



**CONTACT:** Erika Rumbley  
Garden Educator  
Erika@bostonnatural.org  
BNAN  
617-542-7696 x15  
www.bostonnatural.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Free Gardening Course For Boston Gardeners**

*Master Urban Gardener program offered by Boston Natural Areas Network*

**BOSTON, MA**, November 17, 2011 – The December 1 deadline is fast approaching for the limited number of spaces left in the 2012 **Master Urban Gardener (MUG)** Program.

MUG is an intensive, skill-building training program for community gardeners. Whether you're just getting started or have been gardening for decades, MUG covers everything you need to know to thrive in one of Boston's community gardens- from vegetable gardening and composting to community organizing. In its 10<sup>th</sup> year, over 400 gardeners have been trained through the MUG program. MUG is open to Boston residents who are active community gardeners and demonstrate a commitment to sharing their skills with others.

The MUG program consists of 30 hours of classroom instruction, followed by 30 hours of volunteer service. The 2012 MUG classroom sessions will be offered on 6 consecutive Saturdays from January 14<sup>th</sup>- February 18<sup>th</sup>. The classes will be hosted at the Boston Natural Areas Network office, at 62 Summer Street in Downtown Boston.

Each Saturday will feature topical lectures as well as participatory activities. Topics include:

- (1) Vegetable garden planning for bigger harvests;
- (2) Botany and soil science for gardeners;
- (3) Managing weeds, pests & diseases without chemicals;
- (4) Composting in community gardens; and
- (5) How to facilitate garden meetings and workshops.

Rather than paying a fee, Master Urban Gardeners give volunteer service to Boston's gardening community. A suggested \$30 donation helps to cover materials costs for the program. MUG participants choose from a number of service projects including Community Composting, Tending the Learning Garden, and Public workshops and celebrations. By donating their skills and time, MUG participants gain invaluable in-the-field experience, while giving back.

Applications for the MUG course are due December 1st. Applications are available online at [www.bostonnatural.org/MUG.htm](http://www.bostonnatural.org/MUG.htm). BNAN staff will arrange phone interviews with all eligible candidates in December. Questions? Please contact Erika Rumbley, Garden Educator at 617-542-7696 x15 or [mug@bostonnatural.org](mailto:mug@bostonnatural.org).

Boston Natural Areas Network is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing together local residents, partner organizations, public officials and foundations to preserve, expand and enhance urban open space, including community gardens, greenways and urban wilds. For further information about the organization, becoming a member or the calendar of events, visit [www.bostonnatural.org](http://www.bostonnatural.org), or call 617-542-7696.

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