

Master Composters Crank Up the Heat in Brooklyn Gardens

Ever wonder how to get your compost pile really cooking? Master Composters are available now to evaluate the pile or bin in your community garden; consider becoming one yourself! **The Urban Composting Project of Brooklyn GreenBridge offers a six-session Master Composter Certificate Program.** Held each spring, this course actively engages participants in issues of municipal waste reduction, the science behind decomposition, and the role compost plays in rejuvenating urban areas. The program, organized with funding from the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), consists of 25 hours of classroom training (including two field trips) and 30 hours of volunteer outreach service in compost education.



Master Composter Emily Neustrom is on top of the world at a Compost Giveback last spring.

One hundred people have entered the GreenBridge Master Composter program since its inception in 1999. **Today GreenBridge has an active volunteer crew of about 60 Master Composters, who successfully completed the course and are dedicated to spreading compost knowledge and enthusiasm throughout Brooklyn.** Their volunteer activities range from tabling at BBG events to teaching their own workshops in the community, and they are available by request for free consultations at community gardens, block associations, city agencies, and schools. **Contact us if you are interested in having a Master Composter visit your site to give a workshop or if you need general advice on composting, both indoors and out.**

"I'm hoping to pique people's interest and get them to compost in their neighborhoods," says Michael Ables, Master Composter Class of 2006, of his community in Sunset Park. **For more information on becoming a Master Composter, get in touch with us in early January and ask for a 2007 application.**

Another way to get involved is to **collect free compost at our Compost Givebacks**, sponsored by BBG and DSNY. The compost is made from recycled leaves that are collected by DSNY each fall. All New York City residents are welcome at any Giveback event to take unlimited compost and to purchase discounted compost bins for making their own. These events are NOT held at BBG but at different sites throughout the city. **Stay tuned for the fall 2006 Giveback events; contact us for exact dates and location information**, or refer to the

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compost calendar at www.nyccompost.org. For nonprofit groups, such as community gardens, and city agencies that wish to get compost at a time other than a scheduled Giveback, make an appointment with DSNY to pick up compost at the facilities at Fresh Kills on Staten Island or at Soundview in the Bronx. Contact us for more information.

To learn more about composting, consider taking one of our free workshops (see schedule) or having us or a Master Composter come to your neighborhood to present compost classes. We also offer compost bins for sale at different times throughout the year; contact us for information about preordering one. **Give us a call at the Compost Help-Line, 718-623-7290 or e-mail us at compost@bbg.org.**

—Joshua Cohen, Urban Composting Project Manager

PLEASE POST!

GreenBridge Workshops

Preregistration is required at least one week in advance for these workshops; call 718-623-7220 to register. Free, but space is limited. Para clases en español, por favor llamar a Karla Osorio-Pérez 718-623-7368.

Composting in the City

Wednesday, September 13 | 6–8 p.m. OR
Wednesday, October 18 | 6–8 p.m.

El Arte del Compostaje

Lunes, 25 de septiembre | 6–8 p.m.

Extending the Season with Cold Frames

Tuesday, September 26 | 6–8 p.m.

Street Tree Pit Gardening

Tuesday, October 3 | 6–8 p.m.

Introduction to Horticulture Therapy

Wednesday, October 4 | 6–8 p.m.

Teacher Workshop: Worm Composting in the Classroom

Monday, October 30 | 6–9 p.m.

This class may also be held at your Brooklyn school for a group of ten or more teachers; call 718-623-7290 for more information.

Mulch, Leaves, and Cover Crops

Monday, November 6 | 6–8 p.m.

Composting Indoors: Worm Bin Basics

Thursday, November 16 | 6–8 p.m.

Optional \$10 materials fee for NYC residents, call 718-623-7290 for more information.

RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE

To further your spirit of reducing and reusing, why not recycle your holiday tree (free of lights and ornaments) into valuable wood-chip mulch? Brooklyn GreenBridge, in partnership with Green-Wood Cemetery, will hold our annual **Christmas Tree Recycling and Wood Chip Mulch Giveaway** on January 13 at Green-Wood Cemetery. Watch your tree being chipped, then take home a bag of mulch or leave it for others. Green-Wood Cemetery is located at 5th Avenue and 25th Street in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. For information on other holiday tree recycling projects in the city, including the Parks Department's Mulchfest, call 311. Mulch is available for free to the public all year, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. daily, at Green-Wood Cemetery.

**SAVE
THE
DATE!**

Making Brooklyn Bloom 2007

Saturday, March 10 : 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Palm House, Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Kick off the garden season with free workshops, exhibits, and tours.

Free, but you must register at 10 a.m. on the day of the event.

Spotlight on . . . Extending the Season With Cold Frames

Whether your goal is to grow vegetables through the winter or to harden off seedlings in the spring, gardening in a cold frame is a fun, easy way to extend the growing season outdoors. **A cold frame is any bottomless structure covered with a clear lid that admits light.** Cold frames can be as simple as a group of hay bales topped by an old window frame or as beautiful as a finely crafted redwood box, but all have a clear top and a frame solid enough to trap and store heat.

The best place to put your cold frame is facing south, protected on its northern side by a wall or hedge to shelter it from cold wind and capture reflected heat. Before planting in your cold frame, let it sit in place for a while to encourage weeds to germinate and grow; then weed it before you plant! **Install a min-max thermometer inside the cold frame, and don't let temperatures rise above 80 °F.** When they do, prop open the lid for ventilation.

In mid-September, you can sow spinach, mustard greens, and lettuce directly into cold frames for a winter harvest. In early October, consider building large cold frames around existing crops, and continue harvesting them into early winter. In mid-February, get a head start on the spring by directly sowing broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, spinach, kale, chard, lettuce, parsley, carrots, and beets inside cold frames.

To learn more, sign up for our free, hands-on workshop (see workshop schedule on front) with working cold frames here at BBG and explore what types of cold frames would best fit your garden. This class will spend some time outdoors, so dress appropriately.

—Robin Simmen, Community Horticulture Program Manager



A hands-on workshop on cold frames, held at BBG. Photo © Judy Janda

Congratulations to the 2006 Winners of the Greenest Block in Brooklyn Contest!

This year 255 blocks entered the contest, another record-breaking number. Take a stroll down any of these winning blocks for inspiration and ideas on how to green up your neighborhood:



East 25th Street

**Residential Block Winner:
E. 25th Street Block Assoc. for E. 25th St. between Clarendon and Ave. D (Flatbush)**

Second Place (Tie):

Fuller Place Block Assoc. for Fuller Place between Prospect Ave. and 16th St. (Windsor Terrace); Fulton St. Homeowners Association for Fulton St. between Carlton and Cumberland Aves. (Fort Greene)

Third Place:

MMSL Assoc. for MacDonough St. between Stuyvesant and Lewis Aves. (Bedford Stuyvesant)

Fourth Place (Tie):

Crown Street Block Assoc. for Crown St. between Bedford and Rogers Aves. (Crown Heights); Stuyvesant North Assoc. for Stuyvesant Ave. between Jefferson and Putnam Sts. (Bedford Stuyvesant).



Lewis Avenue

**Business Block Winner:
Shops on Lewis Avenue (SOLA) for Lewis Ave. between MacDonough and Decatur Sts., East Side (Bedford Stuyvesant)**

Second Place (Tie): Atlantic Avenue Nevins Third Assoc. (AANT) for Atlantic Ave. between Nevins and Third Sts., North Side; Mid-Atlantic Block Assoc. for Atlantic Ave. between Bond and Nevins Sts., South Side (Boerum Hill)

For more information about the contest and a complete list of winners, call 718-623-7250.



GREENBRIDGE STAFF

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