Research across all of Minnesota

Visitors are welcome at the University of Minnesota’s research sites. Public gardens and fields enable visitors to see a variety of U of M cultivars in different settings and to learn how to grow them. Located throughout the state at Becker, Cloquet, Crookston, Grand Rapids, Lamberton, Morris, Rosemount, and Waseca, the eight Research and Outreach Centers (ROCs) vary in climate and soil conditions. Other facilities that conduct research and outreach include the St. Paul campus, the Horticultural Research Center, and Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

Lamberton

The Southwest Research and Outreach Center at Lamberton is well known for its organic research with more than 40 years of organic crop and vegetable production. High tunnel greenhouses demonstrate extending the growing season for research and production. A 30-acre remnant prairie features ponds, a side slope, marshy fen, and access to the Cottonwood River. Ten new acres of native prairie were established in 1990.

On the northeast corner of the University’s St. Paul campus, a vibrant, welcoming garden is a landscape laboratory for College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences students majoring in environmental horticulture and a popular site for seminars, tours, and casual visitors. The campus has many acres devoted to research and display, including turf and ornamental grasses, a tree and shrub nursery, a native prairie, and attractive edible gardens.

St. Paul

Morris

At the West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris, diverse research programs range from swine production to organic dairy to renewable energy. Large horticultural display gardens mix research and education in a showcase that entices visitors to enjoy a scenic overlook, trellises, gazebo, water garden, and an interactive, informative children’s area. Eighty percent of the plants on display are in research trials, yet presented in an aesthetically pleasing way. Cold, dry, windswept winters and soil differences are factors in testing new flower and fruit varieties.

http://z.umn.edu/rocs
Grand Rapids

Much of the University’s outdoor cold hardiness research takes place at the North Central Research and Outreach Center, where research has been ongoing since 1896. Most notably, apples, strawberries, and blueberries are tested here, along with other fruits, vegetables, trees, shrubs, and flowers. Extremes of cold winters and short, humid summers present natural challenges at this northernmost—and coldest—horticultural research center in the continental United States. High tunnel greenhouses protect plants from snow and extend the growing season.

Rosemount

The 3,500 acres at the Rosemount Research and Outreach Center are dedicated to research in a wide range of agricultural crops and animals, as well as turfgrass, ornamental plants, and trees. This extensive site, where rural meets urban, invites the public to learn about food production.

Horticultural Research Center and Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum’s famous display gardens and natural woodlands are a year-round destination. Science and research underly the beauty there, but at the adjacent Horticultural Research Center, research is foremost. University horticulturists develop and study hardy landscape plants, high quality grapes, berries and tree fruits, ornamental grasses, and investigate methods for restoring wetland and prairie ecosystems. The Arboretum’s Spring Peeper Meadow is a major wetland restoration demonstration site.

Waseca

At the Southern Research and Outreach Center, agricultural research including drainage and water management, dairy calf production, alternative crops, and biomass renewable energy provides ongoing demonstrations of new cultivars and farming techniques. Research on vegetables with cancer preventive nutrients has been ongoing since the 1980s.

www.arboretum.umn.edu