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**For Immediate Release**

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**4-H Clover Garden**

By Linda Langelo, Horticulture Program Associate

What is a 4-H Clover Garden? This garden represents a vision of 4-H philosophy come to life. What everyone will see by first-hand experience is a garden designed in the shape of a 4 leafed clover to represent the 4-H pledge. As all 4-H'ers know, you pledge your head to clearer thinking, your heart to greater loyalty, your hands to larger service and your health to better living for your club, your community, your country and your world. Back in the late winter of 2012, I was creatively thinking of a functional and educational children's garden. I thought what could be done in the Golden Plains Area that would be representative of agriculture, horticulture and 4-H. Then using the 4-H clover shape came to mind and I started sharing the concept for the garden project.

This garden project came to life thanks to the Colorado Garden Show, Inc. funding and the Sedgwick County Commissioners. The Commissioners donated two types of gravel and soil. The Commissioners and the county staff was great about coordinating the delivery of the materials with the allotted volunteer times. The garden came together quickly and successfully thanks to all the 4-H volunteers, Sedgwick County Colorado Master Gardeners and support staff.

In gardening, learning takes place through the illustrative media of the garden itself. People who come to see this garden are at all levels of learning. It was important to demonstrate as clearly as possible representative interpretation of each leaf of the clover. Gathering input from staff and volunteers was important and helpful. We wanted to personally motivate any visitor to have a deeper understanding of 4-H in the world. We also considered how we learn because we wanted 4-H to use the garden for future activities. Studies show learners remember 90 percent of what they do and only 50 percent of what they see. Many present and future 4-H youth will come to participate in the 4-H Living Program that holds the tenets of basic healthy activities.

In the garden, each leaf-segment of the clover is filled with plants or sculpture that represents that leaf. The leaf segment representing the mind has silver plants that edge the leaf with a seat in the center. The silver-leaved plants are a calming, neutral type of plant. They are neither showy, nor demonstrative and they do not distract or take away from the space. That leaf is a space to clear the mind for clearer thinking.

The leaf representing the heart has roses planted around the edge of the shape. Roses are symbolism for many emotions in our lives. But these red roses symbolize loyalty and true love. The type of red roses used is called Knock Out roses. These roses need no pruning and grow to be 4 feet wide by 4 feet high.

In the leaf that represents the hands, a sculpture is being created by Maureen Hearty soon to be a resident in Joes, Colorado. She is currently assisting with grant funding for the Grass Roots Center. The sculpture is a sunflower with a metamorphosis of a caterpillar at the base to remind us all of the cycles of life and the continued forward motion or perpetual motion of our hands.

The last leaf of the clover represents health. The plants in this leaf are a diversity of color of the coneflower with some other herbal plants and some space to add or change plants in this leaf from year to year. Our health requires a diversity of color on our plate and an acceptance of diversity within our community, our country and our world.

Within 4-H there is a program called Healthy Living. The 4-H members will be able to actively use this garden with activities from the 4-H Healthy Living program. The Cloverbuds will have the opportunity to work in the garden and learn some of their gardening skills using the “learn by doing” approach.

Come and see the garden in the Sedgwick County Fairgrounds located at 17000 CR 41.5 before you enter into the town of Julesburg on 385. You won’t want to miss this. We would love to have you stop and visit. And if you have time, stop in town and visit. The Sedgwick County Extension office is located in the Sedgwick County Courthouse at 315 Cedar Street, Julesburg, CO and is open 8 am – 4:30 pm every weekday. Feel free to call us at (970)474-3479.

For more information visit [www.ext.colostate.edu](http://www.ext.colostate.edu).

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