



# Mason County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

## April Accomplishments, 2016

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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.

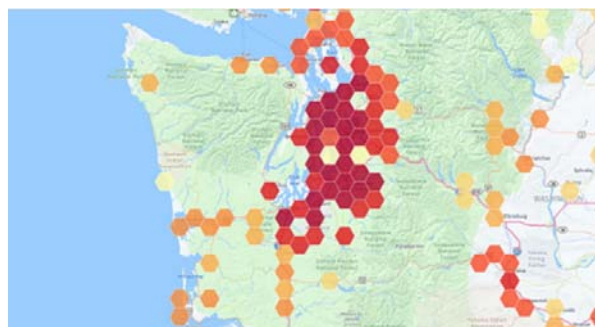
### Program Updates

#### Community & Economic Development

**Staff:** Justin G. Smith, PhD., County Director & Assistant Professor

**Mission:** Serve as leader in assisting Washington communities achieve their economic, environmental and social goals.

**Updates:** April was an exciting month for the CED in Mason County. Our faculty continue to work on developing the next generation data platforms that will support the community decision making, improve access to industry trends and insights, as well as open up opportunities for increased public engagement. Faculty launched the first iteration of the data platform based upon the RapidMiner Studio (<https://rapidminer.com/>) technology. We also successfully deployed a social media data mining application to enable trend analysis across time and geography. The test case focuses on Twitter and positive discussions related to Farmers Markets, Local Foods, and Gardening in Washington State (<http://tiny.cc/foodculture>). As these tools continue to be extended, our community will be able to access them to help identify hot spots for marketing shellfish products, identify regional markets for local food sales, locate and identify illegal dumpsites in the county, and even monitor citizen well-being.



## Noxious Weed Program

**Staff:** Patricia Grover, Coordinator

**Updates:** The Secure Rural Schools Act (SRS Act) has provided funding to the Mason County Noxious Weed Control Board since 2005. The Act was reauthorized by section 524 of P.L. 114-10 and signed into law by the President on April 16, 2015. On April 06, 2016, the Olympic Peninsula Resource Advisory Committee met at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center in Sequim, WA and once again recommended the Mason County Noxious Weed Control Board's proposal for funding. We look forward to continuing this key partnership.

## Food Safety & Food Preservation Program

**Staff:** Lisa DeWall, 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:** Check pressure gauges on Monday's from 10-12. Answer questions regarding Food Safety & Preservation.

## 4-H Youth Development Program

**Staff:** Dan Teuteberg, Regional Specialist-Assistant Professor  
Kathy Fuller, Program Coordinator

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

**Updates:**



Learning how to communicate your ideas and thoughts to other people effectively is a critical life skill. In 4-H, idea sharing in a structured way is called a public presentation. Approximately fifty Mason County 4-H members shared their knowledge and public speaking skills with community members at three different public presentation events during the last month. Members chose a suitable topic, prepared their presentation, and then presented to a team of judges. Community members and 4-H volunteers served as judges for these events. The topics that were presented included How to Make a Rabbit Hutch, Making Freezer Jam, Chicken Health, Making it in the Equine Business, Gardening, and many more. Members will also have an opportunity to share their public presentation at the 4-H Extravaganza and the State 4-H Fair in Puyallup.

## Master Gardener Program

**Staff:** R. Jeanne Rehwaldt, Program Coordinator

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

**Updates:**



WSU Master Gardener volunteers developed and delivered a 3-hour class to members of the Squaxin tribe about how to create and develop a community garden. Soil, composting, plant nutrients, irrigation and vegetable varieties were covered. This interactive class was attended by ten tribal members and was held at the tribal Community Kitchen facility. This partnership will continue as the garden is developed with consultation provided as needed.

## Food \$ense Nutrition

**Staff:** R. Jeanne Rehwaldt, Program Coordinator  
Pamela Lyons, Joshua Munro and Christine Ciacetta, Educators

**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:** After nearly 17 years teaching and building the Food \$ense nutrition program, Jeanne Rehwaldt is stepping away to lead a county wide Culture of Health movement as Executive Director of Mason Matters. Christine Ciacetta will be leading the program in the interim until the permanent replacement is named. Pamela Lyons and Joshua Munro are continuing to teach nutrition education classes for youth and adults in the county and will be adding work to improve environmental supports that lead to behavior change. The focus will be to reduce childhood obesity and increase physical activity for youth and adults.



Nutrition Educators - Christine, Pamela & Joshua



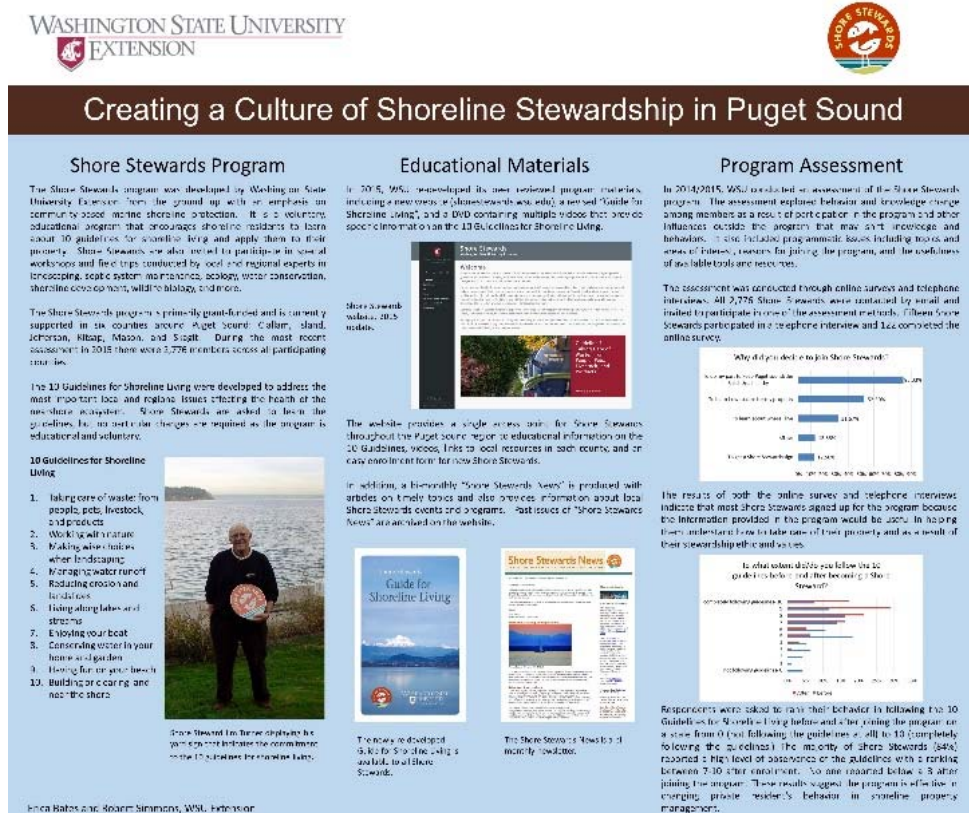
## Water Resources Program

**Staff:** Erica Bates, Water Resources Associate

**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:** The Water Resources Program participated in the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference April 13-15<sup>th</sup> in Vancouver, Canada. This biennial conference focuses on science and policy related to the protection and recovery of the Salish Sea. Over 1,200 people attended to learn from presentations on a broad range of topics including climate change and ocean acidification, fate and effects of pollutants, human wellbeing related to the Salish Sea, behavior change, shorelines, water quality, aquaculture, and food and food security. The conference is an immersion in current research and opportunity to make contacts with partners across the region.

The Water Resources Program presented on two of our projects here in Mason County. One was an oral presentation, "A Social Marketing Based Strategy for Shoreline Residential Water Quality Outreach" which highlighted work done through a recent grant-funded project in the Hood Canal 6 shellfish growing area as well as Pierce and Kitsap counties. The second was a poster, "Creating a Culture of Shoreline Stewardship in Puget Sound" that focused on the Shore Stewards program and included information on a recent assessment of the program. (Image of poster below.)



## Small Farms Program

**Staff:** **Mary DiMatteo**, Small Farms Educator and Outreach Specialist

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

**Updates:** The Small Farms Program at WSU Extension Mason County participated in the 2016 Small Farms Team Annual Retreat, held in Skagit County at the Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Building, Mount Vernon. The team discussed the revisioning of the Small Farms Team and decided upon the development of the Farm and Food Systems Team. This revision seeks to more holistically bond the various facets of the team including emphasis on food waste reduction, food access, nutritional planning, on-farm technical assistance, direct marketing, and addressing infrastructural requirements of industrial local food purchasing. The Small Farms Program at WSU Extension Mason County has also been working toward the creation of a single page in the 2016 Cascade Harvest Coalition Farm Guide. As one of the only counties not listed in the Farm Guide (Mason & GHC), WSU staff made a concerted effort to seek farms and farm based businesses in Mason County who are interested investing in making the one page Mason County advertisement a reality. So far, 21 businesses in Mason County are listed including The Farm at Water's Edge, Hunter Farms, Hama Hama Oyster Co., Walter Dacon Winery, Fungi Perfecti and The Harstine Island, Shelton, and Belfair Farmers' Markets.

Key Partnerships: Mason Conservation District, Mason County Public Health Department, Taylor Shellfish, Capital Land Trust, Shelton and Belfair Farmers' Market, KMAS News Radio, Mason PUD.

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.