

SWES Colloquium Series 2013-2014

Department of Soil, Water and Environmental Science



Phyto-Environmental Health: Gardens as a Hub for Research, Education, and Outreach

According to the National Gardening Association, in 2013, 37 million households participated in food gardening at home, three million grew food at a community garden, and 76% of the households grew vegetables. Community gardens have been shown to help address social and economic constraints on health by increasing access to wholesome foods, improving community building efforts, creating green space, and reducing the cost of foods. Unfortunately, soils have been the repository of society's waste, can be a sink for pollutants and metals (e.g. lead and arsenic), and may pose a threat to public health. This talk focuses on soil quality, the uptake of trace elements by commonly grown vegetables in urban community and rural home gardens, and how these values compare to store bought produce. This seminar will conclude with examples describing community engagement efforts to minimize risks posed by exposure to contaminated soils and vegetables, methods to promote public participation in environmental research projects, and educational programming at gardens for college students.

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9:00 a.m.

Marley 230