**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Middlesex County Master Gardener Focus Group**

**July 29, 2011**

In attendance:  Peggy Becker, John Carlson, Marsha Dowling, Marisa Fede, Chantal Foster, Maureen Gillis, Barbara Glista, Fern Martin, along with InternsSusan Allison, Tad Bartles, Karen Rottner and Sherry Van Liere

**Thanks to Chantal** for the snacks – recipe to follow!!

**Minutes** have been posted to<http://mcmgcg.weebly.com/>

**Garden Observations:**

* Tomatoes are doing well, starting to produce in quantity
* Eggplant starting to come around, but suffered from being small and being attacked by flea beetles. User BIGGER plants next year and consider floating row covers for the flea beetles
* Cucumbers coming along, but are mostly misshapen – likely a weather/watering issue.
* Onions should be pulled

Maureen passed around an updated harvest log – very impressive, with lots more to come! Barbara suggested having a scale to weigh all the produce that is donated – we like the idea and will consider how this could be done.

**Financials:**

Maureen indicated we are in good shape, if anyone has expenditures that need reimbursing, please submit!

**Old Business:**

* Boy Scouts – Karen, Susan, John and Vicky participated in the tour of the garden for this group. John will prepare and article and send pictures. It was an interesting experience for all.
* Herbs – Susan will identify herbs which should be left to seed. Continue to harvest and deliver others, there is LOTS of oregano!
* Garlic – Marisa harvested the garlic and is curing before delivery to the food pantry. Garlic will be re-sowed in the same area at the end of October.
* Soakers/Squirters – Jamie made some additions to the soaker hoses along the fence line which have helped during the dry spells.
* Garden Improvements – Maureen purchased the ladder and Fern fixed and painted the gate – thanks!!

**New Business:**

* Eggplant – In addition the comments above, dried blood will be applied (Chantal) along with fish emulsion (Jamie) to the eggplant and tomatoes to address general garden health/production. Chantal complained incessantly about what she perceives as a reduced production in the garden this year compared to previous years. She blames management.
* It is agreed that the soil around the outside edges of the garden (both in and outside the fence) should be amended in the fall prior to planting garlic. Will use compost from the bins. Do we need to order some from T&C?
* Garden Expansion – It was agreed that the garden is at a manageable size currently, and we are not looking to expand at this time.
* Garden Calendar Sign-up was passed around for August and September, there looks to be good coverage for August, please continue to communicatewhat was accomplished for each visit either via the website or by email so we all know what has been done and what needs to be done.
* Durham Fair/Haddam Neck Fair – Jim was not at the meeting, Vicky has the list of what is needed, Maureen will contact her and report.

Open Discussion: It was decided that beans be pulled and replanted, Chantal volunteered. Tad shared his experience with red plastic mulch on his tomatoes – this is something we should try for next year, as he had great success with it.

Meeting ended at 8:10 pm. **Next meeting scheduled for Friday, August 26 at 6:30 pm**, Karen will bring refreshments.

Submitted (very late) by,

Chantal Foster