



Kitsap
County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



MASTER GARDENERS 2020

BY THE NUMBERS

- 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
- 4644 pounds of produce grown in our demonstration gardens were donated to local food banks
- 213 community members attended our fall Advance Training series, where we educated them on natural yard care practices, propagation, native plants and tips for extended the growing season
- 52 community members were educated in with our Sustainable Vegetable Gardening series of 12 zoom sessions
- Over 300 specific garden related questions were answered for citizens in our new virtual clinic

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.

RESPONSE

The WSU Master Gardener Program began in the Seattle area in 1973, spreading from most counties in Washington to the entire United States and abroad. The Kitsap Master Gardener Program began in 1975 and celebrated 45 years in 2020. The Master Gardener name is well known and respected in our communities for friendly and unbiased advice on research-based gardening and conservation information. A survey of Kitsap

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County Master Gardener clients showed that 42.9% 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. One person responded saying, “I like having someone to talk to that doesn’t have a vested interest in selling me something” and another: “Every time I’ve called, they’ve been very truthful with me.” This level of public trust allows Master Gardeners a unique and impactful role as community educators.



QUOTES



Thoroughly enjoyed all of our topics & presenters. I gathered so much information & now have a better understanding of many concepts, but know I STILL have much learn. Now I have a 'village' of like-minded Plant Warriors to seek guidance from!"



Better than expected. I was expecting a very good course in general gardening. However it is the complete foundation to understand all gardening and pursue any of the aspects of it."



Thank you to Hari and Gayle for all of their creativity, dedication, and persistence in figuring out how to keep our class learning when so many things shutdown due to COVID-19. I greatly appreciate it! You are truly impressive!"



This is an outstanding series of classes. I was very impressed with the level of knowledge and enthusiasm that the instructors had about subjects they shared."

IMPACTS

- 32 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.
- 29 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% indicated that participating in the MG Program improved their quality of life.
- Kitsap Master Gardeners provide advice for homeowners at regularly scheduled plant diagnostic clinics at 5 farmers market locations (Port Orchard, Bremerton, Poulsbo, Bainbridge Island, Silverdale), 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. In 2020, due to COVID 19, we pivoted to virtual and email clinics as well as zoom chats.
- 83 individuals in total attended classes on the safe and proper use of pesticides from WSU and Master Gardeners.

