



Kitsap  
County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION



## MASTER GARDENERS 2019

### BY THE NUMBERS

- 276 certified WSU Kitsap Master Gardener volunteers
- 42 new Master Gardener volunteers trained
- 18,242 volunteer hours reported
- At national volunteer hourly rate: almost 1/2 a million dollars in labor savings for Kitsap County
- 10,708 one-on-one adult contacts
- Approximately 5800 people received individualized help from MGs with 2454 specific questions answered at plant clinics.
- 118 people took series of 5 Organic Vegetable Gardening classes taught by 4 MG volunteer educators
- 2093.5 pounds of produce donated to foodbanks
- 852 Youth learned and implemented gardening practices

### ISSUE

Puget Sound and Kitsap's rivers, lakes and aquifers provide water for agricultural, residential, and recreational use. Stormwater runoff is the leading cause of pollution in the Puget Sound region. Scientists have found 23 pesticides in Washington streams, many at levels that may damage salmon and other wildlife. Studies find increased health risk among families (especially pets and children) using lawn and garden pesticides, which are easy to track into the house, bringing toxins indoors. Sustainable gardening techniques such as composting, mulching to prevent erosion and reducing use of garden chemicals prevents polluted stormwater runoff. Protecting existing trees and adding new trees and native plants to our gardens has been proven to reduce stormwater runoff and provide myriad other environmental benefits.

### PURPOSE

Staff and volunteers educate the public about: organic gardening practices; youth gardening; water quality; landscaping septic systems; best landscape practices; plant selection and maintenance (right plant/right place); identification of plants, insects and weeds; IPM (Integrated Pest Management); environmental stewardship; native plants; and sustainability practices.

### RESPONSE

The WSU Master Gardener Program began in the Seattle area in 1973. The Kitsap Master Gardener Program began in 1975 and celebrated 40 years in 2015.

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our communities for friendly and unbiased advice on research-based gardening and environmental conservation. A survey of Master Gardener clients showed that 59% of those visiting the Master Gardener Diagnostic clinics were referred by friends or family and 100% of the survey participants said they would recommend Master Gardeners to a friend.





## QUOTES

"This is a great program. Even though I was already an Idaho MG, taking the classes were very valuable. Idaho could learn from WSU. The program is well organizes and very thorough! The areas where my knowledge is weak, i.e. plant ID in the PNW, I now have resources to continue my education on my own."

"I really appreciate all of the continuing education opportunities and enjoy the camaraderie and kindred spirit of the group as a whole. My only suggestion is to continue the good work you've done with supporting healthy sustainable gardening practice/ teachings because we can all learn more about how to do our part to promote healthy environments."

"I had no idea how much it would change my life. I feel blessed to have become part of the community. I cannot believe everything that we learned for the cost of what we paid - absolutely incredible."

"The speakers were all amazing and clearly passionate about their fields of study which made them extremely engaging to listen to. It was excellent and I would highly recommend it. The organization, presentation, and materials provided were truly exceptional. I feel like my course of study has just begun thanks to the wealth of materials provided."

## IMPACTS

- 42 citizens attended Kitsap Master Gardener Training, a 12 week program with online horticulture curriculum from WSU and 10 weeks of in class lectures on topics such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Gardening & Water Quality, and Plant Problem Diagnosis. Trainees are taught where to locate science-based resources with efficacious and safe pest control information to use at home and share with the public.
- 36 of those students went on to graduate as certified WSU Kitsap Master Gardeners. Certified Master Gardeners return to the trainings annually to earn required continuing education hours. Post-certification evaluation indicated that all of Master Gardener Trainees (100%, 25 of 25 respondents) began new environmentally conscious natural resource and environmental stewardship practices or increased these practices since becoming a Master Gardener.
- All of the Master Gardener Trainees increased their knowledge through the MG program and 100% (25 of 25) indicated that participating in the MG Program improved their quality of life.
- Kitsap Master Gardeners provided advice for homeowners at 196 regularly scheduled plant diagnostic clinics at 5 farmers market locations (Port Orchard, Bremerton, Poulsbo, Bainbridge Island, Kingston), our business office and other locations countywide. "Home Composting Made Easy", "Natural Yard Care" and "Kick the Weed and Feed Habit" booklets are popular publications Master Gardeners reference and distribute to the public.
- A total of 5771 people received individualized help from MG volunteers and 3128 specific garden related questions were answered for citizens.
- All the demonstration and community gardens MGs plan, manage and lovingly tend are maintained with organic methods to protect our water resources. Sustainable methods are on display at these gardens for citizens to adopt at home including composting demonstrations in partnership with Kitsap County Solid Waste.
- 114 individuals in total attended classes on the safe and proper use of pesticides from WSU and Master Gardeners.
- Kitsap Master Gardeners succeeded in coordinating 142 workshops, demonstrations and field days for adults and children that focused on stewardship of natural resources and environmental protection.