

Mississippi Homemaker Volunteers

Vegetable Gardening Award

Instructions

Objectives

- ▶ To improve gardening skills
- ▶ To develop garden record-keeping skills
- ▶ To encourage applicants to share their knowledge with others
- ▶ To introduce applicants to new vegetables, varieties, and gardening practices
- ▶ To develop a record or history of the garden for future reference and improvement

Instructions

Please read this document and follow all instructions for completing and submitting the award application.

The applicant must grow a vegetable garden and is encouraged to use resources at extension.msstate.edu, especially [Publication 3616 Mississippi Vegetable Gardener's Guide](#).

The garden area must be a minimum of 400 square feet. (For example, the layout could be 20 feet by 20 feet.) You must plant at least five different vegetables.

Print and use the Direct Seeding Record, Transplant Record, and Harvest Record Form on pages three and four to hand-record your garden information throughout the season. Make a copy of the Harvest Record forms for each type of vegetable you plant. Then input your information into the MHV Vegetable Gardening Award Application Excel workbook, found at <http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/mhv-vegetable-gardening-award-application-instructions>.

After you complete the application, print it for judging on the county level. No handwritten applications will be accepted.

Garden period:

January 1–December 31 of current year

Deadline for submission at county level:

January 15 of year after garden period

Deadline for submission at state level:

March 1 of year after garden period

State winners must wait 3 years before entering the contest again. The Vegetable Gardening Award will be announced at the MHV State Council meeting in May.

The county contest will be judged by the agriculture or family and consumer sciences county Extension agent. County winners compete for awards in the state contest. State contest will be judged by the MSU consumer horticulture specialist. Judging is based on the following categories: record-keeping (20 points for completeness; 20 points for consistency), photographs (10 points for details; 10 points for variability), and narrative (20 points for thoroughness; 20 points for accomplished objectives).

How to Use the MHV Vegetable Gardening Award Workbook

You can either download the MHV Vegetable Gardening Award workbook to use on your personal computer or complete the workbook using a computer at your county Extension office. To download the workbook, go to <http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/mhv-vegetable-gardening->

[award-application-instructions](#). To complete the workbook at your county Extension office, take your handwritten sheets there at the end of the gardening year and complete the workbook.

Narrative Summary

Your narrative summary is worth 40 points during judging. You should tell about your gardening experiences briefly and in your own words. You could include things like type of soil, time and method of soil preparation, use of fertilizers, the garden plan, weather data, information on new vegetables you grew, and insect and disease control. In addition, you could explain how you used your vegetables. Most importantly, tell what you learned from this project. Be specific, but limit your narrative to 500 words.

Your narrative will be judged according to your thoroughness, which is worth 20 points, and your objectives met, also worth 20 points.

Instructions for using the Excel Workbook

Download the workbook to your computer and open it in Excel. Simply click on each sheet at the bottom of the workbook, and fill in the blanks.

Use the tab key to move to the next cell in a sheet. This moves the cell to the next open cell to the right. To move down a column, press the enter key.

Be sure to save the workbook often as you are entering data. At the start of each year, save the file with a new name, such as “2023 MHV Garden Record Award” or something similar.

There are three sheets in the workbook on which you should enter data:

- ▶ **Direct Seeding Record.** As you go through the year, enter the vegetable and variety combinations you plant and the seeding dates for each combination. This is only for direct-seeded plants.
- ▶ **Transplant Record.** Similar to the Direct Seeding Record, this sheet is intended for those vegetable/variety combinations that are transplanted into the

garden. Simply record each date a vegetable/variety combination is transplanted into the garden as you go through the year.

- ▶ **Harvest Record.** First, type each vegetable/variety combination at the top of each column. Then, each time a vegetable is harvested, record it in the column below. Record the harvest date, amount, and unit of measure (ounces, pounds, pints, etc.). Simply record these harvests as you go through the year.

There are two sheets in the workbook on which you should **not** enter data:

- ✘ **Harvest Summary.** This sheet will add up all the harvests of each vegetable/variety combination on the Harvest Record Sheet. You do not have to add up the harvest. Do not enter anything on this page. Simply print the sheet to list the total amount harvested for each vegetable/variety combination.
- ✘ **Info.** Do not modify this sheet in any way. The data on this sheet is used on the Harvest Record and Harvest Summary to calculate total amounts.

Be sure to save the Excel workbook every time you add data to the workbook. This workbook should work in any version of Microsoft Excel since 1997.

When you are done, print the application and submit it to the county Extension office. Also take or email a copy of the workbook with your data. This must be done by January 15.

Forms

Use the forms on pages 3 and 4 to hand-record your garden information. Transfer this information to the Excel spreadsheet. Do not submit these handwritten sheets with your application. These are for your records.

If you need assistance from an Extension employee to enter data, please be considerate of their time. Schedule an appointment at least two weeks before the January 15 entry deadline.

Direct Seeding Record

This sheet is only for vegetables that are directly seeded into the ground (for example, corn or beans). Print this sheet and hand-record your information. When you are finished, transfer this information to the Direct Seeding Record page of the Garden Award Excel Workbook.

Vegetable	Variety	Dates							Comments

Vegetable	Variety	Dates							Comments

Transplant Record

This sheet is only for vegetables obtained as transplants (for example, tomatoes and peppers). Print this sheet and hand-record your information. When you are finished, transfer this information to the Transplant Record page of the Garden Award Excel Workbook.

Vegetable	Variety	Dates							Comments

Vegetable	Variety	Dates							Comments

Harvest Record Form

Print this sheet as many times as needed for the number of vegetable/variety combinations you grow. When you are finished, transfer this information to the Harvest Record Sheet page of the Garden Award Excel Workbook.

Enter all the dates and amounts of harvest for each vegetable/variety combination. Report each harvest amount in the same unit throughout the season. For example, if you start recording tomatoes in pounds, use that unit of measurement throughout the season. If you harvest strawberries in pints, keep that consistent throughout the season. For large vegetables, such as watermelons, corn, cabbage, pumpkins, and winter squash, choose the # unit to represent the number you harvest.

Year _____

Year _____

Vegetable _____

Vegetable _____

Variety _____

Variety _____

Date of Harvest	Amount	Unit (oz, lb, cup, pint, gal, #)

Date of Harvest	Amount	Unit (oz, lb, cup, pint, gal, #)

Publication 2983 (POD-10-22)

By **Jeff Wilson**, PhD, Assistant Professor, North Mississippi Research and Extension Center; and **Sylvia Clark**, Extension Associate I, 4-H and Family and Consumer Sciences.



Copyright 2022 by Mississippi State University. All rights reserved. This publication may be copied and distributed without alteration for nonprofit educational purposes provided that credit is given to the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Produced by Agricultural Communications.

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination in university employment, programs, or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by applicable law is prohibited.

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. STEVE MARTIN, Interim Director