in this issue: the journey to agricultural missions • raising hogs on banana silage University of Tennessee • workteam’s 24th year • intern spotlight: Imanuel Feodor
“Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.” Col. 4:15

At the beginning or end of many of the Apostle Paul’s New Testament letters, he sends greetings and special messages to people with whom he has built relationships. Sometimes we know the stories of these people and their relationship with Paul; many times we encounter little or nothing but the few words of greeting Paul writes. In either case, their named presence gives us insight into the depth of belonging and engagement that Paul developed wherever he traveled.

I was reminded of those letters as I previewed this edition of ECHO News. Throughout these pages are stories of a wide range of people with whom ECHO has built relationships over the decades — and what richness is revealed! All kinds of people, with varying histories, meaningfully engaged in making a difference wherever they are located around the globe.

These relationships continue to be meaningful and “bear fruit” in the far reaches of our world, from Bolivia to Cambodia, and right here in the United States.

And new relationships are constantly beginning, informed and inspired by those who have come before. We trust, by God’s grace and goodness, that in years to come ECHO News readers will continue to hear of ‘new’ friends and colleagues and the impact that has developed through their ECHO relationships as well.

You are part of this remarkable community! In relationship with ECHO, you share yourself; your time, talents, experience, and finances. Together, with your help, we are enriching, sustaining, and growing relationships that are making a tangible difference in our world…now, and for eternity. Thank you for being in relationship with us and our global community!

We are blessed … together,
ECHO News

2018 ECHO Leadership Summit

In July 2018, ECHO leadership from Florida, Thailand, and Tanzania will meet in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso for a week of planning, sharing best practices, prayer, a little fun, and a lot of building unity through our impact centers worldwide.

For some of ECHO’s leadership, this is the first time they’ve been able to visit our West Africa Center. Latin America/Caribbean Team Leader Cecilia Gonzalez is looking forward to seeing first-hand what other Centers are teaching and learning, what they have in common, and how can she encourage them.

While each region is culturally unique, how ECHO serves farming families is beautifully similar. Each region chooses techniques that are appropriate to the people they’re serving in the region, but they all work to change lives and communities through agriculture.

Please join us in praying that these important meetings would encourage and equip our teams worldwide.

ECHO is a global Christian organization that equips people with agricultural resources and skills to reduce hunger and improve the lives of the poor.

cover photo: Seed Bank Manager Holly Sobetski demonstrates seed harvesting techniques by observing the maturity of peppers in Managua, Nicaragua.
The Journey to Agricultural Missions

by Jasmine Johnson | Journalist

Former ECHO intern carries out full-time missionary work among Bolivian farmers.

From a high school drama club to a mission field across the world, Jason and Jenna Weigner give all the praise back to the God who orchestrated it all.

While traveling after high school, Jason struggled to understand how the calling he felt to pursue missions could intersect with his passion for nature.

One African community he visited was much more advanced in health and farming practices than any other in the surrounding area, untouched by poverty or illness. This was not because of an abundance of wealth, but rather the practical techniques missionaries had taught them in order to utilize the land’s full potential.

“That was my first realization that my calling into missions and my God-given passion for nature were not mutually exclusive, but meant for each other,” Jason said.

Once he understood that agriculture and missions could be combined, Jason pursued a degree in environmental science at Messiah College. One of the requirements for Jason’s major was to take an agricultural missions class at ECHO’s Global Farm.

During this month of study, Jason worked with the rainforest intern, which hinted at his future position with ECHO.

Originally, Jason had intended to pursue missions in Africa. While attending a global missions conference, Jason and Jenna ran into friends who were hosting a South American Missions’ booth. Ironically, these missionaries happened to be looking for individuals from ECHO to come work with them.
“He got really excited and told me they had been looking for an ECHO intern to go down to Bolivia,” Jason said. “It was one of those God-sent moments where you just know that is what you need to do.”

The Weigners agreed to follow God’s path and committed to serving a two-year term in Bolivia.

An important stop before their journey to the mission field was ECHO’s Global Farm. During his internship at ECHO, Jason specialized in the rainforest area. “The hands-on learning really appealed to me, as well as the community of people living and working together with the shared passion of bringing healing to people and the earth through sustainable food production,” Jason said.

During their time in Florida, ECHO’s Technical Research Coordinator Bob Hargrave, along with his wife Ellen, would often meet with Jason and Jenna over lunch to discuss life and faith.

“Jason is quite a biologist,” Bob said. “He’s interested in everything in the natural world as well as agriculture and development.”

Even after their training at ECHO was completed, God continued to place projects involving agriculture and development along their path.

Although the Weigners thought their ministry in Bolivia would be temporary, God had other plans. They felt called to stay and develop a discipleship and training center with an agricultural component.

Waiting for plans and paperwork for the training center to be finalized, an international school in Bolivia asked Jason to assist in teaching a high school gardening class. This God-appointed detour connected Jason with the course’s co-teacher, Sarah Hinson. Just as Jason had previously wrestled with how to combine agriculture and missions, Sarah was exploring these same questions.

Sarah described the influential role the Weigner family had during her time in Bolivia, as they helped her transition to life in a foreign country.

Jason also convinced Sarah to attend an ECHO conference.

“Jason had my dream job,” Sarah said. “It was through that conference that I was really sold on ECHO and its impact globally.”

Following in Jason’s footsteps, Sarah applied to be an ECHO intern.

“Jason introduced me to ECHO and to the world of agricultural missions and I am so thankful for that.”

Sarah is now at ECHO Florida serving as the Community Garden Intern while Jason and Jenna continue to serve in Bolivia. Jason uses the practical experience and innovative learning derived from ECHO to manage the training center’s land and oversee the sustainable agriculture demonstration farm.

“God has really put the vision of this discipleship center on the hearts of our Bolivian brothers and sisters.”

-Jason Weigner, Former ECHO Intern and Missionary in Bolivia
One of the first tools he built was a ram pump. This mechanism uses the energy from a nearby stream to pump water uphill to a water tower. By using appropriate technology like this, clean water is provided through a pump that can be fixed with accessible materials, rather than an expensive generator with complex parts.

“We want to demonstrate low budget techniques for the students that come,” Jason said. “Those who have seen it are talking about other areas they could apply the concept.”

As he continues to work alongside Bolivians to kickstart the farm, Jason delights in using the plants and techniques from ECHO to assist the locals.

“My experience at ECHO is the foundation I am using to set up a plan for the farm,” Jason said. “My unconventional techniques have been met with a bit of skepticism; however, once I got the ram pump working, my team was suddenly more open to try my other unusual ideas.”

Once the discipleship and training center is in place, local people will be able to learn practical life skills, receive medical aid, engage in sustainable farm training, nurture their faith, grow as disciples, and return home to share their acquired knowledge and experience.

“God has put the vision of this discipleship center on the hearts of our Bolivian brothers and sisters,” Jason said. “It is truly their project and we are here to support it.”

This project is valuable because most other forms of training in the area require a high school diploma, which leaves many rural and low-literacy individuals with nowhere to turn.

A Bolivian man assisting with the construction of the center was thrilled to hear of the upcoming educational opportunity for all people.

“He had hoped to attend a Bible school for indigenous people in another part of Bolivia, but his application was rejected because he did not have a high school education,” the Weigners shared. “He was overjoyed that finally there would be a place for people like him to grow in their faith regardless of their education level.”

Through personal stories like these, the Weigners are encouraged by the local excitement and engagement with the discipleship and training center.

“We have come up against what seemed like impossible barriers to the ministry, but God always seems to open the right door, send the right people, or provide the needed funds at just the right time,” Jason said.

Through many twists and turns, God empowered two high school students to pursue agricultural missions. By listening to His voice one step at a time and gaining practical experience through ECHO, the Weigners are making a lasting difference in the lives and eternities of those God calls them to serve.

“Everything has to start small, including Jason Weigner’s budding nursery. Weigner is a former ECHO Intern who then went on to serve full-time training farmers in Bolivia.”
Raising Hogs on Banana Silage in Myanmar

Farmers use what they have to make what they need for their family’s nutrition

Small home gardens are common to nearly all households in Myanmar’s Karen communities, and may be second only in occurrence to the pig that can be found being raised underneath so many homes. Like many other countries in Southeast Asia, land in Myanmar is as hard to come by as the protein that needs to be produced on it, making hog production a viable and popular source of animal protein. It would only take a few minutes for a visitor to realize the importance of agriculture to the Karen people.

Being omnivores and efficient consumers of household waste, pigs are well suited for integration into small farm systems where space and resources are limiting factors. Even one or two pigs can become costly to feed and will require, in many cases, expensive purchases of commercial feed.

For this reason, ECHO seeks to provide appropriate options for using on-farm resources, encouraging farmers to use what they have, to make what they need. At our most recent Myanmar Seed Saving Workshop, our team met an attendee who had participated in our first Myanmar training event in 2013, where he learned to make fermented banana stalk silage for hog feed. We were delighted to learn that for the last four years he’s been promoting its use!

Now a Program Manager for World Vision Myanmar, our friend is working to spread this technology to communities within his reach. One of his ongoing projects, which began with four participants, encourages the production of fermented banana stalk silage to supplement any purchased feeds needed for raising hogs. Through trial and error (and the creation of their own appropriate silage chopper), he and his coworkers have found that they can reduce the need for purchased feeds by up to 75% by supplementing with their own farm-generated feeds, thus improving production margins tremendously. The program now has 120 participants and is expanding to additional communities!

“We seek to provide appropriate options for using on-farm resources, encouraging farmers to use what they have, to make what they need.”

ECHO Staff members Sombat and Boonsong making pig feed from banana stalks in Thailand.
what’s happenin

Attendees at a village training in Burkina Faso learn to make a salt lick for their cattle. Some farmers and community groups started producing salt licks for sale in their village.

As part of their service learning trip, Dalat International School students visited one of ECHO’s partners, in a small village outside of Chiang Dao, where they have cultivated an incredible and lively agroforest! They also were trained on seed banking, Natural Resource Management, the services of ECHO, and built an appropriate earthbag seed bank.

Rooftop Gardens in Tecpan, Guatemala

Inspired by ECHO, the staff of Maya Health Alliance has built a rooftop garden. They will demonstrate and test their plan for the home gardens program which will help improve the health and nutrition of Mayan women and their families.

Follow us on Instagram for pictures of ECHO’s work all around the world. #echofightshunger

Tag ECHO and we’ll follow you too!

#echofightshunger
In His Own Words

“The Ibadan networking forum organized by ECHO West Africa was eye-opening. The amount of knowledge shared, networking that is available, experience shared, and testimonies to inspire, made the forum a blessing to all attendees.” —Matthew Oladele

Senator Cynthia Villar

The Asia Pacific Conference, co-sponsored by ECHO, Samaritan’s Purse and SEED Project, was honored to have Senator Cynthia Villar of the Philippines as keynote of the opening ceremony. Senator Villar is the current chairperson of the Committees on Agriculture and Food and Environment and Natural Resources.

Kidugala Lutheran Seminary

Happy Lukumay trained 113 church leaders, pastors, and community members about sack gardens, vegetable gardening, food drying, and conservation agriculture in Kidugala, Tanzania. They learned how to make a dryer and establish a key hole garden and sack garden. Happy was encouraged by the cooperation they demonstrated and their plans to continue to learn in the future.
Since 2015, the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) has collaborated with the ECHO Asia Regional Impact Center on two agricultural projects in Cambodia. Collaboration is essential but finding effective partners who can build trustworthy networks has proven challenging for UTIA in the past.

ECHO Asia’s partnership with UTIA has leveraged the teaching-research-extension expertise of the University, providing reliable and responsive networks through ECHO to advance sustainable agro-ecological solutions for Cambodian smallholders.

ECHO Asia has helped UTIA by training Cambodian farm managers and technicians. In November 2017, this group of managers and technicians traveled to ECHO Asia’s office and seed bank in Chiang Mai, Thailand, for a one-week workshop. The workshop was led by Dr. Abram Bicksler (ECHO Asia) and Dr. Ricky Bates (The Pennsylvania State University). These managers and technicians worked with UTIA, Penn State, and a range of other Southeast Asian partners on the Sustainable Intensification Innovation Lab project. The SIIL project is USAID-funded and Kansas State University-managed. The Cambodian farmers trained are leaders of agricultural technology demonstration parks throughout the country. The training helped them increase the potential capacity of these demonstration parks as places for learning and innovative research.

The workshop discussed agricultural diversification options to improve smallholder farming systems. In this lowland, rainfed region of northwest Cambodia, smallholder farmers have faced frequent challenges. They struggled with managing cattle and providing high quality fodder in their rice-dominated systems. Workshop sessions addressed the following issues: silage production for improved animal nutrition and health, production of high quality fodder through diverse species’ cultivation, the use of living fences for control of cattle in the dry season, and the use of grafting for improved production of vegetables in the rainy season.

A critical constraint to strategic farming is the availability and knowledge of high performing and well-adapted seeds. Dr. Bicksler provided information to farmers about low-tech options. These ideas included seed storage, well-adapted monsoonal seed varieties, high quality open-pollinated vegetables and other nutritionally supplemental crops for smallholder diets.

Collaborations between UTIA, ECHO Asia and other partners in Southeast Asia have proven fruitful. Moving forward, the partnership hopes to further investigate options for Cambodian smallholders. One proposed next step may be documenting smallholder “wild gardens”. These typically-overlooked spaces could be assessed for opportunities to learn and improve smallholder management.

ECHO’s Dr. Bicksler, along with UTIA researchers, delivered a workshop to 50 farmers at the University of Battambang’s farm.
Every summer for 24 years, John Hanson has volunteered at ECHO. Adding up each two-week trip to the Global Farm in Florida, he’s totaled almost one full year of volunteering!

Mr. Hanson is the leader of a volunteer work team comprised of students from the Indiana area who are part of the Reformed Presbyterian denomination. The high school and college students come each year to serve alongside the staff members and interns at ECHO Florida.

“It’s about helping and blessing the workers here at ECHO who have dedicated their lives to this mission,” said Lauren Daniels. “We want to come and partner with the work that’s being done globally by serving the long-term staff here.”

ECHO’s farm manager, Andy Cotarelo has had the opportunity to work with the team for 12 years. Cotarelo expressed what a blessing it has been to have extra hands on deck for big projects and general farm work over the years. He and Mr. Hanson have also cultivated a friendship during the 12 years they’ve known each other.

Lauren Daniels, a senior at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, has served at ECHO three times with this team. She jokes about how unglamorous the work is, but counts it a joy to serve missionaries who equip people around the world.

“Getting out in the heat of Florida and doing hard physical labor on the farm has done wonders for my character,” Daniels said. “We are doing this work and nobody is going to know our names. That’s why it matters. That’s why it’s important that we do this.”

Ellen Smith, a volunteer who has served at ECHO for eight years, acts as the mother of the group. While the students are working in the morning, she prepares lunch and does laundry before joining them on the farm.

“This trip was invaluable for me when I was in high school,” Smith said. “I want to play a role that provides that same opportunity for other students.”

The Indiana Work Team, as ECHO staff refers to them, has certainly left their mark over the years. Returning members look around the farm and point out the rice paddy they revamped, fences they built, and fields they cleared that now bear fruit. Each year, the team works on a couple big projects. This year they’ve re-thatched the roof on the hut at the Anderson Appropriate Technology Center, tarped and replanted the bamboo field, and cleared out the research plot. When they’re not working on group projects, the students split off with ECHO interns to work alongside them in their areas of the farm.

“I can’t say enough about the influence of the interns on the lives of the high-schoolers,” Mr. Hanson said. “They are just a few years older and have been through exactly what those students are going through. The interns really encourage and inspire my students.”

Both parties have benefited greatly from this long-standing relationship. The high-school students are quick to recognize that this mission trip is about pouring into people who are used to doing all the serving. Along the way, they often learn about themselves and who they are in God’s kingdom. For ECHO staff and interns, the hard work and friendships that come with the group are a great encouragement. They are thankful for the willingness of Midwest students to spend part of their summer serving in an unconventional way.

The Indiana Work Team is a testament to the Lord’s faithfulness to ECHO. Those who give of their time and resources help to sustain our work all throughout the world. Whether it’s a tradition of 24 years and counting, or a first-time volunteer, ECHO is greatly blessed by those who choose to come and partner with us in our mission to honor God by empowering the undernourished with sustainable hunger solutions.
The Biblical Basis for ECHO and Agricultural Missions

by Bruce Wilson, Director of Strategic Initiatives

In previous issues of ECHO News, we introduced this series which explored Biblical themes that provide the foundation of ECHO and agricultural missions. This issue examines the third theme, “Compassionate care for the poor and hungry.”

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Compassionate care for the materially poor and hungry is a consistent theme in scripture.

The message of Isaiah 58 is straightforward, “Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help... Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble.” (Isaiah 58:7-10 NLT)

Deuteronomy 15:11 is equally clear, “…open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor…”

In the New Testament, after Peter, James, and John understood Paul’s outreach to the Gentiles, “their only suggestion was that [Paul and Barnabas] keep on helping the poor” which, Paul writes, “I have always been eager to do.” (Galatians 2:9,10)

From the beginning to the end of the Bible, God’s people are commanded to care for the poor.

Scripture is surprisingly forceful in commanding compassionate care for the poor and warning those who trample, oppress, or ignore the poor. (Amos 2:6-7; Amos 5:10-15; Job 31:13-23; Isaiah 10:1-3; Matthew 25:31-46).

“Doing justice is inseparably connected to preaching grace. This is true in two ways. One way is that the gospel produces a concern for the poor. The other is that deeds of justice gain credibility for the preaching of the gospel. In other words, justification by faith leads to doing justice, and doing justice can make many seek to be justified by faith.”

—Tim Keller, Pastor & Theologian

In Proverbs we read, “Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but helping the poor honors him. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice. The godly care about the rights of the poor; the wicked don’t care at all.” (Prov 14:31, 31:9; 29:7)

Jesus taught his followers to feed the hungry and give to those in need (Luke 12:22-34; 14:12-14; 18:18-30). The apostle Paul praised the Gentile believers for their generous “offering for the poor among the believers in Jerusalem” (Rom 15:26; 2 Cor 8:1-15), and James warned the church not to discriminate against the poor (James 2:1-13).

The apostle John provides the foundation for our care for the poor and confronts us with a searching question: “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.” 1 John 3:16-18

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This week-long training was the first in-depth agricultural workshop they’d ever had. When ECHO trainers visited a host farm in South Africa, they were met by eager small-scale farmers who were new to the practice and relied on their success to provide for their families.

There are two types of farming in the Limpopo Province, large and small scale. According to Statistics South Africa in 2012, there are nearly 5,000 large-scale commercial farms in Limpopo. Farmers who practice large-scale farming, which occupies approximately 70% of the total land area, use the most advanced production technology.

The smallholder farms cover only 30% of the provincial land area. These farms have limited access to farming technologies and are approximately four acres per family.

It has been estimated that there are 303,000 smallholder farmers in Limpopo Province. Women constitute 80% of this group and most have never had access to formal farm training.

On the first day of training in Limpopo, ECHO trainers demonstrated soil principles pertaining to the effects of tillage and mulching on water infiltration and erosion. The trainees were astounded to see how much soil was eroded during a simple rain after being tilled and left with a bare surface. When they saw how little water went into the soil and how much soil was washed away, many of them vowed to till their soil less and to try the strategy of tilling minimally.

After a session on Integrated Pest Management, one farmer, who was a very quiet student, came up and commented that he had never been told that there are things he can do to prevent pest and diseases from attacking his crops! He said he would start using control methods to prevent infestations, reducing or eliminating the need for chemical treatments.

The training took place on the farm of Linda and Johnson, who are an inspiring and incredible example of what faithful farmers can accomplish. After only living on this farm for a few years, they started exporting dried sweet potatoes and selling zucchini and green beans in regional markets. On the farm, they practice using vermicompost and tea, demonstrate kitchen garden options and experiment with legumes as a green manure. They have a deep interest in teaching farming from a biblical perspective. Their example and hard work was a blessing to all the farmers who attended, and especially to the ECHO team. We hope they inspire you too!

In March of 2018, ECHO was connected with a group of farmers who were searching for training in agriculture that would help them.

At an ECHO training in South Africa, church members planted sack gardens for the first time. Many commented that when they returned home, they would use these kitchen garden designs to grow food for their families.
Hi! My name is Imanuel Feodor, originally from Jakarta, Indonesia. I spent four years at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa. I graduated with an agriculture degree with an emphasis in plant science. Being introduced for the first time to the deeper level of soil, plants, livestock, and insects awakened my curiosity and filled my time at Dordt with many exciting moments. People would often ask me how I was going to relate this knowledge from a temperate mid-west context to a tropical country such as Indonesia. This question led me to come to an ECHO conference to learn more about tropical agriculture. During that short visit to ECHO, God filled my heart with joy, more excitement, and lots of curiosity to learn more about things that ECHO is doing. By the grace of God, I was able to come back to ECHO and have been privileged to be in the internship program.

My time at ECHO is probably the most productive 14 months of my life! There are countless things that I learned during my time here at ECHO. Sustainable farming techniques and hands-on learning experiences are the first two things that fit well for a fresh graduate like me. Being able to see and apply what I have learned from college to a real situation has greatly enhanced my learning experience. The fact that we have many different people with different cultural experiences around the world adds more value to what I am learning. My faith also has been strengthened during my time at ECHO. Weekly devotions from people who have been walking with God and living out their faith for years through different experiences in their lives have helped me not to just listen but see God’s wonderful work. Finally, having great connections with people through ECHO is another thing that I really value from my time here. Having a community who has the same mission and vision will help us to encourage and support each other as we are later sent out to serve around the world.

To me, ECHO is a privilege from God, and to not use that as a blessing for others would not be glorifying His name. Thus, after my time at ECHO, I am hoping to go back to Indonesia where my heart has always been, and work alongside farmers. I am excited to see what God has planned for me in Indonesia after all the opportunities that he has given to me at ECHO.
New Rates Make it a Good Time to Give AND Receive

Higher Payout Rates
For the first time in six years, the American Council on Gift Annuities (ACGA) has increased payout rates for charitable gift annuities. This is exciting news for those looking for ways to boost retirement income while also planning how they can continue to support causes they’ve cared about for years.

Charitable gift annuities have always been a trusted and popular planned gift option for ECHO supporters reaching the senior season of life. They care deeply about the work ECHO is doing to reduce hunger. However, at their age they are also balancing the desire to leave a legacy of charitable giving with the reality of needing steady income.

These new, higher rates, effective July 1, 2018, make it a smart time to establish a charitable gift annuity. Throughout your lifetime, you’ll enjoy the security of fixed payments which are now about .30 to .50 percent higher (depending on your age at the time of the gift) than previous rates.

More Benefits
In addition to undergirding ECHO’s work in the future while also generating stable income you can count on, there are other reasons to consider a charitable gift annuity.

• Payments to you are fixed when the charitable gift annuity is established. Unlike other investments such as CDs and stocks, what’s going on with the stock market or interest rates won’t impact the payout you’ll be receiving throughout your life.

• Using appreciated stock to fund your charitable gift annuity eliminates part of the capital gains tax.

• If you itemize when filing your tax return, you can claim a charitable deduction for a portion of the gift.

For more information, call ECHO’s Director of Advancement, Amy Wiggins, at (239) 567-3341.

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Blueberry

We can all agree that there is nothing quite like the flavor of a handful of freshly-picked blueberries or, even better, a fresh-baked blueberry pie right out of the oven. Want blueberry plants for yourself? Here are a few tips from our experts:

Site preparation is extremely important in establishing young plants. As with blueberries in the wild, domestic types require an acidic soil with high organic matter content. Infertile, sandy soils may necessitate the addition of composted manure and/or peat moss in the top few inches of the planting site. Blueberries are shallow rooted, drought sensitive, and respond favorably to mulch. A four-inch mulch layer (pine bark mulch is recommended) will reduce soil temperature, conserve moisture, suppress weeds, and contribute to the soil’s organic matter. Select a site with full sun.

Pruning is essential for a productive and healthy blueberry bush. During the first two years, we recommend removing flowers to direct the plant’s energy into vegetative growth rather than fruit production.

As plants mature, some fruit thinning may be necessary to adjust crop loads as well as enhance fruit size and earliness. A hard pruning should be performed immediately after harvest to stimulate a new flush of growth. The new leaf growth reduces the incidence of leaf disease from season to season and increases the plant’s vigor and productivity.

Whether you’re up for the blueberry challenge or not, we invite you to visit ECHO’s Global Nursery in North Fort Myers.

For questions about your plants or ECHO’s Global Nursery call (239) 543-3246.

For more information, call ECHO’s Director of Advancement, Amy Wiggins, at (239) 567-3341.
The Joy of Learning

Bernard Prommesse Sie, a trainer at ECHO West Africa, shares a joyful moment with a group as they learned a thermal composting method. This method will produce organic compost in 21 days!