



Mason County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

September 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

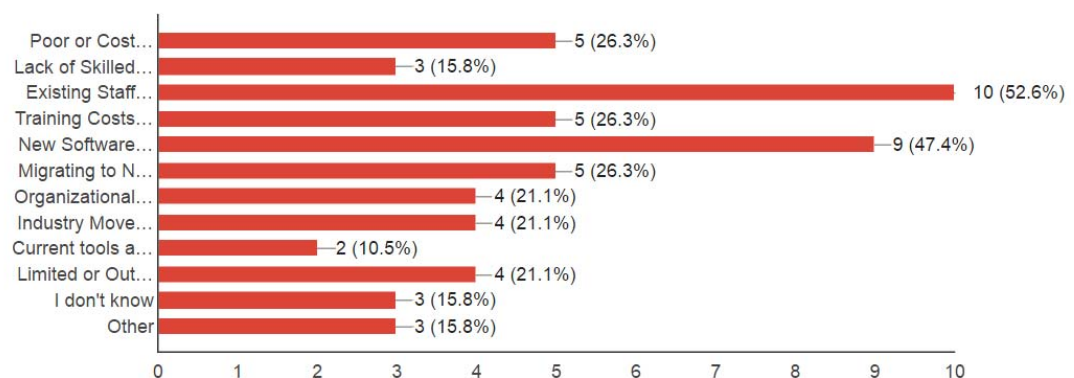
Community & Economic Development

Staff: **Justin G. Smith, PhD.**, County Director & Assistant Professor
Greg Schundler, CED Research Assistant

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

Updates: WSU Mason Extension CED launched the first series of IT & Big Data information sessions in Mason County. The sessions attracted participants from Mason, Grays Harbor and Thurston counties. Attendees arrived with a broad set of skills and needs related to big data and internet based research; discussion topics included social media marketing, using public data to tell stories, data mining and more.

Figure 1. Limitations to Effective IT Use in Mason



Based upon feedback from participants and other community partners, the Community Intelligence Lab (CIL) will continue to hold trainings and provide direct services to participants in Mason County's Microenterprise Assistance program with Enterprise for Equity. Open office IT & Data Science support will be provided every Tuesday from 5PM to 8PM @ Smoking Mo's in Shelton, WA.

Noxious Weed Program

Staff: Patricia Grover, Coordinator
Kendall Carmen, Assistant
Keith Reitz, Assistant

Updates: Mason County Noxious Weed Control Board staff were on the ground, and in the water, for much of September, treating knotweed infestations on 36 parcels within the county. Supplemental funding from the Washington State Department of Agriculture's knotweed program supported the targeted efforts in Finch, Sherwood and Coulter Creeks and in the North Bay area. This "Boots on the Ground" approach to noxious weed control resulted in multiple detections of new invaders including Policeman's helmet, a "Class B designate". This escaped ornamental is considered extremely invasive to moist, natural areas and was located in Sherwood Creek. Plant locations were inventoried and, in most cases, manually removed.



Policeman's helmet

In addition, as part of the Participating Agreement between Mason County and the Olympic National Forest, personnel completed monitoring requirements on nearly 25 acres of program treated federal lands.

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: The Washington State 4-H Fair was held September 2 – 25 in Puyallup. Mason County 4-H members qualified at local county qualifying events and earned the privilege to participate in this State 4-H event. Members exhibited and participated in many different departments including public speaking, animal contests, judging contests, photography, and still life.

Participation in the State 4-H Fair is the culmination of a year of learning, dedication, and responsibility for 4-H members. Approximately 30 Mason County 4-H youth exhibited their 4-H project work at the State 4-H Fair this year.



4-H member Austin Brower,
giving presentation at State 4-H Fair 2016.

Master Gardener Program

Staff: **Johanna Willingham**, Master Gardener Coordinator

Mission: To provide relevant university based research to meet the home and community horticultural needs of Mason County and to promote responsible environmental stewardship. Public education is the primary goal of Mason County WSU Master Gardener Program.

Updates: Thus far Master Gardeners have harvested 1530 pounds of produce from Catalyst Garden and distributed it to The Saint's Pantry Food Bank this year.

The 2017 Plant Sale preparations are underway as the Master Gardeners have begun grafting and potting native perennial plants to be sold at our annual fundraiser next May.

Bring your plant, insect, and weed samples and horticultural inquiries to the Master Gardener Clinic for identification on Monday's from 12-3 at the office or stop by the Master Gardener clinic at the Shelton Farmers Market through October on Saturday's from 9-1.

Food Sense Nutrition

Staff: **Christine Ciance**, Interim Program Coordinator
Pamela Bish and **Joshua Munro**, 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:



SNAP-Ed Nutrition Program successfully added the popular Germ City presentation and hands-on activity at Oysterfest Kids Day to the end of our 2016 activities. The presentation covers proper handwashing techniques and invites participants to apply "glow germ" to their hands. After washing hands, participants enter the darkened "Germ City" tent lit with black light and see if they were able to remove all "germs".

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 September, the Water Resources Program continued implementation of the Hood Canal Pollution Identification and Correction Outreach and Education program. The outreach team completed doorknocking at approximately 500 properties in Tahuya, Hoodport, and Union. At doorknocking, property owners were invited to participate in a site visit with a water quality advisor. During a site visit, the clean water advisor discussed best management practices including septic system operation and maintenance, pet waste practices, mud and runoff management, and shoreline buffers and native plants. Twenty-two site visits were completed during the summer field season. Work on this project will continue through the end of 2016.

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

Small Farms Program

Staff: Colin Stewart, Small Farms Education and Outreach Specialist
Greg Schundler, Small Farms Research Assistant

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

Updates: The Small Farms program continues to work on how to best support Mason County food and agricultural producers through databasing markets and assessing community needs. As the season changes and the rains start to fall, our region experiences growth of rain-loving specialty products such as mushrooms and berry plants. Keep your eyes open for an announcement for a luncheon in November catered to the general public and Mason County agricultural producers.

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.