

Illinois Master Gardener IMAGINE

INFORMATION ♦ NEWS ♦ EDUCATION



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COORDINATORS COMMENTS

Congratulations to all Master Gardeners and Extension staff for another outstanding year for the Master Gardener program! Thank you for all the time and talent you gave to educating Illinois citizens and youth about good gardening practices! Please share your accomplishments with friends and family, local and state stakeholders and partners.

Statistics for 2014

3,200 volunteers

2014 Volunteer hours= 198,474 (equivalent of 95 full time staff)

2014 Continuing education hours= 40,084

Value of a volunteer hour in Illinois= \$24.08 per hour as specified by the Points of Light & Independent Sector

Total Value of 2014 MG hours to Illinois citizens= \$4.78 million

Volunteer Hours by Category of Work:

Gardens= 100,139 Hort Special Events= 24,034 Information Service=34,744

Marketing Extension= 2585 Non-event Program support= 14,028

Other Extension Support= 4502 Speakers Bureau= 4317

Technical Hort Support= 6674 Therapeutic Hort= 5685

Website= 112 Youth Gardening =230

Contacts: Adult face-to-face= 87,134

Adult non face-to-face= 29,455

Youth= 77,274

Total Contacts= 193,863

Training for 2014: 560 new trainees

A few reminders and updates.....

Pesticide Recommendations- Master Gardeners should only give out pesticide recommendation to home gardeners. Questions from commercial or municipal clients should be referred to an educator. *Pest Management for the Home Landscape* should be your main source to provide pesticide recommendations. Two additional fact sheets- Invasive Plants and Emerald Ash Borer fact sheet are being added as appropriate sources of pesticide recommendations. They can be found on the Master Gardener State website under 'U of I Hort links.' Publications are likely to be added or deleted in the future based on recommendations of the Extension Horticulture team. The *Home, Yard, and Garden Pest Newsletter* is not a source for pesticide recommendations as it is primarily written for professional landscapers, not homeowners. Many of the pesticides recommended in that newsletter, particularly the brand names, are not sold to homeowners. However, the newsletter is a great source of information for Master Gardeners on current diseases, insects and weeds and when to expect them in your area.

Master Gardener state website: The state website has undergone some minor updates to make it more user friendly. If you have not had a chance to check it out- please do so!

TV shows for MG continuing education: The state advisory committee voted last year that TV shows such as PBS or HGTV will not count as continuing education credit.

Monica David, University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener Coordinator

WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME FOUND IN FOUR ADDITIONAL IL. COUNTIES

White-nose syndrome, a fungal disease that has killed millions of bats in North America has been found in four new Illinois counties. Tests conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin found five bats submitted from Union, Saline, Johnson and Jackson Counties were positive for the disease. These are the first confirmed records in these counties. The disease was first discovered in Illinois in 2013 in Hardin, LaSalle, Monroe and Pope Counties.

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is not known to affect people, pets or livestock, but is harmful or lethal to hibernating bats, killing 90% or more of some species of bats in caves where the fungus has persisted for a year or longer, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

WNS is known to be transmitted primarily from bat to bat, but spores of *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, the non-native fungus that causes white-nose syndrome, may be unintentionally carried between caves and abandoned mines by people on their clothing, footwear and caving gear. The name of the diseases refers to the white fungal growth found on the noses of infected bats. To protect hibernating bats, including threatened and endangered species, all Illinois Department of Natural Resources-owned or managed caves have been closed to the public since 2010. In addition, within the Shawnee National Forest, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, caves have been closed since 2009.

White-nose syndrome was first detected in New York state in 2006 and has killed more than 5.7 million cave-dwelling bats in the eastern half of North America. Bats with WNS have been confirmed in 25 states and five Canadian provinces. White-nose syndrome monitoring in Illinois is done in collaboration of the University of Illinois Prairies Research Institute, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Bats play an important role in the environment, with individual bats preying on thousands of night-flying insects daily. Bats provide invaluable insect pest control.

For more information, visit www.whitenosesyndrome.org

Written by Chris Evans, Coordinator of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan-Invasive Species Campaign

2015 INTERNATIONAL MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE

Join Master Gardeners from around the U. S. and Canada at the International Conference to be held September 22-25 at the Mid-America Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

The conference will feature pre, post and conference tours, a vendor trade show, several excellent keynote speakers and lots of class sessions.

The conference tracts include:

Midwest Flavor (prairie plants, local foods)

Horizons (technology, QR codes, trends)

From the Ground Up (composting, propagation, grafting)

Professional Development (program management, volunteer retention, conflict resolution)

Design (floral, landscape, container)

Working with Community (youth, elderly)

Registration is now open at <http://mastergardener.unl.edu/imgc2015>

Standard registration (May 1 to June 30) is \$385

Late registration (July 1 to August 31) \$440

Single day registration is also available.

Rooms are being held at Harrahs in Council Bluffs and at the Embassy Suites Omaha.

IMPORTANT DATES

June 12: Garden Walk, Noon to 4 pm. Tickets are \$10 per person. Sponsored by the Vermilion County Master Gardeners. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cfiv/>

June 14: Garden Walk, 2 to 6 pm. \$10 in advance; \$12 day of the event. Six unique gardens in Decatur and Forsyth. Sponsored by the Macon County Master Gardeners. 217-877-6042.

June 20: Garden Walk, 9 am to 4 pm. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$12 day of the event. Sponsored by the Champaign County Master Gardeners. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/units/event.cfm?EventID=68563&UnitID=480>

July 11: Garden Walk, 9 am to 4 pm. \$12 until July 3, then \$17. The walk starts at the McHenry County College- Master Gardener Demonstration Garden. Sponsored by the McHenry County Master Gardeners and McHenry County College. 815-455-8588 or visit www.mchenry.edu/gardenwalk

THE FIRST NATIONAL UNIFYING MISSION STATEMENT AND PROGRAM STANDARDS FOR EXTENSION MASTER GARDENERS

Started in 1973, by 1996 the Extension Master Gardener (EMG) program had been independently established in all 50 states. It was not until 2006 that an Extension Master Gardener National Committee was formed to facilitate cooperation, communication, and collaboration among EMG programs. In response to requests from EMG coordinators, a task force was appointed to develop nationally relevant resources and a set of national program standards to support and guide EMG Programs. Here we report on the development and adoption of national program standards and a unifying mission statement for EMG Programs in the United States. The endurance and expansion of the EMG model are a testament to the program's impact and success. However, the independent adoption of the model by individual states, territories and regions has occurred in the absence of a unifying mission or set of program standards. At the 2012 National EMG Coordinators conference held in Spokane WA, attendees voiced strong support for the formation of a task force that would develop common resources for staff as well as national program standards for EMG programs. The following proposed mission and standards were accepted by the EMG National Committee in January 2014.



Our National Mission- Extension Master Gardener programs educate people, engaging them in learning to use unbiased, research-based horticulture and gardening practices through a network of trained volunteers directed and supported by land-grant university faculty and staff.

Our National Standards- Extension Master Gardener programs are networks of land-grant university-trained volunteers, distinguished by the standards listed below. To achieve greater consistency in program management and the volunteer experience across the Extension system nationally, state Extension Master Gardener programs will strive to meet these standards and ensure they are reflected in the statewide program.

Program Structure and Expectation Standards

- Has an established statewide organizational system
- Establishes state program goals that align to achieve the EMG program mission
- Engages in Extension-approved projects/programs designed to educate the public about horticulture & gardening
- Is accountable to state Extension leadership and local stakeholders
- Shows documented educational impact in local communities that demonstrates behavior change and public value
- Follows the Equal Opportunity Guidelines for their state and/or university

Volunteer Management and Preparedness Standards

- Uses recognized volunteer management practices
- Incorporates a system for volunteer leadership and development
- Uses an established state training curriculum (a suggested core curriculum includes Botany, Physiology, Soils, Basic Pathology, Entomology, Weeds, IPM, Vegetables, Fruits, Turf, Woody Ornamentals, Herbaceous Ornamentals, Composting, Diagnostics and Troubleshooting, Planting and Maintenance, Introduction to Extension Master Gardener Program, and Record Keeping and Reporting)
- Requires a measurement of volunteer competency following completion of state training program
- Requires volunteer service hours; 40-hour volunteer service minimum in the initial training year and 20-hour volunteer service minimum in subsequent years
- Requires annual continuing education and professional development hours; 10 hours minimum annually in years following initial training
- Uses an annual recertification criteria and process

EMG programs will not be demoted or penalized if local programs do not meet these minimum standards. Instead the standards set a bar against which EMG program could judge their performance or which they could work towards. The new mission and standards are meant to foster a national sense of purpose across EMG programs in the U.S.

Reprinted from Journal of Extension, February 2015, <http://www.joe.org/joe/2015february/iw1.php>

HISTORY OF MASTER GARDENER PROGRAMS IN THE U.S. AND BEYOND

<u>State, Territory or Country</u>	<u>Year Program Started</u>
Washington	1973
Nevada(1), Ohio(2)	1974
Colorado, Illinois	1975
Idaho, Nebraska, Oregon	1976
Minnesota, New York, Rhode Island, Wisconsin	1977
Alaska, Connecticut, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Oklahoma	1978
Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Texas, North Carolina, Virginia	1979
Arizona, California, Utah(3)	1980
Alabama, Kansas, New Mexico, South Carolina	1981
Hawaii, Maine, North Dakota(4), Pennsylvania	1982
Missouri	1983
New Jersey, Wyoming, Massachusetts, Ontario	1984
South Dakota, Tennessee	1985
Delaware	1986
Arkansas	1988
Kentucky (5), Mississippi, Ohio(2), Vermont	1991
Nevada(1)	1992
New Hampshire, West Virginia	1993
North Dakota(4)	1996
Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Newfoundland	2007
Manitoba, British Columbia	2010
Alberta	2011
South Korea	2012

(1) Nevadas program was launched in 1974 in the northern part of the state and in 1992 in the southern part of the state.

(2) Ohio's program started in 1974, disbanded in 1976 and was relaunched in 1991.

(3) Utah's program started sometime in the 1980s-specific date not known.

(4) N. Dakota stated in 1982, disbanded in 1988, re-launched in 1996.

(5) Kentucky's program began in early 1990s-specific date not known.

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2014 MINI GRANT PROJECT SUMMARIES

COMMUNITY GARDENS- MCHENRY COUNTY

The Community/Pantry Gardens of McHenry County revolve around 2 main sites (Harvard and Woodstock) and also include smaller sites in various parts of the county.



The primary goal of these gardens are to provide fresh produce for our local food pantries, by partnering with other groups and organizations within the county. Past partners are: Harvard Lions Club, City of Harvard, Harvard HS FFA, Brook Farm, Harvard Rotary, Alten Farms, Inc., Pihl Farms, Harms Garden, Woodstock Garden Club, Bull Valley Garden Club, Kishwaukee Valley Garden Club, McHenry Co Farm Bureau Women, Crystal Lake 4H Clovers, Woodstock Wannabees (4H), Woodstock Noon Rotary, St. Ann's Lutheran Church, and Midwest Organics. These organizations primarily provide manual labor, however, some provide plants, some provide space for raising seedlings, some provide the land the gardens are located on, and some provide compost. The goals of applying for this mini grant were to raise funds for expanding into new areas, purchasing planting materials and seed, developing brochures, and adding an educational component that could be used on site.



The educational goals of these projects are to teach current partner organizations and potential groups the basics of vegetable gardening using a more formal approach, and to involve the University of Illinois Extension's SNAP Ed

staff in the process. This was done by developing a series of stand alone workshops that could be done on-site, geared to adults. Another set of lesson plans were developed that were geared toward youth (specifically, the Brown Bear Pre-School program in Harvard. There was a Parent Night held at the Harvard Library (adjacent to the Harvard garden), which was set up with the SNAP Educator, so the Brown Bear kids could show their parents what they had been doing in the garden. There were over 30 parents in attendance. Garden totals for the season were: Woodstock 2198 lbs of produce, and Harvard 5959 lbs.

2014 MINI GRANT PROJECT SUMMARIES

THE STEPHENSON HOUSE- MADISON COUNTY

The mini-grant helped improve the signage at our Master Gardener site. The objective was to have three large signs created which would identify three of our gardens: Pleasure Garden (a formal garden with heirloom perennials), the Shade Garden (with heirloom and Illinois native plants of the early 19th Century), and the Prairie Garden (with flowers and bushes native to Illinois in the 1820s). We also put metal markers for the vegetable and herb plants which would identify the common name of the plant and the particular cultivar.



Hundreds of youth and adults visit the gardens annually. Docent volunteers lead tours at the house and garden throughout the year, and they do not help with the garden area. The improved signage allowed the docent volunteers to better inform the public on plant names. Feedback from the docents and the public about the improved signage is very positive.

PLANT-A-ROW GARDEN- ROCK RIVER VALLEY PANTRY – WINNEBAGO COUNTY



The Plant-A-Row garden at the Rock River Valley Pantry, funded in part by a State Master Gardener Mini-Grant, serves the clients of the pantry. It is a bright and productive spot located in a somber area of Rockford. The pantry building itself is freshly painted with rose bushes in the front, from the previous occupant, and some perennial flowers. Surrounding the pantry are vacant lots and empty buildings mixed in with some small industry.

The garden was beginning its third year when the 2014 mini-grant, for which we are most grateful, helped us add three more raised beds, add trellises and meet our operating costs for the year. As the garden has grown, it has given us more and more opportunity to help pantry clients by providing fresh produce and by sharing our knowledge with those who visit the garden.

The range of client experience with gardening is wide. Some have never seen fresh produce growing. They enter with a look of pleasure on their faces and it is music to our ears to hear folks comment as they read the signs, “Look, here’s what eggplant looks like!” Or, “I didn’t know okra grew like that!” And others, more experienced, recall cherished memories of childhood gardening alongside a parent or grandparent. Sadly, some are reminded of a better time when they had their own home and their own garden. We listen as they tell us about their gardening experiences. Some clients give us advice on gardening to which we pay careful attention, mindful that many practices from decades ago were based on sound experience. We become gardening buddies, if only briefly.



Low income families simply cannot afford a healthful diet and so they are grateful to leave with fresh produce; this garden enables us to help the pantry clients eat better, at least for a meal or two. And we are fulfilling the teaching goal of the Master Gardener program with each client with whom we speak.

Submitted by Barbara Flores, Master Gardener and Pantry Garden Coordinator

THE COMMERCIAL GREENHOUSE- A BOOK REVIEW

The Commercial Greenhouse by James W. Boodley and Steven E Newman, 3rd edition, is a comprehensive, beautifully illustrated horticulture book with in-depth explanations of the industry. Almost 800 pages in length, and in full color, it covers a broad array of topics beyond what the title suggests.

The introduction explores the scope of the industry and its development. Most gardeners know that weather (i.e. zone) is a crucial factor in what can be grown successfully and where. For instance, large quantities of bulbs are grown in the Pacific Northwest, in the states of Washington, Oregon and northern California. Cool summers and mild winters produce the ideal environment for iris, lily and narcissus bulbs. Although Illinois plays a pivotal role in the bulb industry and ranks seventh in the nation for sales of potted spring bulbs, it is the state of California that leads the country in overall agriculture production.

Of course, ideal conditions do not prevail every place, so it is greenhouses or similar structures that provide the growing space for crop production. A section of *The Commercial Greenhouse* is devoted to types of greenhouses, including extensive construction information on framing and glazing materials, heating systems for glass houses, foundations, piping for hot water and steam heated greenhouses. Another section addresses plant growth, explaining elementary concepts of photosynthesis, seed germination and vegetative growth. Diseases such as powdery mildew, botrytis blight and downy mildew are discussed in detail with important suggestions for their management.

One of the goals of growing plants is to produce the best possible specimens. In a greenhouse that is too warm, the crops may grow too tall and temperatures that are too cool may create short plants with delayed flowering. It is necessary to integrate light intensity and temperature, and monitor or stabilize the relationship of night to day to control plant growth. If chemical retardants are used, they result in fuller and shorter plants. These are sometimes applied to ornamental plants. But other retardants are used on edible crops.

The wholesale market is a very important and lucrative part of sales in the industry. A distributor purchases from some local growers but many purchase offshore. Flower growers are located in nearly every country in the world.

An extensive section in *The Commercial Greenhouse* that addresses post-harvest and marketing of potted plants and cut flowers, suggests the importance of proper handling and its impact on sales. A few years ago, thirty two of the top wholesalers in North America had annual sales that averaged \$14.3 million. Eighty two percent of the income was derived from fresh flowers. Roses and carnations were the main cut flower crops.

The Commercial Greenhouse has been used as a textbook and there are review questions at the end of each section. It is a superior reference and an excellent volume for independent study.

by Cheryl Pettus, Champaign County Master Gardener



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