mason House, a large sign is displayed on Putnam Pike (Route 44) anytime Master Gardener volunteers are in attendance, inviting the public to stop in and look around and/or ask questions of the volunteers. Monthly boards are also maintained with information about different weeds, plants and insects.

**John Hunt House**

The John Hunt House dates to 1750 and is home to the East Providence Historical Society. This heritage home and its unique property have been lovingly restored over time, including its period gardens which URI Master Gardener volunteers planned and skillfully maintain.

Cheryl and Jeff Faria lead their team of nine Master Gardeners and six other helpers to guide and maintain the gardens, including a beautiful rock kitchen garden. The dedicated team enjoys their Tuesday nights with spirited Wine and Weeding sessions, while also working every other Sunday in March through October.

The John Hunt House hosts various events and meetings that provide a showcase for the gardens. In addition, through a series of MG-sponsored events and sessions, nearly 700 direct contacts were made (600 adults and 90 youth) in 2019. Activities included this year were 14 garden sessions, five garden talks, seven kiosks, 7 soil testing events and 7 engaging events for patrons (e.g. Historical Society events, including the RI Historic Preservation Conference and the Rumford Bake Off).
Seekonk Meadows

Seekonk Meadows is a reclaimed, capped landfill in Seekonk that borders the Seekonk Library. This 8-acre park includes a meadow, a gazebo and amphitheater and nature trails. With a team of nine URI Master Gardeners, Cheryl and Jeff Faria led this project, which includes gardens near the gazebo, a vegetable garden on the side of the library, and several perennial gardens dotting the library entrance. With a large amount of park usage and high traffic for the library, the gardens experience a lot of traffic from the public.

In addition to this indirect traffic, 225 people had direct contact with MGs (75 youths and 120 adults). A total of 300 pounds of produce was donated from the vegetable garden this year. Library patrons are also encouraged to snack from the vegetable garden when they passed by.

Activities at the gardens this year included eight garden sessions, six garden talks, including: 1) Spring Tips; 2) Planting Tender Vegetables; 3) Thinning Young Plants; 4) Highlighting Plants; 5) Birds and Pollinators; 6) Tips on Using and Preserving Your Harvest, and three grounds tours, eight kiosks, and 8 engaging events for patrons in partnership with the host.

Slater Mill

This historic heritage garden is nestled in downtown Pawtucket, along the Blackstone River. Leaders Anne Faulkner and Sherry Dzamba, along with their team of 16 URI Master Gardener volunteers earned the Northern Region Project of the Year award. Working alongside partners Slater Mill Association and the Blackstone River National Park, the MG volunteer team plants and maintains this period-appropriate garden. Modeled after cotton spinning mills first established in England and harnessing the power of the Blackstone River, Slater Mill is one of the first water-powered cotton spinning mills in North America.

This mill complex hosts many visitors (history buffs, genealogy groups, photographers, nearby workers and neighbors) and elementary school trips throughout the year, so there are many who tour the gardens (indirect contacts). For passive education, the MG team expanded the use of signage and re-did the plant tags in the herb garden to include both colloquial and Latin names.

Direct contact with MGs totaled over 400 adults and 40 youths in 2019, between garden tours, soil testing and events. Outreach events this year hosted by Master Gardeners included: 1) Fruit tree pruning demonstration workshop by MG and arborist Dave Schwartz (11 attendees) in late March; 2) Soil pH testing and free seed packet distribution at the annual Get Healthy Pawtucket Day event at Slater Mill, sponsored by the Pawtucket School Department for students, families and the community (200+ attended) in late April; 3) Kiosk in late August at the annual Sam’s Mill Fest to mark the end of summer (festival attendance was 750+, of which 60+ had garden questions); and 4) Natural Dye Plants and the Dye Process, a workshop by Anne Faulkner to 27 MGs in October.