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University of Idaho Extension
Extension Educator
Mike Bauer 263-8511

March 18, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RE-INVENTING THE VICTORY GARDEN

By Sue Traver, Extension Educator

During World War I and II, the United States government asked citizens to plant gardens to support the war effort. The response was overwhelming. In 1943, Americans planted over 20 million Victory Gardens. The harvest accounted for nearly 1/3 of the vegetables consumed that year. Along with producing food, the idea was to make growing a garden a family and community event and a national duty.

Today, Victory Gardens serve a different, but no less important purpose. Food travels an average of 1500 miles before it reaches our table. Not only does food transportation over such distances reduce freshness and lower nutritional value, it also increases food costs, increases our dependence on foreign oil, and contributes to global warming.

UI Extension in Bonner County recommends small scale, sustainable food production as a partial remedy for these problems. Your Victory Garden, an eight part series of classes in Sandpoint begins March 31st and runs through May 19. The sessions, to be held from 6 to 8 pm at the Sandpoint Center, cover planning and preparing the vegetable garden, soils and nutrient management, culture of vegetable crops, sustainable pest management, tree and small fruit culture, harvesting and seed saving. The final two sessions will help participants preserve their garden's bounty through freezing, drying, canning and pickling.

All classes will be held at the Panhandle State Bank Auditorium, 414 Church St., Sandpoint. Cost is \$10.00 per person or \$50 for the eight week course. These fees cover room and materials. Couples sharing one set of materials may attend and pay one fee.

We anticipate that the classes will fill fast, so please register early. To register, visit the UI Extension Office, 4205 N. Boyer Ave., Sandpoint (Bonner County Fairgrounds) or call 263-8511.

*Sue Traver is the Community Development educator for UI Extension in Bonner County.
Sue works with agencies, government offices, organizations, and individuals.*

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