



## Mount Kisco Child Care Center Receives Cornell University *Kids Growing Food Garden Grant*

*Students to connect to agriculture by growing food at school*

**Mount Kisco, NY—(May 19, 2009)** - Mount Kisco Child Care (MKCCC) received a grant from Cornell University for Kids Growing Food, a New York Agriculture in the Classroom program, that has helped create and support over 300 school food gardens. For more than 10 years, the program has provided K-12 students throughout New York with hands-on food growing experiences. Mimi Edelman will serve as MKCCC's garden project director.

Kids Growing Food gardens help raise teachers' and students' agricultural awareness by making links to agriculture, food systems and good nutrition. The garden also serves as a "garden classroom." Garden-based lessons are integrated into such regular classroom studies as math, science, language arts and history, helping teachers meet core curriculum requirements. Growing food at school helps students gain an understanding of how the local food system works and serves as a link to local farmers, businesses and others involved in agriculture.

Kids Growing Food garden grant recipients are awarded \$500 as "seed" money to help purchase necessary supplies to get their gardens growing. In addition, recipients receive educational resources, workshop opportunities and access to a growing network of school food gardeners through the Kids Growing Food Network.

"Being part of this program is a natural fit for us. We have always believed in – and taught our students – the importance of local farming, sustainability, healthy food and healthy choices," said Dottie Jordan, executive director of Mount Kisco Child Care Center.

Kids Growing Food garden sites participate in the NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets *New York Harvest for New York Kids Week*, which promotes New York and locally-grown food and healthy food choices in school cafeterias. In addition, all Kids Growing Food gardens are asked to grow extra food and donate the produce to a local food bank, soup kitchen or service organization, as part of the Garden Writers Association *Plant a Row for the Hungry* program.

For more information about the Kids Growing Food school garden program, visit the NY Ag in the Classroom website at [www.nyaged.org/aitc/](http://www.nyaged.org/aitc/). New York Agriculture in the Classroom is a partnership of Cornell University, NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets, NYS Education Department, and NY Farm Bureau, and works with Cooperative Extension educators, teachers, and Farm Bureau volunteers throughout the state to foster an awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the total food and fiber system.

For more information, call New York Agriculture in the Classroom within Cornell University's Department of Education: (607) 255-9252, visit the web site: [www.nyaged.org/aitc](http://www.nyaged.org/aitc) or send e-mail to: [hed24@cornell.edu](mailto:hed24@cornell.edu).

**About Mount Kisco Child Care Center:** Mount Kisco Child Care Center is a licensed nonprofit, non-sectarian childcare facility that has served the working families of Northern Westchester since 1971 by providing exceptional and affordable, early-care and education to a diverse group of children three months to five years, with an expanded school-age program serving children up to 12 years of age. For additional information about Mount Kisco Child Care Center, visit [www.mkccc.org](http://www.mkccc.org) or call 914.241.2135.

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