

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **JUNIOR MASTER GARDENING PROGRAM INITIATED IN WOODBINE**

**Woodbine**—Mayor William Pikolycky is pleased to announce that (the) Woodbine Elementary School (District), in collaboration with the Rutgers Cooperative Extension 4-H Program and the Cape May County Department of Health, has begun a school gardening project to begin this fall.

In school garden programs that grow edible produce, students generally learn science and nutrition concepts while they work in the garden. With the growing obesity crisis facing our nation the goal is also to promote healthy life styles to young people so that life long habits may be established.

The Junior Master Gardening Program is a 4-H Youth Development Program which utilizes a curriculum that covers such topics as Plant Growth and Development, Soils and Water, Ecology and Environmental Horticulture, Insects and Diseases, Fruits and Nuts, Vegetables and Herbs, Landscape Horticulture, and Life Skills and Career Exploration.

Betty Jean Webersinn, the Director of 4-H Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Linda Horner, 4-H Program Associate, Maryann Fee, School Nurse for the Woodbine Elementary School, Joan Rowland, Field Representative/Health Educator for the Cape May County Health Department and the Woodbine Elementary teachers will be working this summer to integrate the hands-on and classroom components into the 2008/09 school year. Some of these activities will be undertaken in conjunction with the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit "Key Ingredients: America by Food", which is being exhibited in Woodbine through August.

The initiative recently won a 4-H Partnership Award at the Cape May County 4-H Fair for their display of tomato plants and herbs planted by Woodbine Elementary summer school students. This initiative is fitting given both Woodbine's agricultural roots and its long relationship with Rutgers, who ultimately shared some of the faculty who had been a part of the Baron DeHirsch Agricultural School, such as Dr. Lippman who was instrumental in the development of the Rutgers tomato.

For further information concerning this initiative, contact Linda Horner, 4-H Program Associate, at 465-5115, ext. 606.