



GROUNDED

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Grant/Adams Master Gardeners

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Fresh Starts . . . *By Kris Nesse, Master Gardener Foundation President*

March begins that season, you know, the one of fresh starts. In the greenhouse little onions are already popping up. *Millenium Allium* and *Blue Sky Prairie Clover* babies are growing fast so they'll be ready to attract the pollinators. The Grant-Adams Counties Master Gardener Foundation (MGF) feels the sap rising too.

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Presentations

Jeannie Kiehn, our fresh WSUE Master Gardener coordinator, will help guide and keep us growing. Jeannie works out of the Grant County Extension office in the courthouse in Ephrata (754-2011, jmkiehn@wsu.edu).

We welcome seven newly trained interns this year to infuse our volunteer group with fresh energy, ideas, and enthusiasm: Jean Bushman from George; Arrow Coyote from Electric City; Karen Fowler, Edris Herodes, Kathy Mason, and Trudie Walsh all from Moses Lake; and Nicole Meaney from Ephrata.

At the February MGF meeting we began planning for a new year of projects.

- Plant Clinics will have Master Gardener (MG) volunteers available with research-based information to answer gardening, pest, and ecosystem questions. Look for us at Farmers Markets in Moses Lake, Ephrata, Othello, and Grand Coulee (availability varies for each market). We'll also staff the WSUE office clinic via email or phone (754-2011, ga.mgvolunteers@ad.wsu.edu). Both the Moses Lake and the Ephrata Community Gardens will have volunteers available with advice the first Friday of each month during gardening season. As a new outreach effort, we hope to have volunteers available in the public libraries in some of the communities we serve throughout the colder months.
- Community Events in many Grant and Adams communities will also have MG volunteer presence. Look for presentations and information booths.
- Demonstration Gardens will show interested gardeners proven plants and techniques for various purposes. Educational materials are available for some, and anyone can contact the WSUE office if you would like tours or presentations. Our volunteers maintain gardens in the following communities:

- Drought tolerant/native plants
- Proven plants
- Drought tolerant plants
- Native plants
- Pollinator attracting plants

- Moses Lake Library
- Healing Waters, Soap Lake
- Othello Old Hotel
- Reiman-Simmons House, Quincy
- Ephrata Community Garden

Community gardens in Ephrata and Soap Lake will rely on guidance from MG volunteers in 2014. Educational Outreach is the mainstay of MG philosophy. Some classes and presentations are already scheduled. If your group is interested, go to http://county.wsu.edu/grant-adams/gardening/Pages/Master_Gardeners.aspx, for a list of available topics and contact numbers.

Of course, the MG Foundation has fundraisers to support all these endeavors. Remember the annual MG Plant Sale and Raffle, Saturday, May 10, 8-1 pm, at the Moses Lake Farmers Market. You'll find many vegetables and ornamentals for your own fresh start! MG Foundation gardening gloves, available at ArtGarden downtown Moses Lake and at the WSU Extension office, are a must.

Happy 2014! Just like Oprah Winfrey, all your MG volunteers "want every day to be a fresh start on expanding what is possible."

Growing Plants from Seed for the Master Gardener Foundation Annual Garden Sale

The proceeds from the MG plant sale support plant clinics, information booths, online services, and presentations by Master Gardeners on sustainable gardening and protection of the environment

Getting ready for our annual plant sale begins with buying and planting seeds for transplanting, then collecting plants from others and our own gardens, and sprucing them up for sale. Several of us start seeds at home and then transfer the plants to the greenhouse at Big Bend Community College to complete their growth. Growing plants from seed is actually a pretty simple process on the surface. Gardeners need good seed, soil, water, and sunlight (or some kind of light). Then they wait, and usually within a few days germination begins.

As a general rule, depending upon the plant, seeds should be started about 4 to 11 weeks before the last expected spring frost date to be ready to plant outdoors. In our area that date is May 10th, which

also happens to be the date of the 2014 Master Gardener plant sale at the Farmers Market in Moses Lake (8 am to 1 pm).



MG Gardeners Cynthia Calbick and Terry Rice

Another way to estimate when to set seedlings out is to wait until night and day temperatures stay in the mid-50s. Here in our high desert conditions, we may need to furnish additional warmth outdoors for warm weather plants until June. As gardeners, we get used to checking the temperature until summer is well upon us. In summertime, we begin monitoring water needs daily.

Because Master Gardeners are growing seedlings to sell to others, they'll start at an earlier date, so that the plants are sturdier and more appealing to buyers. They will be growing vegetables and flowers from seed, taking cuttings from plants like geraniums, starting bulbs and rhizomes, and cultivating the herbs we think our customers will like this year. Besides growing seeds, many Master Gardeners bring plants to the green house to create flower and vegetable baskets that might appeal to customers.

Starting Seeds. Planting containers should be at least 3 inches deep with small holes for drainage. Commercial starting kits can be used, but many containers can be homemade—yogurt or cottage cheese boxes, half-gallon milk cartons cut lengthwise, plastic fruit boxes. It's important to use a good quality seed starting mix. You will find brand name mixes at most garden centers. The seed starting soil is sterile and

blended to be porous so that seedlings have both moisture and light. In a large container, moisten the starting mix first with water, combining until thoroughly moistened—but not soggy. Fill containers to about an inch from the top, shaking the seed bed container to settle the soil. With something like a pencil or chopstick, make a furrow or hold about a ¼-inch deep and drop in a seed. Seeds need to be about an inch apart if you’re planting more than one in the container. Sift more soil on to the seed and press down firmly. Then water with a fine mist.

Germinating and Growing Seed. Some warm weather plants, like peppers and tomatoes, need 80-85° F to start germinating. If they’re not in a greenhouse, put the containers where they’ll get some bottom heat, perhaps on top of a refrigerator or water heater. Keep the container moist. Commercial flats sometimes have plastic tops, or you can use plastic wrap or some rigid clear plastic. Check it daily. If water is necessary, use a very gentle spray. Sometimes the containers can be set in another container to soak water up from the bottom, but be careful not to oversaturate. It’s important that plants get light as soon as they emerge from the soil. Some people begin growing seeds under lights. Grow lights may be suspended just 1 or 2 inches above the seedling, keeping the seedling somewhere between 70° and 80° F. Then the lights are gradually moved up as the plants grow. Plants that do not have enough light get ‘leggy.’ There should be no more than 1 inch of stem between the root and the first leaves.

Potting Seedlings. Seedlings are moved to deeper containers when they are about 3 inches tall and have several sets of true leaves. Again fill the pots with pre-moistened potting soil, not the starting soil. You’ll have an easier time if you buy a commercial potting soil, but you can make your own mix. There are several formulas available online or from a master gardener. Lift the tiny seedling out of the germinating container (a fork might help) getting as much root as possible and plant it a little deeper than it was in the original container. Now you begin feeding the plants with a good liquid fertilizer or fish emulsion diluted to half the normal proportions about once a week. Give the seedlings as much light as possible, rotating flats or containers so that the plants don’t begin leaning toward the light.



Master Gardener plants ready for sale

When you buy plants at our Master Gardener sale, all that work has been done for you and you are now ready to take the next step with your seedlings.



Master Gardeners at 2013 Plant Sale in Moses Lake

Seedlings in the Garden. After you buy the plants, if they have not already been hardened off, you gradually acclimate them to outdoor conditions. By May 10th you should have 50° F days.

Place the pots in a protected spot for part of several days. Then gradually move them to full sun, starting in the morning and then all day. Plan to transplant out of the pots in the afternoon or on a hazy day. Plant them at root level, except for tomatoes, which are sturdier if planted deeper. Firm the soil around the plant and water well. They will be helped by adding

organic mulch around each plant but not touching the stem. Check the plants daily to make sure that they are consistently moist, but not saturated.

Here's a timeline for starting some of the more popular seeds. Those plants that do not have frost tolerance are called warm weather plants. They may need protection after being planted outside. Happy Gardening!

Timeline for Planting Popular Seeds

	Plant Types	Germination Time	Growth Rate	Cold/Frost Tolerant
Vegetables				
7 weeks	Pepper	7-14 days	Medium	None
4 weeks	Cucumber	4-6 days	Fast	None
4 weeks	Squash	4-6 days	Fast	None
4 weeks	Watermelon	4-6 days	Fast	None
6 weeks	Onion	7-9 days	Medium	Good
Flowers				
14 weeks	Pansy	6-10 days	Medium	Good
10 weeks	Petunia	6-12 days	Slow-Medium	Slight
12 weeks	Lobelia	15-20 days	Slow	None
9 weeks	Snapdragon	7-12 days	Medium	Medium
7 weeks	Sweet Alyssum	4-8 days	Fast	Slight

Reference

Gardening in the Inland Northwest (misc 0304), Chapter 7 & 8, by Tonie Fitzgerald. Along with the best seeds, potting soil, fertilizer for seedlings, and pots, this book will help you grow a great garden.

Meet New Master Gardener Volunteers

Every other year in Grant-Adams Counties, volunteers are trained to be effective community educators in gardening and environmental stewardship. Those who apply and are selected undergo rigorous on-line coursework through WSU, as well as local classroom work and field trips. Those who complete the 4-month course successfully become "interns" and are required to volunteer 50 hours before becoming full-fledged master gardeners. That's a lot of work done for the privilege of being a volunteer. These MG volunteers are a diverse and amazingly accomplished group of individuals. The 2013 trainees will complete their internship during 2014.



Trainees and Master Gardeners
at Sunrise Orchards

This issue we'll introduce you to two newly trained volunteers from our most northern reaches.

Gayle Swaggerty lives in Coulee Dam with her husband Frank. She operates Coulee Gardens and Design, a business that provides landscape design, renovation, and maintenance for clients. Gayle and Frank have two adult children and five grandkids. Gayle is not truly new to master gardening. She first took the training in 2005, but wanted a refresher course and signed up to do it all again!

Gayle exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism. She serves on her town council and is working to reinstate her town's Tree City USA status with the Arbor Day Foundation. She wants to educate residents about the benefits of trees and other natural resources. She also will continue to offer plant clinic gardening advice at the Grand Coulee Farmers Market for the first Saturday of the market, and then the first Saturday market of each month. In addition, she hopes to help with online clinics through the WSUE office.

Gayle says, “Being a Master Gardener brings me in touch with others who share my passion, love of horticulture.” She appreciates access to WSU’s extensive, research-based information, as well as the sustainability focus of the training. During this training sequence, Gayle enjoyed the field trip to WSU’s organic research orchard and the other labs. She appreciated the opportunity to become more acquainted with Master Gardeners from all over Grant and Adams Counties.



Arrow Coyote (left) and Gayle Swaggerty

Arrow Coyote hails from Electric City. Along with Gayle, she traveled long distances to participate in training. She is an archaeologist who enjoys gardening, playing the guitar, decorating, creating greeting cards, and many outdoor activities, such as hiking, kayaking, swimming, and cross country skiing.

Arrow wanted to train as an MG volunteer “to get better at gardening and to include a more scientific approach.” She also wanted to share the experience of gardening with others. She hopes to volunteer at the farmers market and library plant clinics, and help others learn about and create vegetable gardens. Arrow felt that the WSU on-line training and local labs were excellent. “I learned a lot and gained many resources.”

Making a Local Impact . . . By Kris Nesse

Imagine a shift from an economy focused on consumption and acquisition to one that promotes and supports what matters locally. That philosophy of investing assets to enhance positive local projects is being practiced on a small-scale right here in Grant County. Philanthropists like the Baird family, through the Columbia Basin Foundation’s donor-advised grants, practice Paul Newman’s adage: “I just happen to think that in life we need to be a little like the farmer who puts back into the soil what he takes out.”

For the last several years, the Master Gardener Foundation of Grant-Adams Counties has benefitted from such local generosity. MGF received funding for projects like demonstration gardens, educational outreach, plant clinics, and new volunteer training. Columbia Basin Foundation administers bequests that it receives, handles money management, and writes checks for local nonprofit groups as directed by donors like the Bairds.

John and Mary Baird arrived in Grant County in the late 40s. They immersed themselves in civic life. As city attorney and supporter of the local economy, John helped start Security Bank with the intent of supplying loans for local endeavors. He also strongly supported this area’s agriculture interest in his capacity of representing the Columbia Basin irrigation district for almost 50 years.

Together Mary Baird and son, Jim, decided that funds from John and Mary’s estate would support local efforts. As Jim says, “John and Mary felt Grant County was good to them. They enjoyed their life here, and would feel good about their legacy supporting local Grant County projects.”



Jim Baird

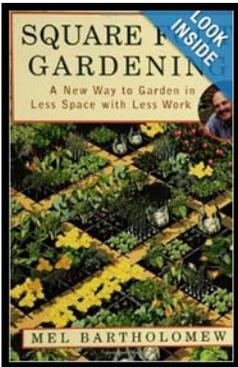
Because of his background in agriculture and his strong beliefs about local and healthy food, Jim helped the Baird family decide to support groups or organizations engaged with the local food movement. This led to grants for the Master Gardener Foundation along with the Ephrata Farmers Market. The Baird family hopes that their grants will ripple out to positively impact the wider local community.

This philosophy also led Jim to form the Cloudview nonprofit corporation. His hope is to further impact local food and healthier eating along with providing experiential learning for folks interested in small-scale gardening/farming. This is coupled with outreach to the larger community including school districts, farmers markets, and community-supported agriculture (CSAs). The Cloudview model gives experience to workers and interns in Royal City and Ephrata and in the new commercial kitchen and retail site in Soap Lake. The focus

is on sustainable practices and includes ongoing research with exploration into insectary zones, cover cropping, and rotational grazing. The hope is to disseminate information on successful practices for the use of other farmers and gardeners.

The Baird family illustrates the power of connecting small investors to the communities in which they live. Through donor-advised bequests to groups like Columbia Basin Foundation, people can support what they believe in while making a significant local impact.

Do You Have Space for a Square Foot Garden? . . . By George Roper



I took a wonderful class at the 2013 WSU-sponsored Spring Garden event in the Tri-Cities sponsored by the Benton-Franklin Master Gardeners. The class focused on details provided in *Square Foot Gardening* by Mel Bartholomew, published by Rodale Books. If you are serious about square foot gardening, this is a go-to book. It first came out in 2005, but readers are encouraged to get the latest edition. The book will give you everything you need to know to get started.

The boxes can be made in any size as long as you keep the dimensions symmetrical like 2' x 2', 2' x 3', 2' x 4', etc. My boxes are 2' x 3' or 2' x 4'. If you want to grow more deeply rooting crops like carrots or potatoes, make the sides deeper. If you use carrot seed for carrots less than 6" long, for example, 6" deep side walls should be tall enough.

For the shallow boxes, I used 1" x 6" boards, and 2" x 2"s cut to length to help support the sides. Small eye screws and string mark my squares off and 1/4" plywood was used for the bottom (having drilled holes in the bottom to let excess water escape). The book shows ways to make coverings to protect

the seedlings so I screwed 1" x 2" pieces x 2' long to hold my covering for the plants as they grew; mine did not work too well as any wind tended to blow it off. If you put the box directly on the ground, you don't need a bottom on it. I built my potato box using 1" x 10" cedar boards for the walls of the box. I had some leftover pallets, which you can get free at many businesses. I raised the beds, which consisted of pallets cut in half and legs screwed onto them, or a square base made from pallets, with the box on top. After leveling the beds, the structures were much easier for me to reach them. The tallest bed is about 3' high; the next is 2' and the others are on the dirt of my original raised beds.



The book suggests a home-made planting medium. The recommended content consists of 2 to 4 bags of compost, large particle vermiculite, and peat moss. For example, if you use 4 pots of vermiculite, use 4 pots of each compost you have and the peat moss. I learned quickly you might as well pour it right into the box and mix it there. As you fill the box, dampen the mixture with water. That helps to pack it down. Use as much of the mixture as needed to fill the box to the top. It will take a lot. With this mixture, any weeds that grow can be easily pulled out, since it is weed free to begin with. Then mark your squares off with the string, and plant your seeds or plants. Depending on the type of plantings you want, you can put anywhere from 1 to 16 seeds or transplants in each square.

At the end of the year, I had 6 cantaloupes and several baby watermelon, all good. My 4' x 4' potato box yielded an almost full 5-gallon bucket of spuds.

This year I'm adding a 4' x 4' box of strawberries, and taking my old strawberry patch and making a small greenhouse on it. Updates on my progress will be forthcoming as the year progresses.

Taking a Master Gardener Break . . . *By Barbara Guillard*

Taking a break is something all of us Master Gardeners should do now and then. It helps us come back to our master gardener group with a fresh perspective on the life that we live and the things we like to do. The Master Gardener Program has built in a recertification process for WSU Master Gardeners. Every year each MG decides whether he or she plans to continue during the following year and signs a formal commitment for the next year.

This year for the first time, Pat McAfee asked for a year off. I've known Pat MacAfee a little over ten years. We started as trainees in 2003. Our class was rather large. The trainees and MGs filled the big meeting room in the Grant County Courthouse. (There are seven Grant- Adams County Master Gardeners from that class who are still active volunteers.) We each received a heavy paper manual to read and took paper tests that we returned each week for ten weeks. Pat, along with the others who passed, did her plant clinic volunteer hours with Colleen Irwin, the MG Coordinator, at the extension office in Ephrata, learning first-hand the WSU way to answer clients' gardening questions. During the next couple of years, Grant-Adams County Master Gardeners began moving toward forming a foundation, while organizing and conducting private garden tours in Ephrata, Quincy, and Moses Lake, and holding the annual plant sale. Also, around this time, Colleen decided to retire. Pat put in many volunteer hours on the garden tours and helping other Master Gardeners write the by-laws for the new Grant County Master Gardener Foundation, which became a reality in 2006.



Pat McAfee at Farmer's Market Plant Clinic

Almost as quickly as it was formed, the foundation, after obtaining an agreement with the city, began building a demonstration garden at the Moses Lake Public Library. Pat was there to help others plan and plant it. When Erik Lampi was hired as the new coordinator in 2006, the foundation found even more projects to pursue: demonstration gardens in Soap Lake, Quincy and Othello, starting up an elementary school garden in George and community gardens in Othello, Mattawa, Royal City, and Doolittle Park as well as acquiring use of the greenhouse at Big Bend Community College. Soon Pat and other Master Gardeners were using it to grow extra plants for the plant sales, which had become the foundation's main fundraiser. During that time, MacAfee served for six years on the foundation board, coordinated the plant clinic at the Ephrata Farmers Market, made trips to Coulee Dam to get a plant clinic started there, helped initiate the shift to the MG Clinic recordkeeping program by taking the training in Yakima, followed her own interests in Master Gardeners advanced education classes, and supplied hundreds of plants for the plant sale.

The Master Gardener Foundation applauds Pat's dedication and wishes her well during her sabbatical. The Master Gardeners wish Pat a good year off and look forward to her return in 2015.



Karen Lewis, WSU Extension, with Pat McAfee

HORTUS MUSTUS –Grant-Adams MG Recommended Plants . . . by Kris Nesse

This regular feature of *Grounded* presents plants grown and loved by one or more Grant-Adams Master Gardener volunteers. This issue features a perennial commonly known as sedum or stonecrop.

If you are looking for a sun-loving, drought-tolerant perennial with a long season of interest that requires minimal care and also attracts pollinators, Autumn Joy is for you! Many species and hybrids of sedum (*Sedum* spp. or *Hylotelephium* spp.), sometimes called stonecrop, exist. They are drought-tolerant succulents prized for low maintenance, attractive appearance, and variety. “Autumn Joy” is one of the showier specimens.



Sedum Autumn Joy
(*Hylotelephium* 'Herbstfreude')

Several years ago, we planted a long border sandwiched between a gravel roadway and the fenced vegetable garden. Non-stop sun and strong winds demanded sturdy plants. A variety of transplants from our old home, along with plants purchased from the MG annual plant sale were installed. Autumn Joy was one of the MG bedding plants. I planted two, and now have five clumps.

So far, Autumn Joy is just that, a joy! The plants have an amazingly long season of interest. Succulent, almost lime-green leaves appear in the spring. This perennial forms large, tidy, clumps. Long stems emerge from the clumps with flowers, 3-6” across, forming in flattened heads. Flowers emerge in summer, beginning green and changing to pink, then gradually to deep rose-red, finishing coppery-rust in the autumn as they die. These large heads (cymes) are really a mass of tiny, star-shaped flowers. Butterflies and bees (especially bumblebees) are attracted to the plants as soon as nectar-packed flowers form. The dead inflorescences (flowers) are interesting even throughout the winter, and attract small birds that feed on the seeds.

Cultural specifics include:

USDA Zones:	3 to 9
Height:	1.5 to 2 feet
Spread:	1.5 to 2 feet (or more)
Exposure:	Sun
Water:	Dry to medium
Bloom time:	August to October
Maintenance:	Low
Attracts:	Butterflies, bees, birds
Tolerate:	Drought, clay soil, dry soil, shallow-rocky soil

The plant has no serious insect or disease issues. The only problem noted at our home is one of “flopping over.” The sedum is relatively tall and top-heavy. The tendency to flop over exposes the bare plant center, making the plant look somewhat messy. Recommendations to prevent this tendency include: fertilize lightly and infrequently; ensure the plant receives full sunlight so stems don’t ‘stretch’ to the sun; water only occasionally (this is probably my issue); cut sedum back in height in early or mid-summer or pinch several inches off each stem above a leaf or bud; stake and tie stems loosely. The plants can be easily divided in the spring.

This great plant provides a long season of color and contrast in the border, is perfect for rock gardens, can be massed or planted as an edging, looks great with perennial grasses, and the pollinators love it. It’s definitely a Hortus Mustus! Look for Autumn Joy starts at the MG Plant Sale in May.

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Timely Pruning Tips for Home Gardeners . . . *By Mark Amara*

Hardwoods are best pruned between November 15 to April 15. Flowering shrubs should be pruned right after they flower. Grapes are ideally pruned in late winter or early spring February, March or early April. As a rule of thumb, roses may be pruned after forsythia blooms as early as February 20 or as late as mid March. Avoid pruning in very cold weather since it may cause exposed branch collars to freeze and cause excessive dieback. If you are removing dead, diseased or broken plant parts, they can be removed anytime. Likewise, if you are removing less than 10% of the plant canopy, it is okay to prune year round. The worst time to prune shrubs is after new leaves have sprouted because the plants may not have the energy to replace them. Another undesirable time to prune is mid to late summer when shrubs may be in a semi dormant state and plants may become stressed. Some trees are prone to pest infestations if done at the wrong time (like with apple or crabapple or conifers, especially those in a forest setting) so it might be worthwhile to consult a certified arborist about site-specific pruning questions.

Fruit trees need pruning to provide enough light for fruit to mature. Well-pruned trees are easier to maintain and harvest. A tree that can be trained and/or pruned is often more open to light, and can be easier to care for and to harvest. Roses are pruned to control size and shape to produce better blooms and to remove disease or winter-damaged canes. Shrubs should be pruned to remove dead or diseased plant material, control size and shape, and encourage new growth.

Tree topping is not pruning and is considered an unnecessary and damaging practice. Though it removes top growth, it does not prevent it from regenerating suckers. Tree height can be reduced by selectively removing upper branches. Rather than excessively pruning, tree removal might be considered especially near or under power lines.

On trees, pruning at mid-branch is not recommended. Instead, make pruning cuts at intersections where two limbs come together or where limbs connect to the main trunk. On shrubs, remove dead or dying branches and dispose of them if they are diseased or insect infested. Pruning shrubs may use any of the following methods: Reduce shrub bulk and health by removing the weakest stems at ground level (use to shape new growth). Reduce shrub size and density by cutting selected side branches back to a main branch or trunk (use to shape new growth). Rejuvenate a declining shrub by cutting it clear to the ground. Shearing shrubs removes outer foliage to create a smooth surface like on hedges or topiary.

Preferred tools: Hand pruners, long-handled lopping shears, or a pruning saw are typical tools for most jobs. Folding or non-folding saws work fine too. A chainsaw can be used for limbs too large for hand tools. Keeping equipment sharpened will make the job easier. Never use an ax as they cut unevenly. With any of the pruning tools, wear appropriate safety gear including eye protection, hat, gloves and sturdy shoes. Tree-training techniques include using spreaders, weights that clip to the branches, or tying limbs using ground clips.

Master Gardener, Barbara Guiland, researched commercial companies that provide tree pruning services in our area and she recommends making sure to ask if the company has employees available who are experienced in pruning (fruit) trees.

1. **R & C Tree Service** (509-766-9800) advertises having certified arborists. Its main office is in Spokane and it has a local office.
2. Gayle Swaggerty, our WSU MG representative in Coulee Dam, prunes fruit trees if they are not too large. Swaggerty operates **Coulee Garden and Design**. Contact her at 509-680-4969.
3. **West Coast Tree Care** from Kennewick covers most of Central Washington. Their arborist is Jim Mosher. (jim@westcoast-tree.org, 509-222-8576).
4. **Inland Arbor** from Yakima has certified arborists. www.inlandarbor.com. The phone number is 509-654-5404.

For specific recommendations on pruning selected plants, refer to the referenced fact sheets.

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Did You Know . . . About Planting Trees in the Spring?

Trees not only add beauty to your home's landscape, but they can also improve your home's environment by providing shade, blocking wind, and helping remove pollutants from the air.

The importance of trees in the environment was recognized over 140 years ago when the first informal Arbor Day event in the United States was held throughout Nebraska on April 10, 1872. At that time, the state's landscape primarily consisted of grasslands and was treeless. A million trees were planted on that day in 1872 to provide settlers for years to come with shade, fruit, and fuel. Other states saw the value of planting trees during the spring and established annual spring Arbor Day events later that same decade.

Since then, Arbor Day has been recognized in all 50 states as well as in many countries. Most states observe Arbor Day in April, with the designated date determined by each state to allow for weather and optimum planting conditions. Some southern states plant as early as January or February, and a few northern states plant as late as May. The National Arbor Day celebration is held on the last Friday in April (April 30th, 2014 this year). Washington State observes Arbor Day on the second Wednesday of the month on April 9th, 2014.

So as Arbor Day approaches and nurseries are bursting with and promoting a wide variety of flowering trees and shrubs, some care needs to be taken if you decide to add a few new plants this spring to your landscape. According to Linda Chalker-Scott, Extension Horticulturist and Associate Professor at Washington State University, planting trees and shrubs west of the Rockies in the spring requires substantial irrigation because of the lack of rainfall during the months of June through August. She points out that in Omaha, Nebraska, where Arbor Day originated, the average precipitation during the summer months is 10.62 inches, compared to Seattle, where the average in that same timeframe is 2.03 inches. In Moses Lake, Washington, the average rainfall ranges from 0.39 to 0.69 inches during these three months with average temperature in the 80s to 90s.

Chalker-Scott recommends watering newly planted trees and shrubs for at least a couple of hours once or twice a week. Even though the plants you select may be labeled "drought tolerant," it's crucial that they get ample water their first year for their above-ground growth. She also recommends:

- Clearing existing vegetation, especially turf, from the planting area and mulching well after planting.
- Using Arbor Day and Earth Day as opportunities to maintain existing landscapes, such as pruning, weeding, and mulching.
- Choosing an autumn date for community planting efforts when irrigation is less of an issue as temperatures drop and root systems can begin to establish themselves during winter months.

References

Linda Chalker-Scott, Ph.D., Puyallup Research and Extension Center, Washington State University, *“The Myth of Arbor Day/Earth Day Planting in the West: Arbor Day/Earth Day is an ideal time to install trees,”* <http://www.theinformedgardener.com>.

NOAA, *Period of Record General Climate Summary - Precipitation, 1981-2006.*

Trees & Woody Landscape Plants, The International Society of Arboriculture, Consumer Education Brochure, excerpted from Chapter 11, Washington State University, Master Gardener Training Workbook, Fall 2011.

Upcoming Events

Editor’s Note: the following classes, clinics, and presentations are opportunities for the public to learn from Master Gardener experts. Gardeners of all ages are encouraged to participate in these events.

Community Gardens

Moses Lake

Dates: March 10 - October 31, 2014
 Location: 317 Alder St., Moses Lake
 Registration: February 19, 2014 - New Gardeners

Cost for approximate plot sizes per season:

- 16 - 80 ft² – \$5
- 81 - 160 ft² – \$15
- 161 - 280 ft² – \$20
- 281 - 512 ft² – \$25

Ephrata

Dates: March-October 2014
 Location: Corner of 4th St SW and C St. SW, Ephrata
 Registration: Starts March 1, 2014, through Ephrata Parks and Recreation

Cost: \$10 per season per plot
 Plot sizes are approximately 3 x 12 ft

Water is included in the cost of the plot. Rototilling is available for an additional cost; please ask about it when registering. Register at the Parks & Recreation office. Master Gardeners will be available on the first Fridays of May, June, July, August, and September between 4 and 5 pm.

Classes

Cynthia Calbick is teaching two classes this spring through Moses Lake Park and Recreation. Register at Moses Lake Parks and Recreation office on Balsam Street.

- **Drought Tolerant Gardening.** March 6th and 8th, Thursday, 7:15 - 9:15 pm and Saturday, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm. Class will be held at The Learning Center, 701 Penn Street; \$10 per person. Learn the principles of gardening in a hot dry climate. Gain skills in designing the garden, choosing plants, and caring for plants using low water consumption. The class will conclude with a visit to the Drought Tolerant Demonstration Garden at the library.
- **Native Plant Gardening .** March 20 & 22, Thursday, 7:15 - 9:15 pm & Saturday, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm. Class will be held at The Learning Center, 701 Penn Street: \$10 per person. Discover uses for native plants in your garden, how to choose and care for them. Learn plant courses and gardening principles, and visit the demonstration garden in the library.

Master Gardener Presentations Available for 2014

Classes listed with Linda Crosier and Terry Rice are through Othello Community Schools Program. Some of the talks by Cynthia Calbick are through the Moses Lake Parks and Recreation Department. *Fees may apply if offered through city programs.*

General Gardening

Cynthia Calbick (509) 765-5474	Putting Your Garden to Bed in the Fall	30 min
	Plant Propagation - Multiply Your Garden Plants	1 hr
	Drought Tolerant Gardening	1 - 4 hr
Barbara Guilland (509) 765-3219	Basic Gardening Skills	1-3 hr
	New Paths: Making Gardening Easier	45 min - 1 hr
	Everyone Lives in a Watershed	30 min - 1 hr
Mona Kaiser (509) 246-0641	Putting Your Garden to Bed	30 min - 1 hr

Native Plants

Cynthia Calbick (509) 765-5474	Native Plant Gardening	1 - 4 hr
	Landscaping with Native Plants	1 hr

Vegetable Gardening

Kris Nesse (509) 690-8542	Variety of topics, in any combination (Vegetables, Herbs, Soil, Seed Starting, Raised Beds, Tips to Extend the Harvest)	30 min - 2 hr
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Ornamental Gardening

Mona Kaiser (509) 246-0641	Using Ornamental Grasses in the Landscape	30 min - 1 hr
	Proper Rose Pruning	30 min - 1 hr
	Beneficial Insects vs. their Insect Pest Enemies	30 min - 1 hr
	Deadheading Perennials, When, Why, How	30 min - 1 hr
	Staking Guidelines and Options for Perennials	30 min - 1 hr
	Lawn Care, Early Spring through Late Fall	30 min - 1 hr

Trees and Shrubs

Barbara Guilland (509) 765-3219	Trees and Tree Care in the Columbia Basin	1 hr
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Shoreline Management

Cynthia Calbick (509) 765-5474	Shoreline Garden Design	1 hr
Barbara Guilland (509) 765-3219	Redesigning Shoreline	30 min

Pest Management

Barbara Guilland (509) 765-3219	New Invasive Insects: SWD and BMSB	1 hr
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Wildlife Habitat

George Roper (509) 488-3719	Attracting Birds to Your Backyard	45 min
Kris Nesse (509) 690-8542	Attracting Native Pollinators	30 min - 2 hr

Soil Fertility

George Roper	Worm composting	45 min
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Specialty Topics

Linda Crozier (509)488-3538	Mosaic Stepping Stone	5 hr
Terry Rice (509) 488-3871	Mother's Day Garden in a Pot	1 - 2 hr
Terry and Linda	Pollinators in the Garden	30 min - 1 hr
Nicole Meaney (206) 484-8272	Gardening with Chickens	30 min - 1 hr

Check out these New/Revised WSU Publications

FS115 Growing Food in Parking Strip and Front Yard Gardens NEW— Parking strip and front yard vegetable gardens are increasingly popular in urban neighborhoods in Washington State. These locations may be the sunniest spots in the yard, and they offer an opportunity to expand garden space on small lots. These gardens not only provide fresh produce, but they can also be a source of neighborhood pride, bringing beauty to an urban streetscape and introducing neighbors to gardening and home-grown food.

Free download online at <https://pubs.wsu.edu/ListItems.aspx?Keyword=FS115>

PNW649 Natural Insecticides NEW-- addresses the common misconceptions associated with products labeled "natural" and "organic," and describes related insecticides intended for home gardening. Categories include biological, botanical, fermented, horticultural oil, mineral, and soap. Readers will learn which types of natural insecticides are most effective for specific pests, how the products work, and application restrictions. **Free download online** at <https://pubs.wsu.edu/ListItems.aspx?Keyword=PNW649>

FS116E Growing Green Peas in the Home Garden (Home Garden Series) NEW-- This factsheet provides information on the definition, culture, and care of green peas when grown in the home garden. **Free download online** at <https://pubs.wsu.edu/ListItems.aspx?Keyword=FS116E>

PNW591 How to Reduce Bee Poisoning from Pesticides REVISED--Provides an overview of how a variety of wild and managed bees and their pollination activities are affected by pesticide application. Includes guidelines for how beekeepers, growers, and pesticide applicators can work together to prevent bee poisoning. (Produced by Oregon State University; reviewed by WSU specialists Walter Steve Sheppard and Catherine Daniels). **Free download online** at <https://pubs.wsu.edu/ListItems.aspx?Keyword=PNW591>

Seed Suppliers for Specialized Vegetable Sources – Free download online at: <http://agsyst.wsu.edu/SeedSuppliersForSpecializedVegCrops2012.pdf>

Master Gardener Plant Clinics:

- Moses Lake Public Library, each Saturday starting March 22, 2014, through Saturday, April 26, 2014, 11 am – 1 pm, on 4th and Balsam
- Moses Lake Farmers Market, every Saturday, May – October 2014, 8 am-12 noon in McCosh Park, Moses Lake
- Grand Coulee Farmers Market, first Saturdays: June 7, July 5, August 2, and September 6, 2014, 9 am-1 pm, on Morrison Street across from Safeway, Grand Coulee
- Ephrata Farmers Market, one Saturday per month, June-September, 2014, 8 am-12 noon on C St SW between the Courthouse and Bureau of Reclamation Building, Ephrata
- Othello Farmers Market, Saturdays June – September 2014 in Pioneer Park, 9 am – 1 pm, Othello, WA 99344

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