

# Know & Grow Workshops

By Jason Miller

May 22, 2009



## **Know & Grow workshops offer gardening guidance.**

No matter what your level of gardening prowess, sometimes you need a little more information than a book can provide.

Enter the Know & Grow workshops, a series of presentations provided by WSU Skagit County Extension Master Gardeners, in partnership with the WSU Northwestern Washington Research and Extension Center (NWREC) in Mount Vernon.

The workshops typically are held at the NWREC auditorium the third Tuesday of each month from March through November. They cover a range of gardening topics and often include a hands-on component. Past subjects include vegetable gardening, dealing with winter damage, and designing sustainable landscapes.

Interactivity is what these workshops are all about. Attendees can ask questions of the local experts and Master Gardeners who present each workshop, which combine the latest in horticultural research with practical gardening advice. Sometimes the topic under discussion allows everyone to get their hands dirty by stepping into the Discovery Garden next door to practice their newfound knowledge—it's the old "learn by doing" approach.

Most Know & Grow workshops are free of charge, but some come with a small fee or donation to help offset the cost of hosting these education opportunities, which were begun in 2006, after the completion of renovations and the new auditorium at NWREC. The WSU Master Gardener program felt the timing was right to build an educational partnership with scientists conducting research in areas of interest to home gardeners.

We choose our topics based on what you home gardeners might find interesting, while drawing on the expertise of our local speakers. The workshops are timed to coincide with seasonal gardening tasks, such as pruning in early spring and planting bulbs in the fall. The formula of timely advice and hands-on learning has proven successful so far: Our most successful workshop focused on winter tasks for fruit trees and was attended by more 130 people.

Keep your eyes peeled for more Know & Grow workshops during the coming months; our May workshop will spotlight drip irrigation (see sidebar). We'll announce more workshops in this column; you also can find notices of future workshops at our plant clinics and on the "Upcoming Gardening Events" page on our Web site at [www.skagit.wsu.edu/MG/upcoming\\_events.htm](http://www.skagit.wsu.edu/MG/upcoming_events.htm).

Whether you're a novice or a pro, there's bound to be something of value for you at a Know & Grow workshop. We hope to see you at one soon!

## **Drip Irrigation workshop**

- **What:** “Drip irrigation for the home gardener” — a WSU Know & Grow workshop, will demystify the techniques and types of this low-volume watering strategy, which helps to reduce weeds and plant diseases. Learn about soaker hoses and emitter systems, how to design your own system, and what supplies to buy, plus a hands-on assembly demonstration. Donations will be encouraged for this workshop, presented by WSU Skagit County Extension Master Gardeners, in partnership with the WSU Northwestern Washington Research and Extension Center.
- **When:** 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 26
- **Where:** WSU Northwestern Washington Research and Extension Center, 16650 State Route 536 (Memorial Highway), west of Mount Vernon
- **Speaker:** Jeff Thompson, Snohomish County Master Gardener
- **Learn more:** To suggest an idea or topic for a future WSU Know & Grow workshop, call 360-428-4270.