



# Mason County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

## January 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:**



January 2016 marked the launch of the Community Innovation and Informatics Lab. This is a new CED program that works with communities to develop information technology that supports data

driven decision making, increases community engagement and technology innovation in rural communities. The CIIL is driving technology innovation through mobile application development, machine learning for intelligent business decisions, and interactive environments for community design. Our partners include The Evergreen State College and Mason County Public Health. In January, faculty began work to integrate new tools into the Insight Vision collective impacts platform. This will greatly increase data collection and provide near real-time updates for health outcomes monitoring in Mason County. Beta testing of the new mobile web app will commence late February. Faculty will also begin offering assistance to business seeking assistance in mobile technology deployment and data analytics services to increase their ROI.

## Noxious Weed Program

**Staff:** Patricia Grover, Coordinator  
Brayden Raber, Assistant

**Updates:** News from Spencer Lake and progress on the Integrated Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan (IAVMP). The equipment for surveys has been purchased and an initial meeting with residents is being planned. Residents recently reported an early January algae bloom and now have a framework for sharing information about the lake with the Facebook page, Spencer Lake Aquatic Invasive Species,

<https://www.facebook.com/SpencerLakeAquaticInvasiveSpecies/?ref=hl>.

Early January algae bloom on Spencer Lake



## 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:** 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:**



4-H members learning how to make dinner rolls

On Saturday, January 30 Mason County 4-H hosted 4-H Community Day. This free event was open to the public and was intended to provide 4-H opportunities to families in our community. The four-hour event provided opportunities for youth to explore hands-on activities such as robotics, bread making, rabbits, creative arts, and community service. Activities were led by trained adult volunteers and teen mentors. Approximately 50 community members were served.



Rabbit Workshop

## 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 Gardeners began the *Through the Garden Gate* gardening workshops in January. Scheduled every other Saturday, January through March, these workshops offer gardening tips and techniques for home gardeners. Topics were chosen from completed surveys conducted during OysterFest last October.

The class on January 9th featured advice about growing healthy soil from compost. An added bonus was how to build a worm bin and one lucky attendee won the completed worm bin as a door prize. January 23, we welcomed 42 gardeners to Memorial Hall eager to learn about ways to extend the gardening season. These techniques enable growers to harvest earlier in the spring and later into the fall. The next class will be February 6 and the topic is conserving water in your garden. Classes are from 9 am - Noon, cost is \$5 per person, payable at the door.

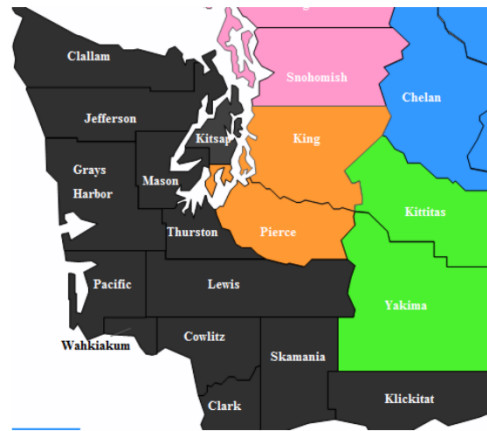


## Food \$ense Nutrition

**Staff:** R. Jeanne Rehwaldt, Program Coordinator  
Pamela Lyons, Joshua Munro and Christine Ciancetta, 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:** Clallam  
Jefferson  
Kitsap  
Grays Harbor  
Mason  
Thurston  
Pacific  
Lewis  
Wahkiakum  
Cowlitz  
Clark  
Skamania  
Klickitat



**Region 5**

Funding for FY 2017 SNAP Ed funding will be distributed via RFP with WA state being divided into 5 regions. Mason County falls into the largest region with 13 counties from Clark and Kittitas in the south up to Jefferson and Clallam in the north. Previously this grant was funded through two implementing agencies: WSU and DOH, this RFP opens up the funding to any interested

implementing agency, one per region. Collaboration will be key to ensure funding will be granted to continue the thriving nutrition education program in Mason County. Emphasis will be placed on Policy, Systems, and Environmental supports, with less direct education in the classrooms of our school partners. Once the RFP is released in February program managers will develop their plans for the year and showcase partnerships and strategies designed to increase behavior change to reduce childhood obesity and increase health outcomes.



## 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:** In January, the Water Resources Program received approval to revise and submit final Near Term Action (NTA) proposals in application for inclusion in the 2016 Puget Sound Action Agenda update.

WSU has submitted an NTA proposing to expand the Stormwater Stewards program throughout South Puget Sound. This program currently exists in Thurston County and is a capacity-building program in which capable, committed, and well trained citizen volunteers provide peer-to-peer technical assistance to other residents seeking opportunities to manage and treat polluted runoff on their home or small commercial sites through design and installation of low impact development techniques including rain gardens and permeable pavers.



Rain Garden outside of WSU Mason County Extension Office

WSU also partnered with Mason Conservation District to submit an NTA to collaborate on expanding both the Shore Stewards and Shore Friendly Mason programs in Hood Canal. The Shore Stewards program seeks to educate and engage shoreline property owners regarding home, onsite septic system, and landscape management activities that protect and improve shoreline function and water quality. The Shore Friendly Mason program goal is to reverse the trend of shoreline armoring and habitat degradation. This collaboration would allow both partners to work to improve water quality and habitat in Hood Canal.

Significant current partnerships include: Mason Conservation District, Mason County Public Health, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Puget Sound Partnership.

## 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:** Small Farms staff worked with local partners to investigate the potential for establishing a mushroom grower's cooperative in Mason County. This program would provide new sources of revenue for farmers interested in diversifying the production. Our staff will be working with the Mason Conservation District to update the Mason County Farm map. This will be an important addition to the county and one of many ways we can support food producers in the county.

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.