GROUNDED

A Quarterly publication of WSUE
Grant/Adams Master Gardeners

Newsletter March 2013
Volume 2 Issue 1

Grant/Adams County Master Gardeners, PO Box 37, Ephrata, WA 98823
http://county.wsu.edu/grant-adams/Pages/default.aspx · ga.mgvolunteers@ad.wsu.edu

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Gardeners On Your Mark - *Gardening Classes Scheduled*

. . . By Kris Nesse

Ready to try vegetable gardening for the first time? Or, would you like to hone your knowledge and skills? WSUE Grant-Adams Master Gardeners have information you can use! The more you learn, through classes, reading, discussion with experienced gardeners, or even trial and error, the better gardener you can become.

Join us for a series of classes in Soap Lake, March 30, April 13, and April 27, from 10 AM to 12 noon. Participants will meet at the Soap Lake Community Garden site, next to McKay Healthcare and Rehab, 127 2nd Ave. SW. The group will move inside or carpool to demonstration sites for some of these sessions, so be on time, please. Classes are free, but participants are asked to pre-register so presenters have sufficient supplies and handouts. Call 690-8542 or email ga.mgvolunteers@ad.wsu.edu to register or if you would like more information. Here are the class details:

- Saturday, March 30: **READY…**

Dream about your garden and begin planning how to make that dream a reality. Learn about local climate conditions, selecting varieties, planning how much to plant, and the cultural conditions plants you choose need to grow. You'll also learn how to start seeds inside!

- Saturday, April 13: **GET SET…**

Focus on soil—analyzing and preparing so plants really grow. Also, learn what structures and season-extending techniques might maximize the productivity of your garden.

- Saturday, April 27: **GO!**

It's time to learn about planting, watering, fertilizing and dealing with pests and weeds so your garden truly GROWS!

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

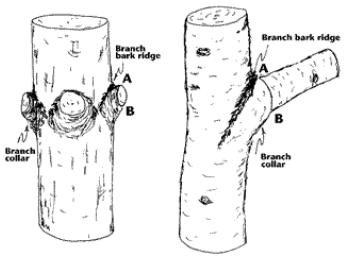
Washington State University Extension produced some excellent fact sheets on pruning trees and shrubs, pruning goals and methods, what tools to use, and the optimum times to perform it.

Hardwoods are best pruned between November 15 and 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 taking out 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 may become stressed when pruned. Some trees are prone to pest infestations if done at the wrong time (like apple, crabapple or conifers, especially evergreens 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 is properly 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, produce better blooms, and 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.

Thinning and heading are two basic types of pruning cuts. Thinning removes an entire shoot, branch or limb back to where it originates. According to WSU, thinning cuts are the ones to use most of the time because they maximize light entry into trees. Often thinning out limbs that are crowding or crossing over does an effective job in opening up a tree to sufficient light. Keep in mind the phrase: When in doubt, thin it out! By contrast, heading removes part of a shoot, branch or limb (up to 1/3-1/2 its length). Heading cuts encourage growth of side branches at the point of the cut and is best used in establishing branches in young trees. If heading is practiced, make the head cut into older wood so there is less regrowth. Heading and topping produce similar tree growth challenges.

Tree topping is not a good pruning practice and is considered unnecessary and damaging to do. Though it removes top growth, it does not prevent it from regenerating suckers. Rather, 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 (as illustrated in the figures), 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 improve 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.

Tree and shrub pruning is considered both a science and an art, and no plant seems to fit a textbook training system. So, the ways and places (on the plant) to prune and/or train trees and shrubs will change over time and depends on how light affects growth and how the plant matures. The ultimate goal of pruning should

be to establish plants that are well balanced between growth and production, are easy to manage, and are open to light and air. Plants are quite forgiving so once you make a decision, go with it. Most people tend to prune too little or too timidly. Aggressively pruning and cutting to thin out a large crowding branch can produce a better result in the long run.

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 it cuts 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.

For specific recommendations on pruning selected plants, see the referenced factsheets below.

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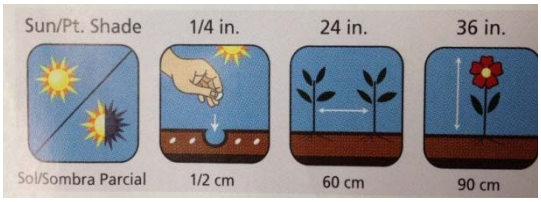
Seed Packets—The Basics in How to Read Them . . . *By Diane Escure*

Stores are stocking 2013 flower and vegetable seeds now for planting this year, and the packets contain quite a bit of useful information to help you be successful in growing them. So here's an overview of what to look for.

First, look at the front of a seed packet, where many of them provide a picture of the plant and give its common name as well as its Latin name, and a brief description of it, often letting you know if it's easy to grow. If the Latin name is not given, be aware that there may be several different plants that go by that same common name, but may not be exactly what you were hoping to grow.

Either on the front of the packet or on the back, flower packets will tell you if they are sun lovers or if they do better grown in partial shade. They indicate whether they're annuals, which means they'll grow profusely for only one season, or they're perennials, which means they will continue to grow year after year. So if you're looking for a spot of color in your front border and decide to grow some marigolds, which are annuals, you will need to replant them each year. You'll also see on the front of seed packets the weight of the seeds inside the packet, for example, 750 g (grams) or 300 mg (milligrams), and occasionally the number of seeds to a packet, which helps you know if one packet is enough for the area you want to plant.

Then, look at the back side of the seed packet where you'll find a description of the plant, its height when fully grown, the number of days it takes to germinate the seeds, the number of days until it blooms or is ready to harvest, how deep to plant the seeds and how far apart to space them. It may also include thinning tips once the plant has reached a certain height to ensure each plant has optimal room to grow.



Some packets also give special growing tips and let you know whether to sow the seeds directly in the ground outdoors or start them in containers indoors so many weeks before the last spring frost, or let you choose either option. May 15th is our average last spring frost date in the Columbia Basin area, according to the WSU Extension Office. So simply count the weeks listed on the seed packet back from May 15th, and you'll know the optimal time to start your seeds from a specific packet indoors. Not often listed is the first frost date, which tells you how long some plants will survive during a growing season into the fall. October 16th is the average date for this area. Keep in mind that frost dates are *mean* freeze dates. This means there is a 50% chance of a freeze on that date. It is not a guarantee, but only an assessment of probability.

Here are some other terms that you may find on a seed packet (excerpted from WSU Extension Office, Community Horticulture Fact Sheet #17, "Saving Seeds from Heirloom and Other Vegetables" by Elaine Anderson, August 2010: http://county.wsu.edu/king/gardening/mg/factsheets/ Fact%20Sheets/ Heirloom%20Vegetables%20and%20Saving%20Seed.pdf

Heirloom: which means these seeds produce varieties that have been around for 50 years or more, even centuries. They are open-pollinated, which means they're pollinated by wind or insects. They generally have characteristics that are stable and reliably reproduce similar plants the following year. So if you harvest your seeds from your heirlooms, you can replant them the next year and get similar results, as long as cross pollination is prevented. Cross pollination may occur if you plant different heirloom varieties of the same plant, say corn, near one another, or your neighbor next door has planted a different heirloom variety from yours.

Crops that normally cross pollinate include all members of the Brassica family: cabbage, broccoli, mustards, collards, kale, kohlrabi, cauliflower, turnips, radishes, and Brussels sprouts; the cucurbit family: zucchini and other summer squash, winter squash, pumpkins, cucumbers, and melons; carrots, parsnips, beets, chard, spinach, and corn.

Hybrids: are created by careful cross pollination of two different varieties, with each possessing desirable characteristics. Unlike heirlooms, seeds from hybrids rarely produce like the parents, so they are not suitable for saving. They are often tough, vigorous, uniform, and productive plants. The traits of vegetable hybrids are important to commercial growers because they are bred for uniform time of maturity, ability to withstand machine harvest, and good post-harvest storage.

Taste may not be the highest priority. Often hybrids have the designation F1 with their name. If the seed packet doesn't indicate that it's a hybrid, you can assume its open pollinated.

Don't forget to look at the date stamped on each seed packet, for example, USA 12/13, which means it was packaged in the US in December for the 2013 season. For the best success rate for germination, use seeds

that were prepared for the current year. Have some seeds you didn't get around to planting from last year? While some seeds will have a low germination rate from the previous year, here's a chart listing vegetable seed longevity and a seed test provided by Holly S. Kennell, WSU Extension Agent from King County, in an article from "Gardening in Western Washington", 2008: gardening.wsu.edu/library/vege004/vege004.htm

If you keep your seeds cool and dry, they will last longer, but can you be sure that they are still good? If they are, you can save yourself some money. Before you buy your new seed, do a germination test on any seeds more than just one year old. Here's what to do:

Plant Seed Longevity		
1-2 years:	**3-4 years:**	**5-6 years:**
corn onions and leeks parsley parsnips peppers	asparagus beans and peas beets cabbage family carrots eggplant squash and pumpkins tomatoes	cucumbers lettuce melons spinach

1. Put exactly ten seeds on top of a damp, folded paper towel.
2. Put the towel and seeds into a plastic sandwich bag and seal.
3. Label the container with the date and seed variety being tested.
4. Leave at room temperature for a week or so. (Leave parsley, carrot and celery longer; they're slow.)
5. Count the number of seeds that sprout:

    - 10 = 100% or perfect germination
    - 9 = 90% or excellent
    - 8 = 80% or good
    - 6-7 = 60-70% or poor — sow more thickly
    - 5 or less = 50% or less — throw the seed out!

SOIL TESTING . . . *By Kris Nesse*

Soil is the foundation of any garden. Healthy soil nurtures the crops we want to grow. Laboratory soil tests provide information to help the gardener develop and maintain more productive soil. Such tests detail the level of various nutrients and recommend how much fertilizer to add, based on the test results and the crops to be grown in any particular area.

A garden soil test typically measures organic matter, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, boron, and soil pH (acidity) and nitrogen. Soil tests can provide valuable information and are recommended for home gardeners every 3 to 5 years.

To take a soil sample, a few rules need to be considered.

1. Sample where the crop will be planted. For instance, if you are using raised beds, take samples in the beds, not in the pathways between them.

2. Avoid unusual areas where conditions are different from the rest of the growing space. Examples of areas to avoid might include the site of a former chicken coop, or a low-lying wet area.

3. Collect subsamples from at least 10 different spots in the garden, sampling the top foot or so of soil in each spot. Use clean sampling tools and avoid contamination of subsamples (fertilizer residue, something in the mixing container, etc.).

4. Air-dry the samples and mix thoroughly in clean container. The lab will want about a pint of the mixed sample.

Of course, contacting laboratories that perform soil testing in advance will provide specific directions as well as cost of the soil test requested. Labs also will provide necessary paperwork and sample bags. Labs available to gardeners in the Grant-Adams Counties area include:

Soil Test Farm Consultants, Inc.
2925 Driggs Drive W
Moses Lake, WA 98837
(509) 765-1622
www.soiltestlab.com

Best-Test Analytical Services LLC
3394 Bell Road NE
Moses Lake, WA 98837
(509) 766-7701
besttest@scml.us or www.besttestlabs.com/

Kuo Testing Labs Inc
337 S 1st Ave
Othello, WA 99344
(509) 488-0112
www.kuotesting.com/

Cascade Analytical Environmental Agricultural Laboratory
3019 G. S. Center Road
Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 662-1888
info@cascadeanalytical.com

USAG Analytical Laboratories
1320 E. Spokane St.
Pasco, WA 99301
(800) 244-0573
http://www.emswcd.org/conservation-directory/soil-and-water-testing/usag-analytical-services-inc

Analytical Sciences Laboratory
University of Idaho
Holm Research Center
PO Box 442203
Moscow, ID 83844
(208) 885-7081
http://www.agls.uidaho.edu/asl/

For more information:

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Growing Apples in Your Backyard /Setting up a Spray Schedule for Apple Trees

. . .By Barbara Guilland

The goal of most gardeners is a relatively small amount of fresh fruit that can be harvested conveniently. However, it is often difficult to maintain healthy trees if they are not small enough to safely prune, thin, spray, water, and protect from weather and pests. The realities of growing fruit at home are that most home gardeners don't have access to the pesticides and equipment available to commercial growers, but everyone in Washington State has a legal responsibility to control certain pests and diseases in their tree fruit.

There are specific guidelines that, **if followed consistently and persistently**, should give gardeners satisfaction while using a minimum of toxic spray and minimizing labor intensive pruning practices. Much of this information is from the **WSU Master Gardener Manual** available through WSU Extension Publications.

The home orchardist must learn to detect the presence of disease and insects and be ready to regularly monitor the trees and scout for signs of abnormality. The most common diseases are viruses, mildew and bacteria (e.g. fire blight). The most common undesirable insects are apple maggot and codling moth. Learn their growing cycles so that you can begin an effective spray schedule. In between spraying, handpicking insects is most effective. In addition, in early August, binding corrugated cardboard to the base of the tree catches codling moth larvae climbing the trees. If apple trees in eastern Washington are **not** protected, they **will attract codling moths**.

Be clear about what you are spraying for. Use "soft" pesticides that are relatively safe for beneficial insects. Use them to smother moth eggs which means knowing and following a spray schedule since several generations of insects are produced every year. Horticultural oils can be used on dormant trees safely and are meant to treat a number of pest problems and diseases at once. Some summer oil sprays will control scale, spider mites, or other common disease problems. **Always** read labels to be sure you're using the spray correctly.

APPLE SPRAY SCHEDULE

You must apply sprays to control pests at the proper stage of tree and bud development. Sprays can't be applied based on calendar dates, since the tree's condition depends on the weather. When the following diseases and insects have been identified, then spray according to stage that the bud is in. See photos on next page:

1. **A horticultural mineral spray** is indicated for the **dormant stage**, which occurs in late winter when the apple bud shows no or very little green (See Images 1 and 2). This all round spray is for San Jose scale, aphid eggs, mites, Lecanium scale, and leafroller eggs.

2. **Powdery mildew fungicide and insecticide soap** is indicated for use in the **pre-pink stage** before blossom buds show pink (see Images 3 and 4). This spray is for powdery mildew and aphids.

3. **Powdery mildew fungicide and apple scab fungicide** is indicated for use in **pink stage** also. Blossoms show pink color just before they open fully (see Image 5).

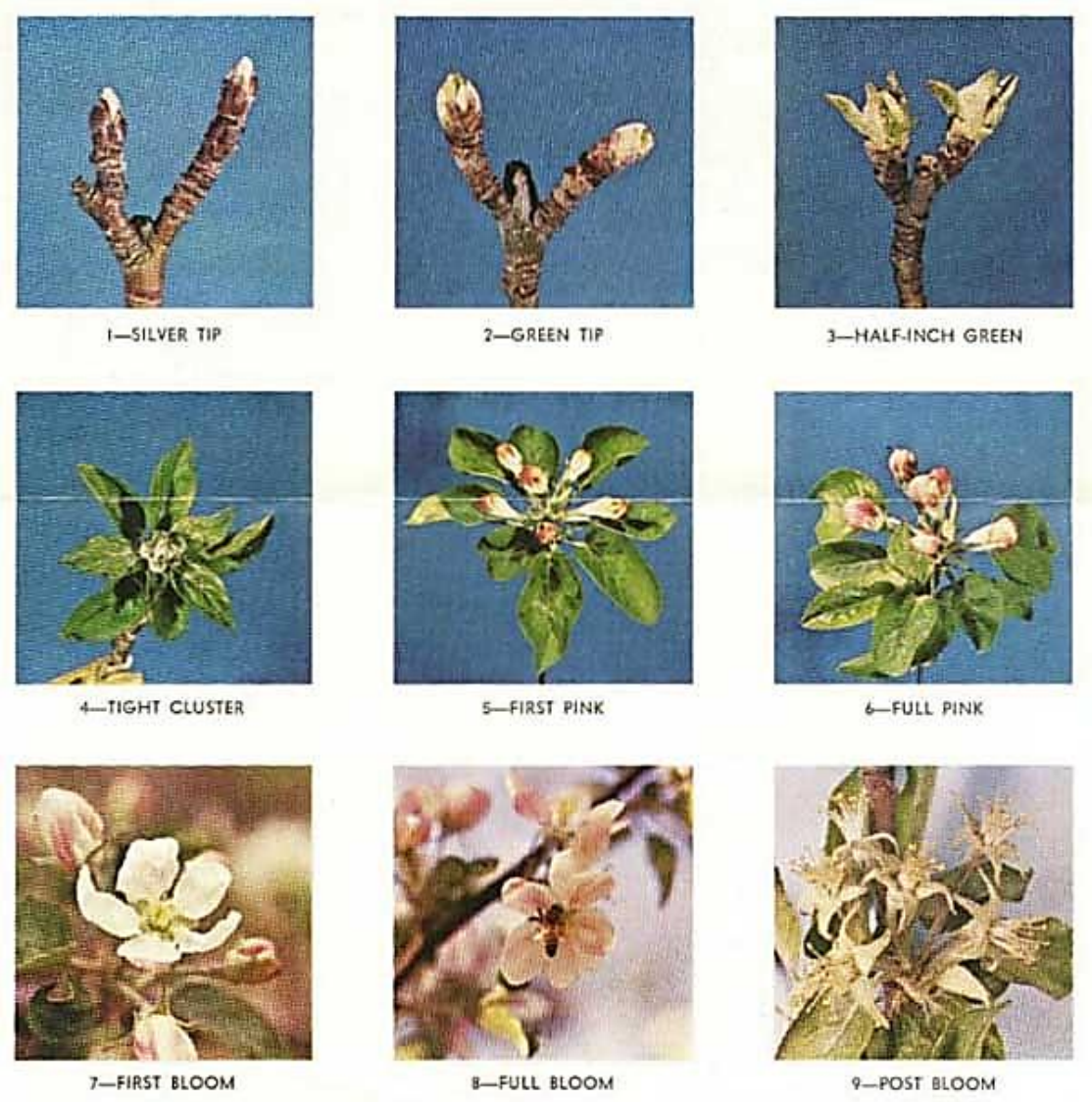
4. **Powdery mildew fungicide and apple scab fungicide** is used at **petal fall** stage for these diseases (see Image 9). Three quarters of the petals have fallen.

5. **Cover Sprays for codling moth** are started when codling moths begin to appear in traps or 17-21 days after full bloom (See Image 9). Apply insecticides like Malathion every 10-14 days or Spinosad every 10 days. Kaolin may be applied to keep foliage and fruit coated as often as every 10 days.

6. **Cover sprays for aphids, mites, powdery mildew** are insecticidal soaps and fungicides applied after full bloom (See Image 9).

7. **Cover spray for apple maggot** is applied after the first fly is captured and at least every two weeks afterward through September. A non-toxic product containing kaolin clay is available. Information compiled by Tonie Fitzgerald mastergardener@spokanecounty.org.

Stages of Apple Bud Development for Making Spray Recommendations



Images: Growth Stages in Fruit trees – from Dormant to Fruit Set

by P.J. Chapman and Gertrude Catlin, Cornell University #58 1976

COMMUNITY GARDENS . . . *By Kris Nesse*

From the White House in Washington D.C. to neighborhoods in Washington State, community gardens are big news. Groups in both Ephrata and Soap Lake are currently working on local gardens. Innumerable studies cite the benefits of community gardening. There are various "recipes" for success of such ventures with "key elements" and "guiding principles". What kernels of wisdom do research and experience over time offer the enthusiastic volunteers engaged in these new efforts?

DEFINITION OF A COMMUNITY GARDEN

First of all, according to the American Community Garden Association's (ACGA) definition, "A Community Garden is a community of people who have joined together to grow food and in the process grow their community." Actually, the ACGA also points out that the definition can be broadened to any urban,

suburban, or rural space growing vegetables, flowers, etc. Pat Munts, the Community Garden Facilitator working through Spokane Regional Health District and WSU Spokane County Extension, insists that it's more about community than food. She says it really is 90% community and only 10% food.

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY GARDENS

Ms. Munts, the American Community Garden Association, and studies across the country all cite benefits from community gardening. Of course, food production, improved health and quality of life, along with the preservation of green space are probably the most commonly understood benefits. Recent surveys indicate that the impetus toward producing food is not an economic one, but really a desire to know where and how one's food is grown.

Some of the positive impacts on the community/neighborhood include a sense of community ownership and stewardship. These are clear benefits exemplified by gardens included in a tour led by Ms. Munts during the 2012 National Extension Master Gardener Coordinators Conference in Spokane. The Perry Community Garden was organized and sustained through efforts of a local business group as a way to foster community identity and spirit. The gardeners at a Transitional Living Center led the tour of their garden showing great pride in their efforts. Their presentation demonstrated the kind of community leadership these projects can build. Plus, they indicated that the large majority of the Center's residents participated in the garden to some extent.

In addition, community gardens often provide cultural opportunities. The Northeast Community Center Garden adjacent to Rypien Field in Hillyard, provides the opportunity for mostly eastern European immigrants to produce an amazing array of food. Their efforts demonstrate their season-extending artistry, expose younger generations to cultural traditions, and offer a wondrous cultural glimpse of what can be produced.

NE Community Center Garden, Spokane

Other benefits to the community include opportunities for youth and demonstrate efforts to reduce crime. The Riverfront Farms in Spokane's West Central neighborhood, another garden tour site, exemplifies these possibilities. This neighborhood was alarmed at the gang activity in its area and worried about their children. They formed an association, gained use of empty lots in the neighborhood, organized classes, obtained funding for paid summer work for neighborhood youth, and are transforming their community. Neighbors are getting to know one another, crime is down, and youth are learning job and life skills.

Community gardens can even impact nearby property values. According to a New York University study, there were statistically significant increases over time in the value of residential properties within a 1000 foot radius of a community garden, along with a positive impact on sales prices, and consequent net tax benefits to cities.

KEY ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY GARDENS . . . *By Kris Nesse*

The benefits of community gardening are clear. Still, there is no guarantee that any individual garden will be successful and sustainable. Both the Ephrata and the Soap Lake groups have some of the key elements for success:

Local Leadership/Staffing

Ephrata's garden idea came out of community meetings organized through the Healthy Community Initiative. From those initial meetings a "Healthy Eating Workgroup" was formed. This group has provided the local leadership necessary to any community garden.

Soap Lake's leadership is through the Soap Lake Urban Homesteaders (SLUH) group. This energetic core of individuals is managed as a non-profit incorporation and is working toward 2013 as their garden's first year.

Both groups have city support, but neither has paid staff. Through her extensive involvement with various community gardens in Spokane, Pat Munts cautions that organizers must involve the participants (the gardeners themselves) in much of the work. She says, "People need to experience and take power for themselves." This can include planning, work parties, and continuing garden oversight. Also, successful long-term community gardens have a committed core of folks who continue to lead the effort over time.

Volunteers and Community Partners

Ephrata Community Garden

Ephrata's workgroup recruited the amazing support of diverse community members and groups to get their effort off the ground in 2012. They leveraged resources as an alternative to hiring staff. They got the property donated, involved the city in infrastructure and water use, and partnered with the health department for organizational expertise. They also recruited local residents, school staff, WSUE experts, key business people, and civic/church groups, as well as local philanthropic organizations. Individuals and groups contributed knowledge, skills, experience, tools, equipment, supplies, money, labor, and much more.

Soap Lake's SLUH group has obtained the property, some donated materials and supplies, city support, and has partnered with McKay Memorial Hospital, the Food Bank, and WSUE Master Gardeners. They have applied for some grants and are seeking other partners and contributions as well as local volunteers and gardeners.

A consideration that experienced groups suggest to new garden efforts is the proximity of 'key members' (gardeners/leaders) to the garden itself.

Skill-Building Opportunities

Another component of community garden success is the opportunity for residents, volunteers, and gardeners to develop skills in gardening, leadership, organizing, and cultures, etc. Skill building is experiential in nature, with intergenerational opportunities, and peer-to-peer mentoring. Volunteers and gardeners then lead workshops, organize garden activities, facilitate discussions, advocate for the garden, etc. All this helps to maintain momentum for the garden.

Currently both Ephrata and Soap Lake will offer "First Friday" Master Gardener help with seasonal garden issues. In addition, three classes will be offered in April in Soap Lake by WSUE Master Gardeners to help gardeners get started. (See earlier article on page 1 "On Your Mark" for details.)

Make It Your Own

A final recommendation comes through the USDA People's Garden Initiative. Because every community garden is different, volunteers and gardeners need to plan for a space that meets the needs of their stakeholders. This might mean age-appropriate design, accessibility, protection from vandals or marauding animals, etc. It also can include unique design elements. For instance, Ephrata's Community Garden, in partnership with the Grant Conservation District and WSUE Master Gardeners, is planning a colorful border that will attract native pollinators. Soap Lake hopes to incorporate elements of permaculture (perennial food crops) into their community garden.

Get involved in these worthwhile local community garden efforts.

Sources:

1. Starting and Sustaining a Community Garden, presented by Pat Munts (pmunts@spokanecounty.org) at the 2012 Washington State Master Gardener Advanced Education Conference
2. American Community Garden Association, www.communitygarden.org
3. Benefits of Community Gardening, www.gardendallas.org
4. Community Gardens: Lessons Learned, www.ncbi.nim.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1447988/

Community Garden Program	Ephrata	Soap Lake
Regular Meetings	2nd Tuesday each month, 6:30 pm, Health Dept., Grant County Courthouse	1st Thursday each month, 6 pm, Soap Lake Public Library
Work Days	March 23rd and April 27th	April 6th, 10 am
Gardener Signup	City Hall or Library	Soap Lake City Hall
		May 4th Grand Opening **Contact:** Tracy Gardner (509-460-1040) or tracyjayne@live.com

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
GRANT/ADAMS COUNTY EXTENSION
Master Gardener Program

WSU Extension Master Gardener Basic Training begins September 11, 2013. *(You will need your own computer and email address.)* Applications are due by August 1, 2013. The training, which is online from WSU, also includes local classroom work and field trips. The 18 topics of training range from Basic Botany and Entomology to Vegetable Gardening and Water Conservation:

Basic Botany · Garden Management · Basic Entomology · Insect Identification & Management ·Integrated Pest Management · Pesticide Safety & Use · Soil Management · Disease Identification & Management · Composting ·Lawn Care & Management · Vegetables · Small Fruits · Tree Fruits ·Weed Control · Landscape Plants · Pruning Principles · Water Quality Issues · Ornamental Plant Care · Plant Problem Diagnosis

To apply to the Master Gardener Program, fill out an application and send it in by 8/1/13. A leaflet explaining the program can be obtained at:

http://county.wsu.edu/grant-adams/gardening/Documents/MG%20Training/0MGBasicTrainingBrochure2013.pdf

Classroom Instruction: Learn How to be a Blue Ribbon Winner at the Fair When Exhibiting Your Vegetables, Fruits, and Herbs . . . *By Mona Kaiser*

On Saturday July 27, 2013, 10 to 11:30 am in the Fuller Building (the Grange Hall) at the Grant County Fair Grounds, WSU Grant-Adams Master Gardeners will lead a classroom instruction for Youth (5 – 18 yrs) exhibitors. The instruction will sharpen your awareness, making it easier to become a Blue Ribbon winner with your horticulture exhibits.

All requirements are laid out in the Grant County Fair Exhibit book, but sometimes it's easier if someone can verbally outline the requirements. In this classroom instruction, Master Gardeners will talk about:

1. Selecting and Preparing Vegetable and Fruit Specimens for Exhibit
2. Selecting and Preparing Cut Herbs for Exhibit
3. What the Judges Will Be Looking For
4. The importance of Accurately Filling out the Exhibit Form for Exhibitor Recognition

There will be time for your questions and answers and sample exhibits to view, critique, and set up. For more information call 509-246-0641 or email raleka51@yahoo.com.

Challenging Weeds of A Noxious Nature . . . *By Mark Amara*

The 16th Annual Noxious Weed Conference held at Big Bend Community College, Moses Lake, in January 2013 was an opportunity to learn about weeds, bio-controls, and cultural and herbicide management strategies.

Noxious weeds were described as destructive, aggressive and difficult to control as outlined in Washington State statute RCW 17.10. The goal of that statute aims to limit economic loss and adverse effects to Washington's agricultural, natural, and human resources by limiting the presence and spread of noxious weeds on all terrestrial and aquatic areas in the state; RCW 17.04 and RCW 17.06 designates (county) weed control districts; WAC 16-750, is a state noxious weed list of the names of those plants which are highly destructive, competitive, or difficult to control by cultural or chemical practices while WAC 16.752 is a list of the targeted prohibited quarantine weeds.

According to the State of Washington, there are three classes of weeds, A-C. Class A weeds are not native to Washington and are usually of limited distribution. For 2013, in this category there are 41 species. Class B weeds are limited in distribution and pose threats to agriculture and nonagricultural areas. The goal for Class B weeds is to contain, control and eradicate the 62 identified species (for 2013). Class C weeds are widespread or of special interest to the agricultural community. There are 44 species in this group this year. Another state identified category is a Monitor List which targets new weeds to Washington that may be spreading and to study where they are occurring, though there are no legal or regulatory requirements with them.

These lists change from year to year. New weeds of note include French Broom, a Class A weed, which currently occurs in western Washington. It is a shrubby legume that may be evergreen or deciduous with 4-10-½ inch yellow flowers and is similar in appearance to Scotch Broom. Tall Hawkweed is a new Class B weed that occurs in meadow and range ecosystems. It is a perennial with a 3' tall erect head, grows in shallow sites or coarse textured soils on low fertility areas. Common teasel is a newly designated Class C weed that is present on roadsides and other disturbed areas and easily spreads into pastures. It is a 7' tall biennial.

French Broom

Tall Hawkweed

Seed containment is an issue with this weed as it is a prolific seed producer. Common Barberry is a new Class C weed which was originally introduced as an ornamental shrub; it is a deciduous yellow weed with a spiny stem, hanging yellow clusters with scarlet berries and it reproduces by rhizomes. As an alternate host for stem rust, it is of particular concern in agricultural areas where yield losses of 100% can occur in wheat and barley. Current state regulations require destroying these plants in wheat bearing regions. Barberry sightings may be reported to www.PNWstemrust.wsu.edu and questions may be directed about it to Diana Roberts at robertsd@wsu.edu or by calling (509) 477-2167.

Common Tansy

Other weeds to be on the lookout for include Common Tansy (also called garlic mustard) with kidney shaped white flowers and Scotch Broom, introduced from contaminated soil from western WA. The broom is a deciduous shrub with legume-like pods that produce over 10,000 seeds per year. For more information about noxious weeds of Washington, contact Wendy Descamp, Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board at wdescamp@agr.wa.gov or www.nwcb.wa.gov

Scotch Broom

Master Gardener Presentations Available for *2013*

General Gardening			
	Cynthia Calbick (509) 765-5474	• Putting Your Garden to Bed in the Fall	30 min
		• Plant Propagation – Multiply your Garden Plants	1 hour
		• Drought Tolerant Gardening	1-4 hours
	Barbara Guilland (509) 765-3219	• Basic Gardening Skills	1-3 hours
		• New Paths: Making Gardening Easier	45 min-1 hour
		• Everyone Lives in a Watershed	30 min-1 hour
	Mona Kaiser (509) 246-0641	• Putting Your Garden to Bed	30 min-1 hour
Native Plants			
	Cynthia Calbick (509) 765-5474	• Native Plant Gardening	1-4 hours
		• Landscaping with Native Plants	1 hour
Vegetable Gardening			
	Kris Nesse (509) 690-8542	• Variety of topics—vegetables, herbs, soil, seed starting, raised beds, tips to extend the harvest	30 min-2 hours
Ornamental Gardening			
	Mona Kaiser (509) 246-0641	• Using Ornamental Grasses in the Landscape	30 min-1 hour
		• Proper Rose Pruning	30 min-1 hour
		• Beneficial Insects vs. Their Insect Pest Enemies	30 min-1 hour
		• Deadheading Perennials-When, Why, How	30 min-1 hour
		• Staking Guidelines & Options for Perennials	30 min-1 hour
		• Lawn Care, Early Spring through Late Fall	30 min-1 hour
Trees and Shrubs			
	Barbara Guilland (509) 765-3219	• Trees and Tree Care in the Columbia Basin	1 hour
Shoreline Management			
	Cynthia Calbick (509) 765-5474	• Shoreline Garden Design	1 hour
	Barbara Guilland (509) 765-3219	• Redesigning Shoreline	30 min
Pest Management			
	Barbara Guilland (509) 765-3219	• New Invasive Insects: SWE and BMSB	1 hour
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 hours
Soil Fertility			
	George Roper (509) 488-3719	• Worm Composting	
Specialty Topics			
	Linda Crozier (509) 488-3538	• Wildflower Walk	Varies
		• Guides tour of Monument Hills near Quincy	Varies
		• Mosaic Stepping Stone	5 hours
	Terry Rice (509) 488-3871	• The Joy of Geraniums	1-2 hours
	Terry Rice and Linda Crozier	• Mother's Day Garden in a Pot	
	Mona Kaiser (509) 246-0641	• Youth Instruction: Exhibiting Your Vegetables, Fruits & Herbs at the Fair	

Save These Dates and Mark Your Calendars for Selected Events, Activities, and Festivals

March	21st - 7-9 pm 23rd - 10:30 am-12:30 pm 19th & 26th – 6-9 pm 30th -10 am to noon	Native Plant Gardening at Learning Center on Penn St. Moses Lake. Register at Moses Lake Parks & Rec Dept. (509) 764-3805 WSU Extension Cultivating Success Sustainable Small Farms Education Workshop, designed as specialty crop grower entrepreneurial class, at BBCC ATEC Center, Hardin Room Free Gardening Class, Soap Lake Community Garden site next to McKay Healthcare and Rehab, 127 2nd Ave. SW, Soap Lake
April	5th-7th 13th & 27th -10 am to noon	Sandhill Crane Festival, Othello - http://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org/ Free Gardening Class, Soap Lake Community Garden site next to McKay Healthcare and Rehab, 127 2nd Ave. SW, Soap Lake
May	11th 9 am – 1 pm	Master Gardener Grant-Adams Plant Sale at Moses Lake Farmers Market, McCosh Park, Moses Lake
June to October	First Fridays	Educational Presentations at Ephrata, Soap Lake, and Moses Lake Community Gardens, with Master Gardeners on hand to answer season appropriate gardening tips and answers to questions
July	27th 10 am – 11:30 am	Pre-Grant County Fair Produce Training for Youth (5-18) at Fuller (Grange) Bldg at Grant County Fairgrounds, Moses Lake
August	13-17	Grant County Fair, Grant County Fairgrounds, Moses Lake
Sept	10-13 11 26-28	Adams County Fair, Adams County Fairgrounds, Othello Master Gardener Training, starting Sept 11th, Wednesdays through December 2013. Recruitment Deadline, August 31st. WSU Education Master Gardener Conference, Everett

Master Gardener Plant Clinics

- Moses Lake Farmers Market, Every Saturday, May – October, 2013, 8 am - 12 noon in McCosh Park, Moses Lake
- Grand Coulee Farmers Market, First Saturdays: May 4, June 1, July 6, August 3 and September 7, 2013, 9 am – 1 pm, on Morrison Street across from Safeway, Grand Coulee
- Ephrata Farmers Market, Every Saturday, June-September, 2013, 8 am - 12 noon in Rock Park, on Division Street, Ephrata
- Othello Farmers Market, First Saturdays on July 6, 2013, August 3, 2013 and September 7, 2013 in Pioneer Park, 9 am – 1 pm, Othello