

Donna De Sousa

Action Assignment #1 5/23/2020

Propose Project and Identify Your Team

I will work on this alone.

I want to investigate the available growing mediums for plants such as garden soil, bagged soils, and soilless mediums including hydroponic mediums.

Assess Needs

I give PowerPoint talks to our community through our Rockland CCE Speaker's Bureau Program.

I have had many questions on plant growing mediums, such as:

- Why is commercial lighter weight potting medium recommended for container gardens as opposed to garden soil?
- Why are bagged mediums considered "lighter" in weight?
- Why are certain mediums sold specifically for starting seeds?
- How can a plant thrive in a 'soilless' potting mix?

I am always looking for ways to improve my presentations. This project will help educate the local community who attend the Speaker Bureau Presentations (and now Webinar presentations) and can also be presented to our Master Gardener's at a regular monthly meeting.

Design Objectives

I want to answer the following questions:

- What do plants need from a growing medium to thrive?
- What are the characteristics of the growing mediums available: garden soils, purchased soil and soilless mediums including hydroponic mediums. This will include how to read labels on purchase mediums and understand what they contain.
- What are the pros and cons of using each medium.

Action Project Assignment #2

Donna De Sousa. Date: 5/28/2020

Develop Delivery Strategies

This project on Soil and Other Plant Growing Media will be delivered by Power Point. I have other PowerPoint presentations that I have developed and offer to our community through our Speaker's Bureau program. I had planned to incorporate parts of this presentation into my other presentations to enhance areas where more information on growing media is needed.

My Horticultural Resource Educator has suggested that this may work well as a short, standalone presentation that can be offered as a Zoom webinar to our community.

In the future, I also thought I would write an article on what I have learned for our Master Gardener Newsletter.

Implement Design

While I am very interested in soil and growing media, it doesn't have the flair of a topic like Bonsai or Heirloom Roses. I want to convey my enthusiasm for the topic. I will take the information that I gather and present it in a simple and easy to understand form, with lots of interesting pictures. I also plan to use humor...in fact; I have a working title – "The Dirt on Soil and Other Plant Growing Media"

As with other presentations that I have done, my resources will be books and online sites that are .gov and .edu . My pictures will be my own photos and drawings, and Creative Common License Photos.

Program Evaluation/Feedback

Donna De Sousa 6/8/2020

1. Who is this evaluation for?

This evaluation is for me so that I can continue to improve my presentation. It is also to be shared with my horticultural educator who coordinates our Speaker's Bureau Program.

2. What do you want to know, and why? After receiving and interpreting results, will you alter your strategy?

I would like to know if the audience could understand the information and whether more or less detail was needed. I'd asked if there was anything new that was learned and if it will be helpful to them. I'd also like comments on my presentation style.

3. What's do-able, really?

I find the challenge to any new presentation is the right level of information. I research my topic in great depth but then need to make it understandable and interesting to my audience, who are often just beginning to garden.

How has your feedback been gathered for education sessions you have participated in? Pre-and or Post-surveys? Group or individual interviews?

For the Speaker's Bureau, we always hand out an evaluation form. A few questions ask how they learned about the talk, what other topics that would be of interest, and if that information will be of use to them. The evaluation form also asks for comments and suggestions for the speaker. I learn a lot from these responses, such as whether I went too fast, had too much information for one talk, too many pictures or too few, etc.

I am continually changing my presentations. Over the years, I learn new information on the topics. I also learn which slides seem to convey the info and which are not as clear judging by the questions I am asked. Occasionally, I have to cut down the program from, say 1 ½ hours to 1 hour. This really helps me key in on what is important to the presentation.

The topic for my action project arose from questions in my other presentations on soil and potting mixes.