



**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY**

**Cooperative Extension  
of Monmouth County**

New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

4000 Kozloski Road  
Freehold, NJ 07728  
732-431-7260

January 2026

Dear Future Gardeners:

The Junior Master Gardener Committee is accepting applications for the 2026 JMG Program to be held at the Monmouth County Agriculture Building, 4000 Kozloski Road, Freehold. The program is open to Monmouth County residents ages 9 to 11 years (as of 5/1/2026) in Grades 3 through 5. JMG is a unique eight-week gardening program which includes hands-on experiences in both the classroom and in the garden under the supervision of certified Rutgers Master Gardeners. Children completing all eight weeks of this program will receive certification as Junior Master Gardeners.

The JMG Program will be held on Saturday mornings with drop-off at 9:00 a.m. at the rear entrance of the Agriculture Building. Pickup time is 12:30 p.m. Classes are scheduled for April 25, May 2, May 9, May 16, May 30, June 6, June 13 and June 20. It is expected that the JMG students attend all classes. To get the full value out of the program, the children are encouraged to return to the garden on designated days for the remainder of the summer to continue harvesting and maintaining their garden plots.

Junior Master Gardeners may enter their harvest in the Monmouth County Fair Home Gardeners' Competition. This year, the Fair runs from Wednesday, July 22 through Sunday, July 26. We will meet at the JMG garden on Thursday afternoon, July 23 to select and prepare entries. Parents are responsible for delivering their child's entries to the fairgrounds on Friday morning, July 24.

Please complete and return the enclosed application and media release with the \$50 registration fee as soon as possible. The JMG program is very popular, and completed applications are accepted on a first come-first served basis. Deadline for applications is January 31, 2026. If you have any questions, please contact the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Monmouth County at 732-431-7260.

JMG Co-Chairs:  
Debbie Gross-Tulli  
Eileen Rodriguez  
Cheryl Sikora  
Ryenne Vigliotti

Sincerely,

**Diane Larson**

Diane Larson  
Extension Horticulturist  
Rutgers Master Gardener Coordinator

Encl: JMG Br



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### Junior Master Gardener 2026 Program Application

Please complete the form below and mail it or deliver it in person with your \$50.00 check made payable to **Rutgers, The State University**, by the submission deadline of January 31, 2026 to:

**Rutgers Master Gardeners of Monmouth County**  
**Junior Master Gardener**  
**4000 Kozloski Road**  
**Freehold, NJ 07728**

**\*\*Please print\*\***

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Name Tag Name: \_\_\_\_\_

T-Shirt Size (check one):

Child: Small \_\_\_\_\_ Medium \_\_\_\_\_ Large \_\_\_\_\_ X-Large \_\_\_\_\_

Adult: Small \_\_\_\_\_ Medium \_\_\_\_\_ Large \_\_\_\_\_ X-Large \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Alt Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain any health conditions, allergies, or special needs\* \_\_\_\_\_

*\*The Junior Master Gardener Program strives to meet the needs of all participants. All possible efforts will be made to include participants. In pursuit of this, volunteers may occasionally require parental assistance. As such, we request all parents be ready to assist program volunteers when appropriate and at the discretion of program leaders.*

Upon acceptance into the Junior Master Gardener Program, I understand that:

- Attendance is expected at all 8 classes and garden sessions.
- There will be a comfort break mid-morning, at which time a light snack will be provided. Children are permitted to bring their own snacks.
- Each class session involves 90 minutes of indoor classroom instruction in the Agriculture Building located at 4000 Kozloski Road, Freehold.
- The 90 minute hands-on gardening sessions are held in the JMG garden located directly behind the Ag Building, where children grow and harvest in their own garden plots.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





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### Media Release for Minors

I hereby authorize Rutgers Cooperative Extension to use my child's spoken and written comments for news articles, success stories, video and/or audio recordings related to the Junior Master Gardener program offered by the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Monmouth County.

I also acknowledge that the above-named organization has my permission to distribute my child's/children's quotes, photographs and/or video clips as part of its educational and promotional programming efforts.

I further acknowledge that my authorization and permission are voluntary, and I will not be paid any royalties, fees, or other form of remuneration for use of same.

**\*\*Please print\*\***

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and The Board of County Commissioners. Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

Program offered by Rutgers  
Master Gardeners of  
Monmouth County,  
Rutgers Cooperative Extension,  
4000 Kozloski Rd, Box 5033  
Freehold, NJ 07728



For information phone  
Rutgers Master Gardener  
Helpline  
732-303-7614  
Or  
mgarden@co.monmouth.  
nj.us  
Registration starts in  
January



Gardening Program  
For Children Ages 9-11



**The Monmouth County Board of  
County Commissioners**

Thomas A. Arnone, Director  
Susan M. Kiley, Deputy Director  
Dominick "Nick" DiRocco  
Ross F. Licitra  
Erik Anderson



## Topics



## Indoor Activities



## Outdoor Activities



Composting  
Container Gardening  
Ecology  
Environmental Horticulture  
Fruits  
Herbs  
Insects  
Integrated Pest Management  
Landscape Horticulture  
Mulch  
Plant Diseases  
Plant Growth & Development  
Seeds  
Soil and Water  
Soil Testing  
Tending a Garden  
Vegetables  
Vermicomposting



## What is JMG?

The Junior Master Gardener Program is an international youth gardening program of the university Cooperative Extension network. Under the instruction of Rutgers Master Gardeners, JMG engages children in novel, hands-on group and individual experiences which provide a love of gardening, develop an appreciation for the environment, and cultivate the mind.

Students are encouraged to donate their surplus harvest to local food pantries and to enter what they have grown in the Monmouth County Fair Home & Garden competition. Eight classes are held on Saturday mornings from April through June. Applications are sent out every January.