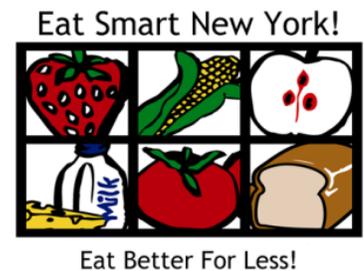


## Cornell University Cooperative Extension Niagara County



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### **New Mobile Gardening Program to Launch in the City of Niagara Falls**

*-Abandoned shopping carts to be used as gardens for city residents-*

*-Program to increase access to fruits and vegetables in urban areas-*

**LOCKPORT, NY** — Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) is pleased announce the May 26<sup>th</sup> launch of Grow on the Go, a mobile garden project based in Niagara Falls. The program will help Niagara Falls residents grow fruits and vegetables in an urban environment where there can be many challenges in maintaining a successful garden including apartment living with no greenspace, rental homes with limitations on yard space, lack of sunlight, lack of equipment, lack of previous experience or knowledge of gardening.

“Grow on the Go breaks down some of those barriers and helps get fresh produce onto the plates of our neighbors,” said CCE-Niagara County Lead Nutritionist Justine Hays. “Having access is the first step to increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables. We are really happy to offer this program and hope it makes a difference for Niagara Falls residents.”

“Grow on the Go” is based off the North Coast Food Web mobile gardens concept, using abandoned shopping carts as gardens. The shopping carts will be repurposed and filled with weed block liner, soil, and plants. The program allows one shopping cart per household, giving individuals and families their own “greenspace”. Using shopping carts allows the garden to be wheeled into buildings, onto elevators, and into apartments. If sunlight in an apartment is an issue, the cart owner can take their garden for a walk to give the garden the sunlight it needs to grow. The carts will be distributed to participants at the Niagara Falls Public Library.

“We are so excited about this project and the community response has really mirrored that,” said Joanna Battaglia, a librarian from Niagara Falls Library. “We are thrilled to work with CCE on an endeavor which will undoubtedly benefit our community in a healthy way.”

“By partnering with the Niagara Falls Public Library, we are able to break down the barriers of knowledge and previous experience,” Hays said. “The library is filled with books and computer resources on how to grow, harvest, and cook the nutritious foods we will be growing in the carts.”

The library will also serve as a common gathering site where cart owners can meet for bi-monthly “Cart Clinics”. These clinics will include an Eat Smart New York nutritionist, who will provide support to the

participants so they can learn how to use the healthy foods they are growing and incorporate more healthy foods into their diet. The clinics will also periodically include a Master Gardener from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Niagara County, to provide hands on support for gardening questions or concerns. Cart clinics will be free and open to the public, and those not involved in Grow on the Go are welcome to come seek information about nutrition and gardening.

The program will begin with 20 carts, which have been assigned to households and other community agencies. The community agencies that are participating in the project are the Earl W. Brydges children’s room, Creating Healthy Schools & Communities, Carolyn’s House, Healthy Families Niagara, and The Crib, among others. “The kids cart for nutrition will be awesome! I think it will also help them understand where our food comes from. Hopefully they will get more involved in our garden here.” said Dereka Newsome, from Carolyn’s House. The first gathering for the gardens will be held on Wednesday, May 25. This event will be a celebration of spring and an opportunity for garden owners to plant their gardens. The dates for the subsequent clinics at the library are as follows:

Event	Date	Time
Planting Party	25-May	4:00-5:30pm
Cart Clinic	6-Jun	3:30-4:30pm
Cart Clinic	20-Jun	3:30-4:30pm
Cart Clinic	11-Jul	1:00-2:00pm
Cart Clinic	25-Jul	1:00-2:00pm
Cart Clinic	8-Aug	1:00-2:00pm
Cart Clinic	22-Aug	1:00-2:00pm
Cart Clinic	12-Sep	3:30-4:30pm
Cart Clinic	26-Sep	3:30-4:30pm

**About Cornell Cooperative Extension:**

Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability, and social well-being. We bring local experience and research based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world. Cornell Cooperative Extension in Niagara County is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities.

To learn more about CCE-Niagara County, please visit [cceniagaracounty.org](http://cceniagaracounty.org).

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