



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Saint Joseph's College to Hold High Tunnel Construction

Workshop

A high tunnel construction workshop will be held at Saint Joseph's College to educate participants on how to properly build high tunnels, also known as "hoophouses." It will be a hands-on workshop where participants will learn from an expert how to build a high tunnel. The moveable, inexpensive structures offer many benefits to vegetable and fruit growers.

The construction workshop will be held July 30-31 from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm CDT on Monday and 8:00 am to 4:30 pm CDT on Tuesday. Breakfast and lunch will be provided on both

days, and dinner will be provided on Monday. The workshop will be held in Rensselaer, Indiana at Saint Joseph's College at the end of Daugherty Road, just west of campus off of Sparling Road, and led by Four Season Tools Agricultural Specialist Mike Bollinger. The cost of the workshop is \$35.

A high tunnel is a passive solar greenhouse that extends the growing season for warm and cool-season crops in both rural and urban settings. Their use offers the opportunity for higher yields, reduced weeds, and premium prices for out-of-season produce. The high tunnel that will be constructed at SJC is a moveable V-track system designed by Four Season Tools.

The construction workshop aligns with SJC's recently developed "Hoophouse Farming Eduventure," an innovative start-up business and educational collaboration in organic hoophouse farming that uses hoophouse technologies for four-season vegetable production. As one of three winners of the Ball Brothers Foundation Venture Fund competitive grant program, SJC received \$25,000 in seed funding for start-up initiatives to stimulate creativity and innovation and to foster competition and collaboration among the Indiana's 31 independent campuses.

The sponsors of the workshop include the Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Natural Resources

Conservation Service (NRCS) of Jasper and Newton Counties, Purdue Extension-Jasper County, the Jasper County Economic Development Organization, and SJC's Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) chapter. The latter two connect well with the intention of the Ball Brothers Foundation Venture Fund grant award, which aims to strengthen the local economy while providing fresh, locally grown food to the Rensselaer community. "I am thrilled to have the opportunity to bring together area farmers and students who share the goals of growing healthy food in all four seasons while strengthening their business operations. Building a high tunnel is the first step to achieving those goals."

For more information on the workshop or to reserve a space for the workshop, contact SJC Associate Professor of Education and Project Coordinator Dr. Lana Zimmer at lanaz@saintjoe.edu or 219.869.1926. Reservations can also be made for a limited number of rooms that will be available on campus for \$30 per night.

Saint Joseph's College, named a "character-building college" by the Templeton Foundation and a "best Midwestern college" by the Princeton Review, is a four-year, Catholic college offering 26 majors, 4 group majors, 32 minors, and 9 pre-professional programs, complemented by the nationally acclaimed Core Program. Founded and sponsored by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, SJC is located in

Rensselaer, Indiana, approximately 90 minutes from both Chicago and Indianapolis, on a park-like campus of 180 acres and has an enrollment of 1,100 students.

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