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**Gardening in a Bucket  
Monroe County Youth Learn Plant Care and Create Container Gardens**

What is one word you think of when you hear the word "garden"? How can you tell if you watered your plants enough? Participants discussed these questions and more at the Monroe County 4-H Virtual Garden in a Bucket workshop on May 18, 2020.

Participants created container gardens in fabric pots and could choose to plant herbs or flowers. You do not need a large plot of land to have a garden. A simple pot or container can create a happy home for plants. Herb gardeners filled their pots with basil and parsley, and flower gardeners made an arrangement of pink geraniums surrounded by bright orange marigolds.

Monroe County 4-H educators Jessica Reid and Lori Koenick led the workshop. Prior to the workshop, they prepped garden kits to be distributed to each participant who signed up. Garden kits contained a fabric pot, potting soil, craft sticks, fabric marker, and of course, plants, all held in a green 4-H five-gallon bucket.

Nine families participated in the virtual workshop, setting up planting stations around their homes from garages to basements to kitchens. Prior to planting, Reid and Koenick led a plant trivia game to facilitate a discussion on general plant needs and care.

Reid demonstrated how to plant a flower garden, while participants followed along and created their own gardens. Reid showed how to properly remove plants from containers for transplanting. Participants were not afraid to get their hands dirty, filling their pots with soil using a variety of implements from bright red shovels, to 4-H cups, to their own hands. Participants made sure to firm down their soil as they planted to provide plant support, and to fully fill their pots with soil.

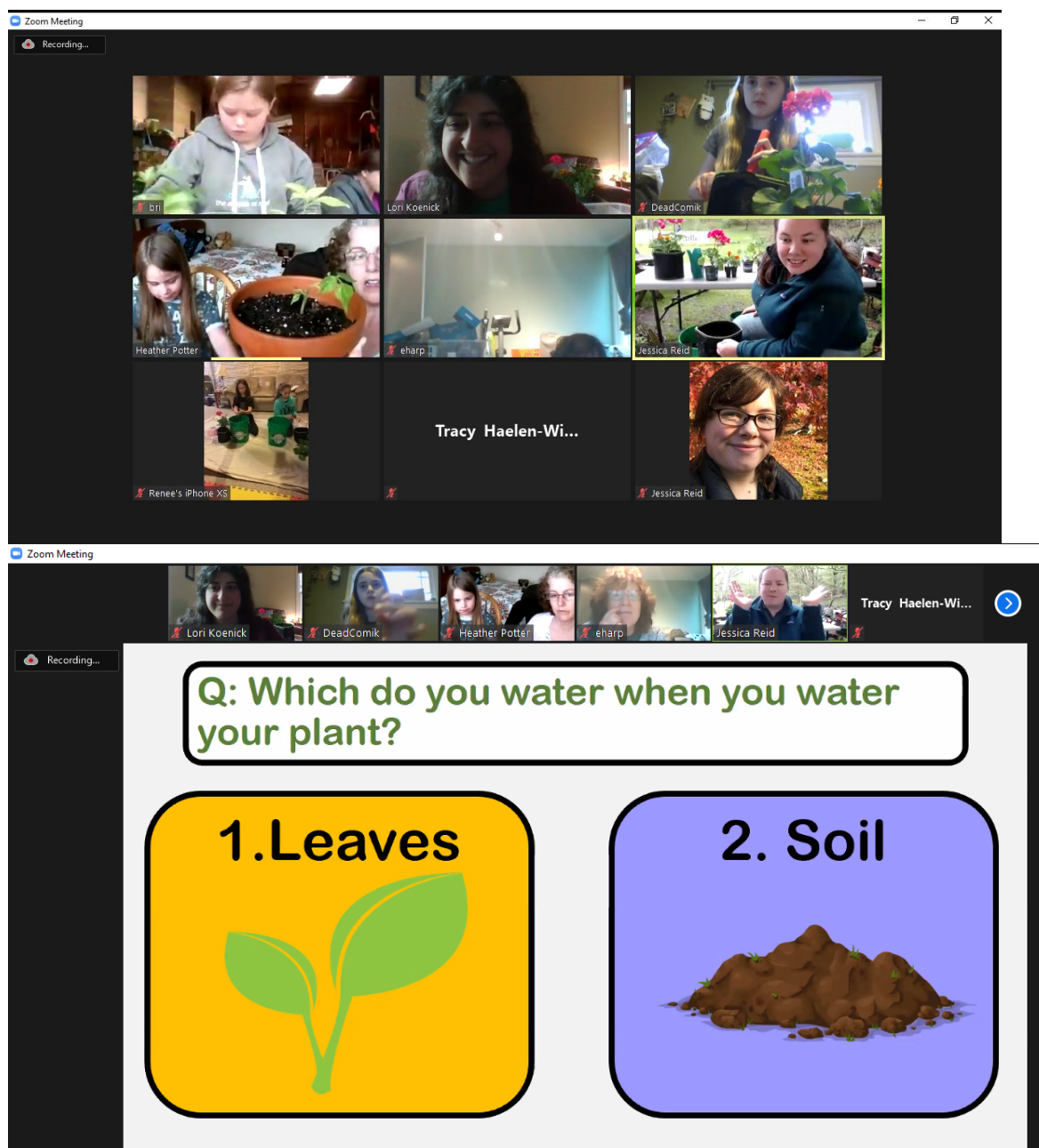
After everyone planted their gardens, there was general discussion on how to take care of them. For the herb gardeners, they will strive to harvest plants frequently to prevent flowering, and to maintain delicious herb taste and plant "bushiness." Flower gardeners learned how to deadhead, pick off dead flowers, to stimulate their plants to produce more flowers.

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Participants also learned about the benefits of planting in fabric pots, and the need to check garden soil frequently in warmer months to see if it needs water. Smiles were on everybody's faces as they held up their beautiful new gardens to share with the group.

The Monroe County 4-H Program is offered through Cornell Cooperative Extension to the youth of Monroe County. 4-H is a worldwide youth development program open to all youth ages 5 to 19, who want to have fun, learn new skills, and explore the world. In return, youth who participate in 4-H find a supportive environment and opportunities for hands-on or "experiential" learning about things that interest them. Learn more at <http://monroe.cce.cornell.edu/4-h-youth-development>.



Participants play plant trivia and create container gardens in virtual Monroe County 4-H Garden in a Bucket workshop. Photos by Lori Koenick. <###>