

# WSU Mason County Extension

## Summary of Accomplishments, April 2014

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### Mission

Washington State University Mason County Extension connects the people of Mason County to the research and knowledge bases of the state's land grant research university providing solutions to local problems and stimulating local economies. Our county-based educators work with partners in your communities to provide educational programs and leverage the broad resources of a major university to resolve issues and create a positive future for the residents of Mason County.

### Program Updates

#### 4-H Youth Development Program

**Staff:** **Dan Teuteberg**, Regional Specialist - Assistant Professor  
**Kathy Fuller**, Program Coordinator.  
**Mollie Taylor**, AmeriCorps

**Mission:** 4-H Youth Development empowers youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults.

**Updates:** Public Presentation events were held on Friday, April 18 in Shelton and Saturday, April 19 in Belfair. In 4-H, idea sharing in a structured way is called a public presentation. As a 4-H member, you are expected to give public presentations as part of your total 4-H experience. Each time a member presents, they learn to speak more easily and effectively before groups so that their ideas become organized and readily understood into a successful presentation. Members learn important public speaking and communication skills. This year approximately 80 4-H youth participated in Public Presentation events.

4-H STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) continues to provide activities at the Shelton Timberland Library. On April 16 youth participated in Wacky Science Earth Day projects.

#### Food Safety & Food Preservation Program

**Staff:** **Lisa DeWall & R. Jeanne Rehwaldt**, Food Safety & Preservation Information Assistants

**Mission:** Provide resident's current up to date research based answers to their home canning questions to reduce risk of food borne illness.

**Updates:** WSU Food Safety and Preservation Information Assistants (*2 staff & 2 volunteers*) from Mason County took the 2014 Regional Training. This allows them to teach hands-on preservation classes. Pressure gauge testing is Monday from 10-12.

## Food \$ense Nutrition

**Staff:** **R. Jeanne Rehwaldt**, Program Coordinator  
**Diana Castro & Pamela Lyons**, Educators.  
**Michelle Lapp**, AmeriCorps

**Mission:** Providing outreach to youth and adults via direct education, environmental supports, and policy work to reduce childhood obesity and stretch food dollars for SNAP recipients.

**Updates:** Preparation of project summary and budget for SNAP Ed grant is nearing completion. Due date is May 9. State F\$ team and OSPI partnering on a Team Nutrition grant to develop Smarter Lunchroom Design in several counties. Mason County F\$ will pilot this program, if awarded, in three elementary schools. Rehired a part time educator for three months to help accomplish goals set out in contract but delayed due to delay in fund allocation from federal government.

## Water Resources Program

**Staff:** **Erica Bates & Cammy Mills**, Water Resources Associates

**Mission:** The Water Resources program helps members of our community make the best choices in caring for our local waters by providing research-based tools and information. We connect people with appropriate resources through collaboration with other extension programs, government agencies, businesses, schools, and other organizations

**Updates:** Planning is continuing for the May on Oakland Bay event which will be held on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 11 am-4pm at Flying Dog Farm. The free, family-friendly event will include farmers market booths, educational exhibits, a bird walk, tree planting, tribal storytelling, and live music. Planning also continues for the regional Do Some Good for the Hood and Puget Sound Starts Here months to support volunteer, education, and outreach opportunities.

Significant current partnerships include: Mason Conservation District, Mason County Public Health, Taylor Shellfish, Capitol Land Trust, Mason ECO Net, Puget Sound Partnership, Native Plant Salvage, Mason County PUD 3, Flying Dog Farm.

## Master Gardener Program

**Staff:** **R. Jeanne Rehwaldt**, Program Coordinator.  
**Michelle Lapp**, AmeriCorps

**Mission:** To provide relevant, research based, ecologically sound resources to meet the home horticultural needs of Mason County.

**Updates:** At Catalyst Park 17 community garden beds have been leased and are in the process of being planted. First educational workshop with community gardeners was held May 3rd. Cool season crops have been planted in the food bank garden. New decorative gate installed in children's garden and general clean up done. United Way grant for additional community garden beds - site visit conducted May 1.

The Plant Sale is May 9 & 10 at Kneeland Park, final organizational meeting has been held and plants and volunteers are ready for sale. 100th Anniversary of Extension will be featured during the sale on Friday from 11am - 1 pm.

## Small Farms Program

**Staff:** Erik Hagan, Program Coordinator

**Mission:** Work to build a socio-ecologically sustainable agricultural community through education, outreach and conservation programs.

**Updates:** Farm-to-School Initiative – Project development with key stakeholders and partners in Mason County to increase healthy food options in schools while enhancing the agricultural economy

Key Partnerships: Thurston Conservation District, Mason County Public Health Department, Squaxin Island Tribe, Mason General Hospital, CHOICE Alternative School, Taylor Shellfish, Capital Land Trust, Shelton and Belfair Farmers' Market

## Noxious Weed Program

**Staff:** Patricia Grover, Coordinator.  
Connor Cordray, Assistant

**Updates:** Completed grant proposal for FY2014 Title II funding with the Olympic National Forest in the amount of \$38,184.00. A total of \$52,977.60 is available for projects in Mason County. Initiated mailing of postcards to Mason County property owners who have documented occurrences of giant hogweed and poison hemlock on their property.

Three scripts associated with various Noxious Weed issues have now been prepared for the "Off the Land in Mason County" radio show on KMAS. Pat recorded a radio segment with Jeff Slakey for the Environmentally Sound radio show on Earth Day.

Preparing for participation at 2 local events during the month of May, the Matlock's Old Timers ' Historical Fair and the Master Gardener plant sale.

Cooperating agencies: Washington State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Washington counties. Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.