New OARDC garden will help study links between plants and health

The Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center’s Secrest Arboretum has many gardens, but its newest addition stands out for its therapeutic and research value.

Established in summer 2015, The Lemmon and Rice Health and Wellness Garden was designed to boost visitors’ sense of well-being and provide opportunities for research into the impact gardens and nature have on human health. The garden was constructed thanks to donations from Bill Lemmon, president and owner of Lemmon & Lemmon Inc., and Kevin Rice, vice president of Rice’s Nursery and Landscaping, both located in the Canton area.

This is one of the country’s few gardens designed around the concept of the pillars of wellness. The garden focuses on six of the nine pillars: environmental, physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and social. OARDC has teamed up with The Ohio State University College of Nursing to conduct future research in the garden.

“Many visitors already use the arboretum as a part of their wellness program,” said Joe Cochran, Secrest’s interim director. “One visitor told me he had lost 36 pounds somewhere on the paths throughout the gardens.”

More: go.osu.edu/healthgarden

In addition to the horticultural research conducted there, Secrest Arboretum provides spaces in which the community can engage with nature and improve their health.

ESSENTIALS
Studies have shown the benefits of gardens and other outdoor spaces on health and wellness.

- Gardening 3–5 times a week has been found to be a good strategy to combat obesity and lower stress.
- Patients with musculoskeletal pain taking part in horticultural therapy programs experience an improved ability to cope with chronic pain.
- Children with attention deficit disorder who play in grassy, outdoor spaces have less severe symptoms than those who play in windowless, indoor settings.
- Dementia patients who have access to gardens are less likely to display aggression or suffer injuries, and they display improved sleep patterns, balanced hormones and decreased agitation.

“I’m an Ohio State grad. My grandfather and father came from Wooster. This is something I wanted to do for the university. I believe plants are very important in people’s health, and I hope this garden will be beneficial for people of all ages in the community, as well as for research.”

— Bill Lemmon, president and owner, Lemmon & Lemmon Inc.
OARDC: A LEADER IN AGBIOSCIENCE

ag•bi•o•sci•ence (ăg’bi’ō-sī’ens) n. the integration of scientific disciplines to address critical needs of food security, safety and health; environmental sustainability; and biobased energy, fuel and products

Food Security, Production and Human Health

Environmental Quality and Sustainability

Advanced Bioenergy and Biobased Products

Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center

As the research arm of The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) employs nearly 650 scientists and staff members throughout the state.

Ohio State’s Wooster campus is the largest agbioscience research facility in the United States. OARDC scientists work closely with researchers in The Ohio State University Colleges of Education and Human Ecology, Medicine, Public Health, Veterinary Medicine, Biological Sciences, and Engineering.

At any one time, OARDC researchers are engaged in nearly 400 research projects. Primary focus is in three signature areas:

- Food Security, Production and Human Health
- Environmental Quality and Sustainability
- Advanced Bioenergy and Biobased Products

The Ohio General Assembly established OARDC as the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station in 1882. It is supported by a line-item appropriation from the Ohio General Assembly, competitive grants, gifts, contracts, federal grants and other sources. OARDC uses these funds to provide direct research support and economic development for Ohio’s annual $100+ billion agbioscience industry. OARDC is not funded by student tuition or any other general funds of The Ohio State University.