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Conservation District Program at Camp Shiawassee

This summer the Shiawassee Conservation District will provide a fun educational experience for campers at the YMCA's Camp Shiawassee through a grant awarded to the Conservation District from the USDA National Institute of Agriculture Sustainable Agriculture and Education (SARE) Program.

Through this program, youngsters attending the Camp Shiawassee YMCA Summer Youth Program will plant and grow an assortment of vegetables in gardens, to be established by the District at the Camp.

To compliment the gardens, the Conservation District will hold weekly sessions educating campers on various sustainable agriculture and conservation topics. By working with District staff to

tend the gardens, campers will learn hands-on the benefits of growing food sustainably, using limited space and inputs.

"The focus will be on producing healthy food while protecting our natural resources using conservation methods," says Melissa Higbee, executive director at the Shiawassee Conservation District.

The Shiawassee Conservation District has been instructing conservation education lessons to campers at Camp Shiawassee since 2009. Topics have ranged from water conservation, groundwater and non-point source pollution to pollinators, silviculture and Best Management Practices in agriculture.

Camp Shiawassee is a 188-acre camp that offers fun experiences that will shape children for the rest of their lives. This summer camp is the only state-licensed camp in Shiawassee County. It has provided an environment for children to learn, grow and mature all while having a great time in a safe, friendly, nurturing setting for 66 years.

Educating young people about the value of conservation through hands-on experiences such as this one supports the mission of the Shiawassee Conservation District to provide for the care, informed usage and protection of natural resources by creating awareness of conservation issues and by being the leader in providing innovative assistance.

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For more information about the Shiawassee Conservation District, persons may contact the office, (989) 723-8263, ext. 3. To learn more about the Camp Shiawassee and the Shiawassee Family YMCA's Summer Day Camp Program, persons may contact the Shiawassee YMCA, (989) 725-8136.