

## **FEATURE – RAIN GARDENS FILTER STORMWATER**

INTRO: Researchers from Rutgers University are using a US Dept of Agriculture grant to show how rain gardens can be a filter for storm water. USDA's Pat O'Leary has more.

DiNardo VO: A rain garden is a shallow, depressed area that's planted with native plants. And when the water comes in it gets filtered down into the ground water.

MADELINE FLAHIVE DiNARDO IS IN LUCK. THE WEATHER IS COOPERATING BEAUTIFULLY WITH HER DEMONSTRATION FOR LANDSCAPERS AND GARDENERS. 24 HOURS EARLIER IT WAS A DIFFERENT SCENARIO.

Madeline Flahive DiNardo, Rutgers Extension: We're here at the Gloucester County 4-H fairgrounds, located in Mullica Hill, New Jersey, and while it's very early spring now and there's not much happening, come summertime this place will be bustling with activity with the county fair and other events that happen here. And a lot of people will enjoy our new demonstration rain garden.

MADELINE AND HER COOPERATIVE EXTENSION COLLEAGUES AT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, VIRGINIA TECH AND CORNELL UNIVERSITY ARE USING A USDA GRANT TO SHOW THE BENEFITS OF RAIN GARDENS FOR BUSINESSES AND BACKYARDS. ALONG WITH BEING ATTRACTIVE TO BENEFICIAL BUGS AND BIRDS, THE GARDENS HELP WITH CONTROL OF NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION.

Madeline: That could be dirt and grime on a rooftop, motor oil on a street or excess fertilizer or pesticide on, say, a lawn situation. Runoff water is contaminated with all that and the idea is the rain garden captures it and gets it filtered out of the water before it goes back to ground water.

ON DAY 2, LOCAL LANDSCAPERS ARRIVE FOR TRAINING AND TO FINISH THE GARDEN.

Stanley Martino, Nursery Owner: There's a big need for it because we have to stop putting all the roof runoff and the street runoff into the streams and the rivers that wind up in the ocean.

Erick Alpizar, Lanscaping Professional: I think it was great to see that we are getting more in tune with what we need to do when it comes to water management. And this is a sustainable way to do it. And at the same time, enhances the beauty of any property.

THE TEAM'S GOAL IS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF RAIN GARDENS AND WITH THEM, ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITIES.

Madeline: One rain garden on a residential property can treat 25,000 gallons of water annually. And say if 40 residents put in a rain garden you could potentially treat a million gallons of water a year.

IN MULLICA HILL NEW JERSEY, FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M PAT O'LEARY