



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

For Immediate Release
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**New Teacher Training Program at The New York Botanical Garden
Gives Teachers Tools to Build School Gardens and
Integrate them into Classroom Curricula**

**“School Gardening 101” Seasonal Institute For Teachers
Runs February 21–26, 2011**

While many school gardens are popping up across New York City thanks to encouragement from the White House and local initiatives like the NYC School Gardens Initiative, few programs are developing to support the teachers who wish to utilize gardens in classroom learning. In response to the need to train educators in creating and using school gardens as a resource for science education, The New York Botanical Garden developed a new teacher-training program called “School Gardening 101.”

“School Gardening 101” is a new Seasonal Institute in the Botanical Garden’s Teacher Programs, offering teachers a six-day immersion in plants, nature, and science, from Monday, February 21 through Saturday, February 26. The Institute is led by expert educators in the Botanical Garden’s School and Teacher Programs and horticulturists in the Garden’s Bronx Green-Up community outreach program with support from the NYC Compost Project in the Bronx. Teachers are intended to gain both horticultural and educational skills, learning: how to build a school garden, tips on maintaining the garden, and how to integrate the garden and planting activities into classroom curricula.

“The New York Botanical Garden wants the school gardening movement to succeed, and much of that success depends on what takes place after the garden beds are laid,” said Jennifer Rothman, Associate Vice President for Children’s and Public Education at The New York Botanical Garden. “That’s why the Botanical Garden is equipping teachers with the skills and information they need not only to build a garden, but also to maintain it and to incorporate the garden into their curricula so that students can learn both in and out of the classroom.”

Participants in the Botanical Garden’s dynamic Seasonal Institutes learn how to make learning fun through field-tested, hands-on, inquiry-based activities. Teachers discover how to make the garden an extension of their classroom while enriching the curriculum with resources and more. Lesson plans, activities, and reproducible curriculum materials are provided for use back at school.

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For “School Gardening 101,” teachers learn botany, weather, and soil science. In addition to rich plant science content, teachers receive practical training on how to convey the material to their students. For the horticultural training portion, teachers partake in classroom planting activities, as well as a site visit to the Botanical Garden’s partner school C.S. 211, to gain first-hand experience of a thriving school garden. Participants are required to submit a capstone project of planning a customized garden for their school. Three “P” in-service credits from the New York City Department of Education are available for “School Gardening 101” as well as all other Institutes offered by the Botanical Garden.

The New York Botanical Garden is recognized as one of the country’s leading environmental education institutions and as a pioneer in the field of informal science learning. With experts in both cultivating and educating people about plants, the Botanical Garden provides educators, children, and families, with unique programs to help better understand the important role plants play in everyday life. Each year, the Botanical Garden’s Children’s Education program provides approximately 3,000 teachers with professional development training in science education and enriches the plant science education of more than 78,000 schoolchildren. Information about the Garden’s School and Teacher Programs offered through Children’s Education can be found online at: <http://www.nybg.org/edu/>

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit our Web site at www.nybg.org

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden’s general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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