Since 2006, Master Gardener Extension Volunteers (MGEVs) of Gwinnett County have worked within McDaniel Farm Park. This property is considered a passive park of 132 acres that Gwinnett County purchased from the Archie McDaniel family. The park boasts a 1930s farm homestead with many walking and bicycling trails running through the property. When the park opened, MGEVs began “Archie’s Vegetable Garden” to demonstrate various types of vegetables that were typically grown in the 1930s as a food source for the family, as well as to trial new vegetable varieties. The working vegetable demonstration garden generates produce that is donated to local food banks and to Annandale Village in Suwanee, a key donation site through the Plant-a-Row for the Hungry program. Impressively, the vegetable garden averages more than 1,000 pounds of produce each year.

MGEVs and Gwinnett County Extension work with the Gwinnett County Environmental and Heritage Center to provide historic programs and summer camps. Children learn about how farms were run, discover the source of their food, and watch Civil War re-enactments. The County Parks Department helps with the beautification of the park by replacing existing plants with plants appropriate to this time in history. The garden is supported by MGEVs’ hard work and grants provided by the Gwinnett County Master Gardener Association, Georgia Master Gardener Association (GMGA), and various donations from the volunteers.

MGEVs have honed their vegetable-growing knowledge and have learned more about the historic value of the site and the McDaniel family. They enjoy working on the site and answering questions as the public comes through to enjoy the park and gardens.

2015 Project Contributions:
Volunteer Hours: 764
MGEV work shifts: 40
Harvest Days and Work Days with the Public: 8

Special thanks to MGEVs working at McDaniel Farm Park!