



WSU EXTENSION  
**Thurston County**

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[extension.wsu.edu/thurston](http://extension.wsu.edu/thurston)

# WSU Thurston County Extension

## *Summary of Activities*



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
**EXTENSION**



# 2022



WSU EXTENSION

**Thurston County**

## WSU Thurston County Extension Leadership

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NATIVE PLANT  
SALVAGE 

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*Our efforts would not be possible without our program staff and numerous volunteers*



WSU EXTENSION

Thurston County

## Extension Programs: Organization Collaboration & Community Buy-In

10 Extension Educators positively impact Thurston County residents each year providing research-based information and educational programs that give people the knowledge to improve health and livelihood. Leveraging County support, WSU Extension bring in resources from grants, contracts, fees, fundraising, and the University to develop and deliver locally-relevant programs.

In 2022, Thurston County provided \$539,339 in support via the MOA, and \$1,050,741 from non-MOA sources (total \$1,590,080). WSU Thurston County Extension received \$584,403 from WSU, raised an additional \$466,338 in grants (total \$1,050,741), and facilitated \$839,361 in volunteer service contributions.

### Volunteer Support!

Trained, enthusiastic volunteers are an important part of WSU Extension programs. In 2022, WSU Thurston County Extension volunteers gave approximately 26,395 hours of service\*, which is equivalent to 12.5 full-time employees. At an estimated volunteer value or \$31.80 per hour\*\*, that service is worth \$839,361.

\*Not all volunteer hours have been reported to the WSU Volunteer Database.

\*\*Source: Independent Sector, April 2023



County  
Investment

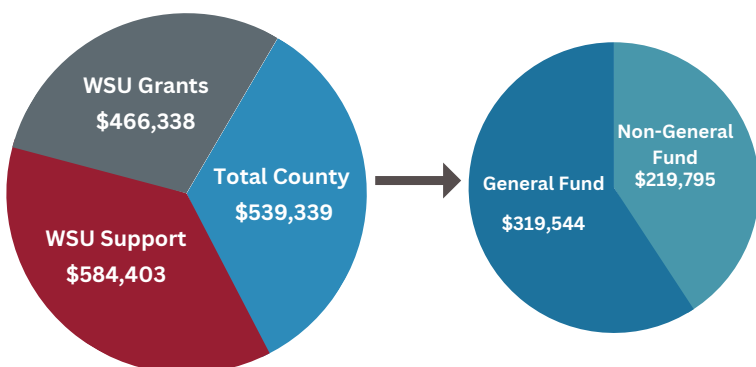
Leveraged

\$839,361  
Volunteers

\$539,339  
Thurston  
County

\$1,050,741  
WSU

### Thurston County-WSU Funding Overview 2022



\*\*Budgeted County funds include space use, IT, phones, waste reduction program staff, front office staff, M&O, reserves, and other.



# Friends of Thurston County Extension

Three foundations support the WSU Extension programs in Thurston County: 4-H youth Development Program, Master Gardener & Master Recycler Composter Program, and the Native Plant Salvage Project. Support is garnered through fundraising activities, accepting donations, membership fees, and other approaches.



**Thurston County 4-H Council** raises funds to enhance and expand 4-H Youth Development programs in Thurston County. The Council and Program Committees add value to the WSU Thurston County Extension program by providing grants for innovative programs, and subsidizing registration fees for camps, leadership conferences, volunteer leader training programs, and exchanges.

[extension.wsu.edu/4h/give-to-4-h](https://extension.wsu.edu/4h/give-to-4-h)



**The Master Gardener Foundation** of Thurston County, founded in 2005, encourages sustainable gardening and environmental stewardship practices through financial support for the WSU Thurston County Extension Master Gardener & Master Recycler Composter Programs. Major events sponsored by the Foundation include an annual Plant Sale on the third Saturday in May, a Bingo Night hosted by local gardening personality (prices are garden themed), and bi-monthly meetings with educational lectures which are open to the public.

[mgftc.org](https://mgftc.org)



**The Native Plant Salvage Foundation**, founded in 2000, promotes the use, preservation, knowledge, and appreciation of native plants in the landscape through financial support for the WSU Thurston County Native Plant Salvage Project. The primary program areas of the project include: Green Stormwater Infrastructures (GSI)/Low-Impact Development (LID), Shoreline Stewardship Education, Schools Programs, Sustainable Landscaping/Naturescaping, Plant Salvages, and Plant Identification.

[nativeplantsalvage.org](https://nativeplantsalvage.org)



# Master Gardener & Master Recycler Composter

Program Coordinator: Cori Carlton, Program Assistant: Jenni Post

## WSU Master Gardener Program & Master Recycler Composter Volunteer Programs of Thurston County

Volunteers are trained and certified as community educators to provide, professional, unbiased, research-based home gardening, composting, recycling and waste reduction information to the residents of Thurston County. COVID-19 safety procedures were still in place for most of 2022 (Jan.-Oct.) which did affect our traditional programming/outreach activities. We continued to adapt and found new ways to serve. The following successes were accomplished through a lot of hard work, problem solving, and Zoom meetings. While challenging at times, the volunteers prevailed and maintained a resilient spirit of service.

### 2022 Success Highlights

- Question/Answer Clinics transitioned to a hybrid format. We returned to some in-person events while continuing to run our virtual clinics. Based on lessons learned from 2021 we are still improving how we use this platform.
- Our food bank garden thrived, and most of the plant health was maintained at our demonstration gardens despite having minimal volunteer crews.
- We successfully completed our first hybrid (in-person and virtual) WSU Master Gardener new volunteer training. We completed Master Recycler Composter new volunteer training using an updated hybrid model we introduced in 2021.
- Created and implemented documents/videos to train volunteers how to use our new CERVIS and Give Pulse volunteer management systems.
- Volunteers on behalf of the Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County (MGFTC) executed multiple alternative fundraisers to meet our program operating needs.

### 2022 in Numbers:

- **29** WSU Master Gardener trainees completed new volunteer training. This was the first new volunteer training course since we had to stop in 2020. Trainees participated in weekly virtual and in-person classes and completed homework from January – June.
- **29** Master Recycler Composter trainees completed new volunteer training. Trainees participated in weekly virtual and in-person classes and completed homework from September – November.
- **195** Master Gardener and Master Recycler Composter volunteers gave over **17,899** hours of service in 2022.
- **169** question/answer clinics were held. From these clinics over **12,593** public inquiries for gardening, recycling, and composting information was recorded.
- **327** work parties were held to maintain demo garden, plant nursery and food bank garden operations.
- **78** virtual and in-person trainings were held. **3,241** people attended these trainings.
- A small group of very dedicated volunteers grew over **2,000** pounds of food at our Dirt Works Demonstration Garden. All food was donated to the Thurston Co. Food Bank.
- In addition to providing funding for two staff positions (1 FTE Program Manager, .5 FTE Program Assistant) Thurston County Solid Waste Department provided **\$6,346.47** worth of Master Recycler Composter program operating expenses.
- The Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County (MGFTC) raised **\$63,994.93** through multiple fundraisers to help cover program outreach, operational and garden expenses. The Foundation received **\$1,500** in new grants, **\$4,225** in sponsorships, and **\$7,327** donations in 2022. We also worked on projects related to **\$2,228** worth of 2020 - 2021 grants that were postponed due to the pandemic.



# SNAP-Ed

Program Coordinator: Amanda Leoni



The SNAP-Ed program helps youth and families make healthy choices within a limited budget and lead active lifestyles through improved nutrition, food preparation skills, gardening and physical activity.

## 2022 in Success Highlights:

In 2022 SNAP-Ed focused on working in the Garfield school garden offering hands on activities and learning opportunities for students and teachers, we offered cooking demos at farmer markets, provided nutrition classes for elementary school 5th graders and managed a grant for the Lewis County Food Bank Coalition. This year we made a huge emphasis on local food both in school gardens and at the farmers markets.

## 2022 in Numbers:

- Delivered **19** educational trainings in the community reaching over **185** youth and adult participants
- PSE (Policy, Systems, and Environmental) reach of over **3,500** new participants
- We supported **7** different farmers markets and **9** local food banks

## Major Outcomes:

- FNS, the USDA Food & Nutrition office toured Garfield Elementary to see our food pantry model and school gardening success.
- We managed the Farm to Food Pantry Grant for the Lewis County Food Bank Coalition. Through this grant we spent **\$19,277.46** on produce from small, local farmers who delivered the produce directly to the food banks involved in the coalition.
- Provided over **100** holiday food bags to families at Garfield Elementary before long school holiday breaks.

## SNAP-Ed Policy, Systems and Environmental Initiatives (PSE) included:

- Collaborating with the Olympia Food Coop for an ongoing food drive for the Garfield Elementary food pantry. Folks donated thousands of pantry staples to the food pantry via this food drive
- Offered cooking demos at several of the farmers markets in Thurston and Lewis County promoting the use of local fresh produce.
- Promoted the school garden and helped form the School Garden Network with other folks managing school gardens in Olympia.



# 4-H Youth Development

Program Coordinator: Emily Killeen, Program Assistant: Kris Shackley



The 2022 year marked a positive turning point for Thurston County 4-H. We celebrated the return of the showcase event of the year, the Thurston County Fair. Thurston County 4-H Clubs returned to meeting in-person. Four new 4-H club opportunities launched in 2022, including the Thurston County 4-H Unlimited Club (a multi-interest group in Olympia), Thurston County 4-H Shooting Sports Club (offering archery and shotgun), Yelm Nerd Herd (a multi-interest group), and Legacy 4-H (a Tenino livestock focused club). Explore 4-H virtual workshops continued to help families dive deeper into their interest areas and to reach those unable to attend face-to-face activities.

## 2022 in Numbers:

- 4-H Club Program - Twenty-two 4-H Clubs (4 new clubs)
- Youth members: **258**
- Adult volunteers (enrolled and trained): **67**
- Trained **13** new adult volunteers, including two new shooting sports volunteers.
- Number of Explore 4-H with WSU Extension virtual workshops conducted: **28**, Total number of volunteer hours contributed: **68**, Number of volunteers helping with virtual workshops: **16**
- **120** youth members participated in afterschool and in short-term, special interest programs
- **242** youth members participate in the 2022 Thurston County Fair
- Provided school enrichment programming to North Thurston High School Animal Science class (three presentations covering rabbits, cavies, and poultry).

## 2022 Success Highlights:

- Four new 4-H club opportunities launched in 2022, including the Thurston County 4-H Unlimited Club (a multi-interest group in Olympia), Thurston County 4-H Shooting Sports Club (offering archery and shotgun), Yelm Nerd Herd (a multi-interest group), and Legacy 4-H (a Tenino livestock focused club).
- Thurston County 4-H delivered **5** Healthy Living Programs during 2022 to 3 different locations. Tumwater School District received CHFFF (Choose Health: Food, Fun, and Fitness); Rochester Organization of Families (ROOF) received Learn, Grow, Eat, Go, and Winter Break Day Camp at fairgrounds received Kids in the Kitchen.
- Tumwater HOPES - Thurston County 4-H delivered an out-of-school time program that combined the evidence-based Positive Action prevention program with hands-on 4-H club project activities. Ten sessions were delivered to Tumwater School District elementary students. Six club sessions and 4-day camp days. 2022 Day Camp - **19** kids, 21-22 Club **10** kids.
- **28** Explore 4-H with WSU Extension virtual workshops offered (**283** Direct contacts)
- **94** percent of enrolled 4-H club members participated in the Thurston County Fair. For 4-H youth members the county fair is an opportunity to demonstrate learning and receive helpful feedback from fair judges on how to "Make the Best Better" for the next year. Make the Best Better is the 4-H motto. County fair provides hands-on, application of skills and time for reflection, so youth can apply what they have learned in the future.
- Thurston County 4-H was able to conduct successful rabbit and poultry fair experiences despite the challenges of Avian Influenza and Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHDV2).



# Commercial Agriculture

Program Coordinators: Stephen Bramwell, Annie Salafsky, Sierra Smith



The WSU Extension Ag program helps support **profitability and sustainability** of agriculture in Thurston County through, among other work:

1. Value-added production & marketing
2. Pasture, livestock, and habitat management
3. Agriculture workforce development and training

## Research & Education initiatives:

- Taught Whole Farm Planning class to 115 new, 15 vets, 28 low-income farmers getting started
- Taught Ag Entrepreneurship class to 34 new, 9 vets, and 5 low-income farmers getting started
- Grew SW WA Food Hub revenue to \$234,000
- Ran or co-ran 10 Grazing Association events
- Developed vegetable processing line at Olympia School District kitchen and processed 2,600 lbs of produce for farm-to-school programs

## Scholarship, Awards:

- **Journal Pub:** Evaluation of Unique Barley Varieties (Beverages Journal)
- **Extension Pub:** Case Study: Establishment of the SW WA Food Hub
- Awarded **\$130,000** over 2-yr to establish “Biodiverse Grasslands” demonstration site on Thurston County Violet Prairie acquisition
- Awarded **\$498,000** through USDA Local Food Promotion Program for SW WA Food Hub hires

## 2022 in Numbers:

### Funding

- Dept of Defense REPI: **\$82,333**
- USDA Research to Grassroots: **\$8,000**
- Western Coastal Restoration: **\$26,666**
- Administer APRA Ag Grants: **\$55,000**
- USDA Rural Business Development: **\$35,000**
- Jointly submitted a **\$2.5m** USDA land access grant for black farmer collective in Thurston County

### Trainings & Projects

- **23 workshops**, including pasture walks and webinars with the Grazing Association
- **20 evening classes** for Whole Farm Planning and Ag Entrepreneurship course (New Farmer Training)
- Classes attended by **1,332 participants** total

### Impact Highlights

- Distributed **\$498,000** in ARPA funding for Agriculture Recovery Grant (*glowing heartfelt thanks*)
- The SW WA Food Hub survived 2023 and grew by over 100%, supporting **20+ farmers**
- Worked with four school districts distributing **\$118k** in local food thru WSDA Farm-to-School grants
- Distributed **\$100k** in food to 4 community food aid organizations including Safe Place, Seniors Services for South Sound, and Tenino Food Bank

# Water Resources & Native Plant Salvage Project

Program Coordinator: Erica Guttman



## 2022 in Numbers:

### Funding

- Program coordinator secured **\$25,000** in contracts for hands-on education and implementation of ecological restoration projects & rain gardens.
- Native Plant Salvage Foundation fundraising efforts provided an additional **\$75,000** to support AmeriCorps members & all program expenses.

### Volunteer & Events

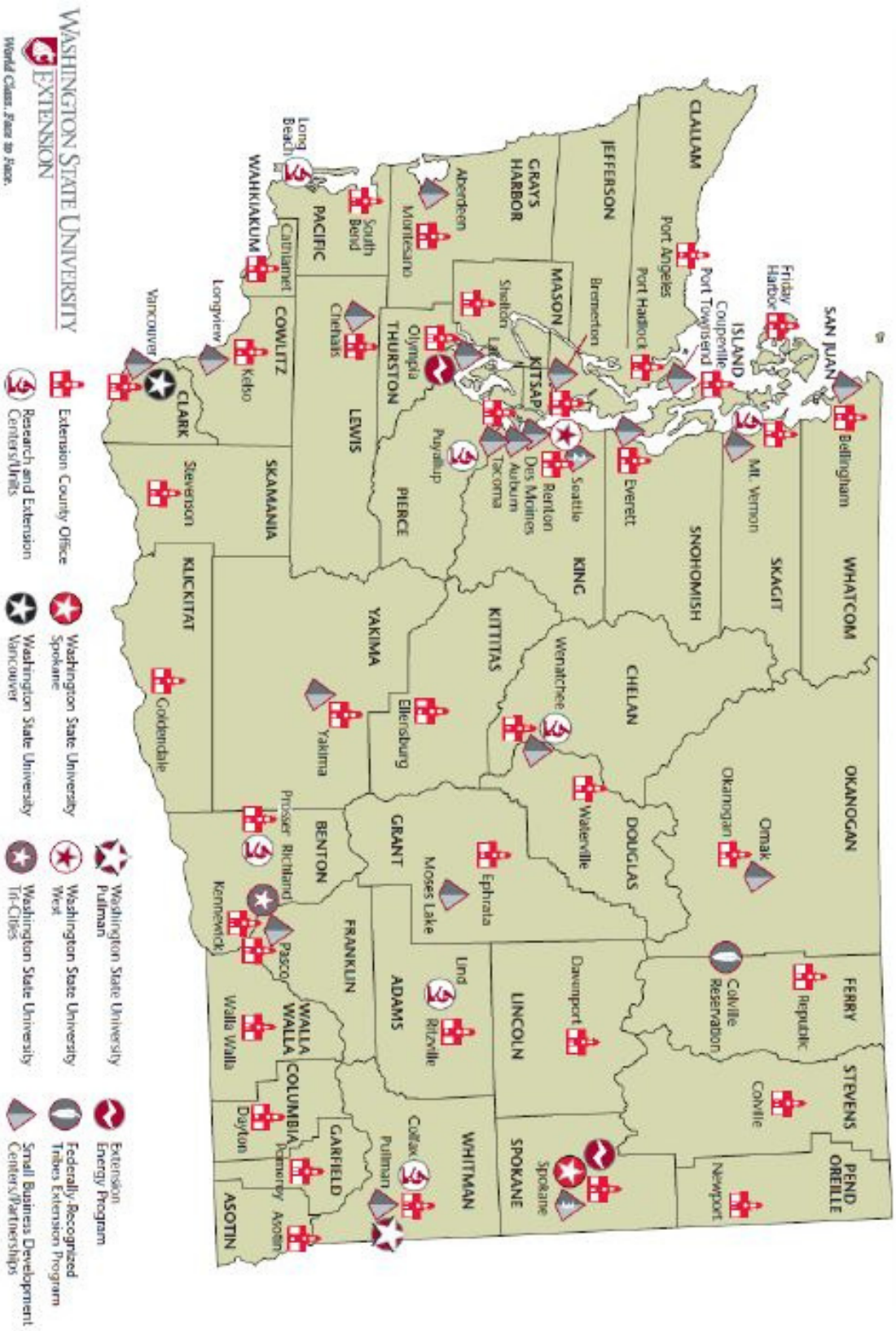
- Engaged **647 volunteers** in field events, ecological restoration, green-stormwater infrastructure, and plant stewardship & maintenance projects.
- Value: Volunteers served **4,996 group-project hours**, an in-kind contribution of almost **\$15,000**.
- Managed and presented **46 online & field-based workshops** for an additional **373 participants**, focused on using native & water-wise plants in landscapes to protect water resources and create habitat.
- Jointly managed with trained volunteers leaders **138 on-the-ground restoration, plant salvage & propagation, plant-distribution, and green-stormwater projects**.

The main aims of the Water Resources Program and Native Plant Salvage Project are to provide hands-on education to bring about on-the-ground changes that protect and conserve water resources and habitat from the prairies to the shores of Puget Sound. The program depends on extramural funding raised through contracts, grants, and fundraising by community volunteers. These are the main focus areas:

- **Stormwater Abatement & Groundwater Recharge:** By law, jurisdictions are required to educate their citizenry about stormwater pollution. Through workshops, volunteer trainings, demonstration projects, applied research, and technical assistance for onsite stormwater management techniques, our program supports the County's efforts under its NPDES permit and realizes on-the-ground changes that protect water resources and recharge aquifers.
- **Restoration of Native Ecosystems:** Through re-vegetation projects and water-wise landscaping with native plants recovered from development sites and provided to local jurisdictions, schools, community organizations and individuals, we show citizens how to make changes to their landscapes that add value and protect water.
- **Agricultural & Rural Hedgerows:** Through online & hands-on technical assistance, we help create narrow buffers to support landowner goals and protect water resources and habitat.



# Map of WSU Extension Locations





# The Smith-Lever Act of 1914

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 codified into federal law, and provided funding for, outreach endeavors at the Land-Grant Universities founded by the Morrill Act of 1862. The act was introduced by Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia and Representative A. F. Lever of South Carolina to expand the vocational, agricultural, and home demonstration programs in rural America. Specifically, the Act stated as its purpose, “In order to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture, uses of solar energy with respect to agriculture, home economics, and rural energy, and to encourage the application of the same, there may be continued or inaugurated in connection with the college or colleges in each State, Territory, or possession . . .”

The appropriation for Cooperative Extension as established by Smith-Lever was unique in that it set up a shared partnership among the Federal, State, and County levels of government. A formula funding mechanism was designed to ensure that there was support from each of the levels to help the fledgling system achieve stability and leverage resources. The funding would flow from Congress to the United States Department of Agriculture and then out to the Land-Grant Universities to be matched with monies from the states and counties receiving programs.

The original formula called federal funding to be divided in the following manner:

- 20% shared by all States in equal proportions;
- 40% shared in the proportion that the rural population of each bears to the total rural population of the several States as determined by the census;
- 40% shared in the proportion that the farm population of each bears to the total farm population of the several States as determined by the census.

The unique nature of the Smith-Lever Act brought a systemic process for funding the on-going Extension education work that had been started in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by educators such as Seaman A. Knapp, A. B. Graham, Jane McKimmon, and Booker T. Washington. The ideals espoused by these educators were transformative in the manner in which the Land-Grant Universities saw their role in their state. The move toward a model of cooperative extension education allowed for professional educators to be placed in local communities in order to improve lives.

Although the original Smith-Lever Act was far reaching, it was later amended to be more inclusive of schools beyond the original funding for 1862 Land Grant Institutions. In 1971, Rep. Frank E. Evans from Colorado presented a proposal to USDA that amended the funding formula and gave an appropriation in the amount of \$12.6 million directly to the 1890 Land-Grant Universities for research and Extension. Additionally, in 1994, there was a second revision to the language which added the Tribal Colleges in order to increase the system’s ability to serve Native American communities. Current information regarding the Act and its applications in contemporary society can be found on USDA’s website.