

May 1-31, 2015

Sentient Bean



FORSYTH  
FARMERS'  
FIRST  
GARDENS  
ALMANAC



Photographs & stories of past,  
present, & future farmers curated by

Mixed  
& Greens



Read the full stories online at

[facebook.com/forsythfarmersalmanac](https://facebook.com/forsythfarmersalmanac)

# Forsyth Farmers' Almanac

## FIRST GARDENS

### ABOUT THE EXHIBIT

Forsyth Farmers' Almanac is a collection of photographs and stories from past, present and future farmers about the experience of growing up, growing food. Inspired by the stories of local elder residents and Forsyth Farmers' Market vendors, the Mixed Greens worked collectively to capture unique perspectives on food. Conceived as a one-time project, the wealth of interesting stories, recipes, growing tips, and moments, generated not just this exhibit, but the beginning of an ongoing Forsyth Farmers' Almanac. To participate in the collective process of future almanac activities or to read full stories, the evolution of the project can be followed at [forsythfarmersmarket.com](http://forsythfarmersmarket.com) or [facebook.com/ForsythFarmersAlmanac](https://facebook.com/ForsythFarmersAlmanac)





# Eloise Crowley

SAVANNAH RESIDENT



*“Gardening benefited the community because I used to grow food for my family and give left over greens and vegetables to people like my pastor and neighbors.”*

**STORY COLLECTOR**

Jessica Marie Mathis

**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Teri Schell



FIRST GARDENS



# John Henry

SAVANNAH GARDENER



*“We’ve got too many people around here that eat... some of the neighbors help in the garden so we all just share it when it’s ready to pick.”*

**STORY COLLECTOR**

Jessica Marie Mathis

**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Lisa Goodman





# James Grant

SAVANNAH GARDENER



*“Gardening taught me  
how to have patience, how  
to nurture plants and to  
appreciate the process.”*

**STORY COLLECTOR**

Jessica Marie Mathis

**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Christopher Schell



FIRST GARDENS

# THE TRUSTEES GARDEN

## AMERICAS FIRST GARDEN & EXPERIMENT IN AGRICULTURE

*Researched & written by Jessica Marie Mathis*

**I**n 1734, The Trustee Garden in Georgia was one of the first agricultural experiments in America. The Trustee Garden was important to the City of Savannah because it served as one of Georgia's first means for economic development and a place to develop uses for herbal medicines. James Oglethorpe, founder of Georgia, was instructed by the Trustees to establish a public garden that could provide vegetables and serve as an experiment for other plants. The Trustees Garden was a public plot that was 10 acres on Savannah's bluff. Many of the early colonists, who founded Savannah, believed that almost any temperate or tropical plant could grow here. Due to this strong belief, they felt that trade with Britain would be much easier because the Trustee garden could cultivate rare plants.

Besides economic development, the Trustees Garden was used to produce plants that facilitated natural medicines and healing. This part of the garden became to be known as the Physick garden. The Physick garden contained herbs such as sassafras and sumac. Trustee garden was a place that served the community, allowed the city to have its first form of economic development and can be seen as a model to promote healthy living.

### SOURCES

"Trustee Garden." New Georgia Encyclopedia.  
Renate Wilson and David L. Cowan, February 2003

"The Beginning of Public Agricultural Experimentation in America: The Trustees' Garden in Georgia." Agricultural History  
James W. Holland, July 1938





# Kerry Shay

MANAGES NEW TRUSTEES GARDEN



*“The hope is that the Trustees Garden will become a spot on people’s map for a place to come and learn skills for gardening and come and participate in something that is helping the community.”*

**STORY COLLECTOR & PHOTOGRAPHER**

Teri Schell



**FIRST GARDENS**





# Wesley Harrington

SAVANNAH GARDENER



*“When I first started my garden, the dirt was nothing but sand and rocks. I knew I had to get my soil right.”*

**STORY COLLECTOR**

Susan Earl

**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Lisa Goodman







# Phil Musen

SAVANNAH FARMER, THE OLD DAIRY FARM



*“I came to Savannah in my 20’s and started gardening right away... I became this obsessive basil planter and I loved how I could count the generations of seed that I saved.”*

## STORY COLLECTORS

Johnny Smith, Teri Schell &  
Christopher Schell

## PHOTOGRAPHER

Christopher Schell



FIRST GARDENS



# Angel Williams

SAVANNAH FARMER



*“I love being a farmer and  
it’s so fun that I get to say,  
‘Hi Mr. Orange tree!’”*

**STORY COLLECTOR**

Teri Schell

**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Christopher Schell



**FORSYTH FARMERS’ ALMANAC**



# Little Green Wagon



**T**he first project of the Mixed Greens at Forsyth Farmers' Market was the Little Green Wagon in 2011. Mixed Greens team members invite youth to plant seeds in a wagon and then take care of the plants during the week until the plants are strong enough to go home with the youth. Each week, the young planters are invited to visit their plants and check the growth. This weekly interaction builds relationships, knowledge and community connection.

Angel Williams planted her first seeds in the Little Green Wagon and enjoyed the process so much she took the plants home to create her first garden. From those first few plants, she now cares for four fruit trees and seasonal vegetables at her home. Angel is the future of food for Savannah!





# Ian Robertson

COMMUNITY GARDEN PIONEER



*“People just warmed to the idea it was going to happen and wanted to be part of it.”*

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**STORY COLLECTORS**

Johnny Smith &  
Christopher Schell

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**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Tiia Strong





# Betty Thompson

SAVANNAH RESIDENT



*“That’s the beauty of having  
a garden, the sharing.”*

## STORY COLLECTORS

Della Wheeler, Teri Schell &  
Jessica Marie Mathis

## PHOTOGRAPHER

Christopher Schell



FIRST GARDENS

# FOOD JUSTICE

*Researched & written by Jessica Marie Mathis*

**A**s a result of having a fast-paced life and meeting the demands of society, people place less emphasis on the importance of community gardens. Like the Trustees Garden, gardens are important because they provide a place for growing healthy vegetables that come from the earth. Due to growing healthy vegetables and natural food, people within the community will be less likely to develop health problem such as diabetes or obesity. Now some may wonder what the practice of gardening has to do with food justice. Food justice is the right of citizens to control the types of foods that are sold in grocery stores and the local market. All too often people who are low income do not have the access to fresh and healthy food that they need to live and be healthy. Food justice is an important concept because if community citizens do not have access and control over the types of foods that are sold in their communities then they have no control over their quality of life.

*In Chatham County,  
17% of households  
experience food insecurity at some  
point during the year.*

#### SOURCES

*“Weighing In: Obesity, Food Justice, and the Limits of Capitalism.”  
University of California Press, Julie Guthman, 2011.*

USDA data.



# PLANNING AN EDIBLE GARDEN

David Berle & Robert Westerfield  
University of Georgia Horticulturists

## STEP 1: LOCATION IS CRITICAL

Access to water is critical. All vegetables and fruits require sunlight, so find a location that gets at least six hours of direct sun during the day.

## STEP 2: SOIL & TERRAIN

While using the soil that you have is easier than building raised beds and adding soil, the safety of the soil must be considered first. Test soil at the UGA County Extension Center first to decide which method — modifying existing soil or adding new soil to raised beds — works for your location.

## STEP 3: CHOOSING CROPS

Vegetables are grown as annuals and therefore need to be planted from seed or plants every season. A planting guide (UGA Cooperative Extension Circular 963 Vegetable Gardening in Georgia) lists recommended varieties that perform well in Georgia and suggests when to plant them. It is much cheaper to start vegetables from seed, but it is faster and sometimes easier to start with plants. All fruits grown in Georgia require full sun, just like vegetables. The main difference in planting fruits versus vegetables is that fruit plants are perennials so they live from year to year. It also takes several years for most fruit plants to start bearing, so when you plant fruits, you are planting for the future.

## UGA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

*Information on these pages is courtesy of UGA Cooperative Extension. Through education in agriculture, the environment, communities, and families, UGA helps Georgians become healthier, more productive, financially independent, and environmentally responsible. <http://extension.uga.edu>*





**The Mixed Greens** are a group of Savannah community members that work together to support the Forsyth Farmers' Market with smiling faces, interactive projects and learning opportunities. As a Real Communities project, supported by the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Mixed Greens serve as a building block to create a means for a more welcoming market experience, as well as provide opportunities for connection and contribution for people with and without disabilities.

