



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
Kitsap County



MASTER GARDENERS 2022

BY THE NUMBERS

- 188 certified WSU Kitsap Master Gardener volunteers
- 34 new Master Gardener volunteers trained
- 12,496 volunteer hours reported
- At national volunteer hourly rate: \$374,255.20 dollars in labor savings for Kitsap County
- Over 2000 people received individualized help from MGs with 1,440 specific questions answered at plant clinics.
- 102 tickets sold for 12 Organic Vegetable Gardening classes taught by 5 MG volunteer educators
- 2838 pounds of produce donated to foodbanks
- 382 Youth learned and implemented gardening practices
- Over 250 individuals attended 3 Septic webinars
- 113 landscape professionals attended 3 Drainage webinars
- A majority of 2022 MG trainees surveyed (76%) reported saving money as a result of knowledge gained
- Helped 331 clients via zoom or other virtual means

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. The Kitsap Master Gardener Program began in 1975 and celebrated 40 years in 2015. The Master Gardener name is well known and respected in our communities for friendly and unbiased advice on research-based gardening and environmental conservation. A survey of Pierce 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.

Over 90% of 2022 customers at Kitsap Master Gardener plant clinics said they learned something helpful with 82% saying they plan to make changes in their gardening after talking with a Master Gardener.



QUOTES

COMMENTS FROM MASTER GARDENER TRAINEES:

"I found all of the training valuable and engaging."

"I felt that the demonstration garden work at Blueberry was especially meaningful for me since I have no experience growing vegetables."

"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 quality of the training and expertise of the instructors is amazing. I am very impressed with the program overall and am glad to have taken the classes and become a part of the program."

"I loved my experience in the Kitsap MG Program. I made some wonderful new friends and cannot wait for next growing season to begin!"

"I had no idea how much it would change my life. I feel blessed to have become part of the community."

"I will definitely deal with pesticides differently, if I use them at all."

"This program is very well organized and provides many diverse opportunities to participate in promoting gardening practices in the community."

IMPACTS

34 citizens attended Kitsap Master Gardener Training, a 13 week program with online horticulture curriculum from WSU and 12 weeks of in class lectures on topics such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Soil Science, Natural Yard Care, 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. 32 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%, 26 of 26 respondents) learned techniques and concepts that have changed the way they live, garden, or think. All of the Master Gardener Trainees increased their knowledge through the MG program and 100% (26 of 26) indicated that participating in the MG Program improved their quality of life.

Kitsap Master Gardeners provided advice for homeowners at 219 regularly scheduled plant diagnostic clinics at 4 locations (Port Orchard Farmer's Market, Bremerton Farmer's Market, Poulsbo Farmer's Market and Library, Bainbridge Island Library), 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. Over 2000 people received individualized help from MG volunteers and 1548 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. 52 individuals in total attended classes on the safe and proper use of pesticides from WSU and Master Gardeners. Kitsap Master Gardeners succeeded in coordinating 66 workshops, demonstrations and field days for adults and children that focused on stewardship of natural resources and environmental protection where 1,737 individuals attended.



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