



WSU EXTENSION  
Thurston County

# The Extension Connection

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE. CHANGING LIVES.

July 2024

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

1st & 2nd Quarter 2024



Annie and Amanda mix buckwheat pancakes for a sensory evaluation at Garfield Elementary School. Students gave recommendations for how to tweak the recipe formulation, which will be used in school meal programs.

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*What's COMING UP IN EXTENSION?*

**Dirt Works - Open Garden & Classes**  
To learn more please visit:  
<https://extension.wsu.edu/thurston/gardening/community-events-and-outreach/>

**Thurston County Fair July 31 - August 4**  
[www.thurstoncountywa.gov/2024-thurston-county-fair-july-31-august-4](http://www.thurstoncountywa.gov/2024-thurston-county-fair-july-31-august-4)

**SNAP-Ed Food Demo at Olympia Farmers Market - August 22**  
<https://www.olympiafarmersmarket.com/>

CAHNRS FOR



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Thurston County WSU Extension builds the capacity of individuals, organizations, businesses and communities, empowering them to find solutions for local issues and to improve their quality of life. Extension collaborates with communities to create a culture of life-long learning and is recognized for its accessible, learner-centered, relevant, high-quality, unbiased educational programs.

*Connect with us:*



3054 Carpenter Road SE  
Olympia, Washington 98503  
Main Line: (360) 867-2189



## 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Emily Killeen

Thurston County 4-H for several years has participated in a grant funded healthy living program. Teen leader 4-H youth members are trained as “Teens As Teachers” to help deliver programs to Thurston County elementary age youth. The Teens As Teachers facilitate lessons on nutrition, physical fitness, and gardening during 4-H Day Camps, 4-H Afterschool Programs, and during partner organization out-of-school time offerings. One of the benefits of being a Teens As Teachers facilitator is the opportunity to attend the national-level 4-H Ignite Summit in Washington D.C.

Last March, three Teens As Teachers from Thurston County traveled to attend the 2024 4-H Ignite Summit. The four-day summit included inspiring speakers, hands-on workshops, career pathway exploration, tours of the national monuments, and networking with 4-H peers from all over the United States. While at 4-H Ignite, teens created Lead to Change action plans to help make positive change happen in their communities. The teens also had the opportunity speak with Senator Patty Murray during their trip.

The Thurston County 4-H Teens As Teachers who attended the 4-H Ignite Summit are using the skills they learned to bring new programs back to Thurston County and beyond! For example, Thurston County 4-H Teens Amelia A., Claire B., and Joanne K. served as workshop presenters for their peers during the 2024 State 4-H Teen Conference held at the end of June on the WSU Pullman campus. During the 4-H Teen Conference the Lead to Change action plan from the 4-H Ignite Summit culminated with a hands-on, 4-H Service-Learning project.



4-H delegates traveled to Ignite 4-H Conference in Washington D.C & had the opportunity to meet with Senator Patty Murray



Thurston County 4-H “Teens As Teachers” teen leaders at the WSU State 4-H Teen Conference. Amelia A., Claire B., and Joanne K. put their 4-H Ignite experience into action and served as workshop presenters during the conference on the WSU Pullman campus. Also pictured, Will A.



Staff and volunteers from WSU, Native Plant Salvage Foundation, Thurston Conservation District, and Oyster Bay Farm learn as they establish a new agricultural hedgerow that will protect water quality.

## WSU WATER RESOURCES & NATIVE PLANT SALVAGE PROGRAM

Erica Guttman

Continuing its work to expand beneficial hedgerows in Thurston County, the WSU water resources program, and its non-profit arm, Native Plant Salvage Foundation, recently partnered with Thurston Conservation District and Oyster Bay Farm for another action-based learning event that resulted in establishing a new agricultural hedgerow that will protect the water quality of Oyster Bay.

With funding from Thurston County's storm and surface water program and Washington Conservation Commission, the WSU/TCD team led an online training that built on a webinar presented in November 2023. Topics included goal-setting, planning, and implementation strategies. Both of these webinars are available as part of the [WSU Hedgerows Toolkit](#), under the [videos](#) section.

Following the webinar, participants and volunteers joined the WSU/TCD team and Oyster Bay farmers Melissa Barker and Nate Lewis to plant 1,360 trees and shrubs along 2,358 linear feet, in mostly parallel rows adjacent to a stream that cuts through the farm's operations and terminates in Oyster Bay. When mature, the eventual hedgerow-vegetated area will be about 19,700 square feet, achieving Melissa and Nate's goals of filtering and cleaning stormwater running off the farm fields, while simultaneously increasing pollinator and other wildlife habitat on the farm.

As detailed in the [WSU Hedgerows Toolkit](#), hedgerows can be sized to fit in almost any landscape—from urban to rural settings. They are a beautiful, low-cost, and valuable tool to achieve multiple benefits, including: screening for privacy and reductions of dust and noise; windbreaks, livestock shelter, and living fences; habitat for beneficial insects and pollinators to improve crop yields; and protecting local waterways by filtering runoff and protecting against flooding and erosion.

With ongoing support from Thurston County, WSU will continue collaborating with local farmers to assist in establishing hedgerows, while using these new projects to provide hands-on education to Thurston County residents interested in learning more about how they can use the WSU Hedgerows Toolkit to create the perfect hedgerow for their own site. In November 2024, we'll be partnering with another Thurston County farm and presenting more webinars. To learn more and participate in these future events, sign up [here](#).



Students searching for strawberries during field day at Garfield Elementary.

## SNAP-ED

Amanda Leoni

SNAP-Ed spent the Spring finishing up our Food Smarts Nutrition classes at Garfield Elementary. We planted out the school garden with students and hosted the entire school out in the garden for Garfield Field Day!

We spent time planning and connecting with several partners for upcoming events and hosted two cooking demos. One at the Olympia Farmers market where we made garlic scape pesto served on a turnip “chip”. The other was at the Chehalis Farmers market on opening day, we offered fresh fruit smoothies.

We finished setting up the Farm to Food Pantry Grant contracts that will allow farmers to provide farm fresh produce to local food pantries starting July 1st – June 30th 2025.



Making Garlic Scape Pesto at the Olympia Farmers Market



Digging up the trash filled pumpkins with first graders to see what decomposed and what didn't. We buried the trash filled pumpkins with both first grade classes in October and dug them up in April.



Students picking lemon balm to make garden tea on field day at Garfield Elementary



Annie and Amanda mix buckwheat pancakes for a sensory evaluation at Garfield Elementary School. Students gave recommendations for how to tweak the recipe formulation, which will be used in school meal programs.

Grazing school participants learn about grass plant anatomy and identification.

## AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

Stephen Bramwell

Early 2024 was packed, and the agriculture team strove to provide programs with tangible positive impact for farmers. Annie Salafsky helped complete \$500,000 in contracts with nearly 20 farms to provide cost-share funding to offset labor costs, and worked with vegetable growers, meat processors, shellfish operations, livestock producers, others. Project collaborators included Pac Mountain Workforce Development and Thurston EDC, with funding from Thurston County through the American Rescue Plan Act (<https://extension.wsu.edu/thurston/farm-labor/>). Annie and WSU Extension co-worker Marilyn Sitaker also helped the SW Washington Food Hub expand their Workplace Wellness Farmshare Program, their multi-farm box (CSA-style boxes at business pick-up locations regionally), <https://swwafoodhub.com/>, and plan a farm stand for the DuPont farmers market starting July 11th.



Cattle and sheep at the Grazing School. The attendees at the school managed small “herds” and set up paddocks to meet daily forage requirements.

Sierra Smith secured funding to develop camas plantings for future cultural harvests on WSU-owned property in collaboration with the Nisqually Tribe and others. He is also working with local ranches and Thurston County partners to develop a grasslands demonstration site, featuring education and research to teach the public, ranchers, and others about co-managing grazing lands for prairie habitat and livestock. The effort was featured here: <https://www.facebook.com/thurstonco/videos/7880395632019218>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- July 10th Northfork Land and Livestock Ranch ‘farm walk’ with the SW Washington Grazing Association
- Thurston County Fair, come see the WSU agriculture exhibit in the Sharp Building, and bring your questions! We’d love to talk to you about farming
- July launch of the SW Washington Food Hub Workplace Wellness Program (<https://swwafoodhub.com/workplace-wellness-farmshare/>), and Multi-Farm Boxes at area business pick-up locations (<https://swwafoodhub.com/multi-farm-box/>)

Spring 2024 also marked the second offering of the SW Washington Grazing School, held at Riverbend Ranch and the Skookumchuck Grange. 30 students attended, with instructors drawn from WSU, OSU, Ecostudies Institute, NRCS, Thurston Conservation District, US Fish Partners, the National Agroforestry Center, and even Lincoln University in New Zealand. The class ran four days with teams managing small livestock herds, allocating forage with electric fencing, and learning the fundamentals of forage growth and planned grazing.



**2024 FREE Composting Workshops**

*Presented by the Thurston County Master Recycler Composter Program*

Date	Location	Topic	Time
Tuesday March 12	Zoom	Introduction to Home Composting	noon - 1 p.m.
Tuesday April 9	Dirt Works Demonstration Garden	Worm Composting	11 a.m. - noon
Saturday May 4	Closed Loop Demonstration Garden	Food & Yard Waste Composting	10 - 11 a.m.
Thursday May 16	Tumwater Library	Food & Yard Waste Composting	1 - 2 p.m.
Wednesday June 12	Dirt Works Demonstration Garden	Food & Yard Waste Composting	11 a.m. - noon
Sunday July 14	Closed Loop Demonstration Garden	Food & Yard Waste Composting (Fall focus)	6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Saturday August 17	Dirt Works Demonstration Garden	Food & Yard Waste Composting	10 - 11 a.m.
Saturday Sept. 7	Closed Loop Demonstration Garden	Worm Composting	11 a.m. - noon
Wednesday October 2	Zoom	Food & Yard Waste Composting (Fall focus)	11 a.m. - noon
		Introduction to Home Composting (Fall focus)	noon - 1 p.m.

For more information and location directions visit: [extension.wsu.edu/thurston/gardening/composting/](https://extension.wsu.edu/thurston/gardening/composting/)

WSU Thurston County Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension office. If you require special accommodations please contact the Thurston County Master Recycler Composter office at least two weeks prior to the event at [master@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:master@co.thurston.wa.us) or 360-867-2189.

# WSU MASTER GARDENER & MASTER RECYCLER COMPOSTER PROGRAMS

Cori Carlton & Jenni Post

This year continues to be a busy one for the WSU Master Gardener and Master Recycler Composter Programs.

22 WSU Master Gardener trainees continued their 6-month training to become certified WSU Master Gardener volunteers. They graduated on June 7 from the classroom portion of their training. They will become certified volunteers after their 60 hours of community service is completed.

Our demonstration gardens are celebrating milestone anniversaries. Dirt Works garden turns 35 years old, Closed Loop Park garden turns 30 and Olympia Farmers Market Garden turns 29. We have been hosting multiple community workshops at these sites. Our Dirt Works Garden has been busy with an irrigation system upgrade. Phase one of this multi-year project was completed in April. Phase 2 will begin in July.

The Dirt Works Food Bank Garden has seven new raised beds! Special thanks to garden managers Sharie McCafferty and Shirley Reynoldson for their tremendous effort in getting this done. Also special kudos to intern Terry Wilcox for sharing her many tools and extensive wood working expertise. Pictured above are (from L-R) Terry Wilcox, Shirley Reynoldson, Keith Gookins, Sharie McCafferty, Annie Brooks, Tracy and Bill Osterhout, and Dennis Voboril. Not pictured, but deserving of many thanks, are Ralph Gross, Gina Hitchcock, Karen Ahnemann, Kathy Burrell, Anna Hanson, Linda Bennett, and Tina Wagner. A great job was done by all-truly a team effort!

We hosted a Gardening and Composting Workshop Series at Tumwater Library from March – May. The series will start again in September – October. Visit our website for workshop themes and further details. Workshops are free and open to the public.

In May Master Recycler Composter volunteers celebrated International Composting Awareness week by hosting three public composting workshops. We will continue to host monthly composting workshops through October. Check our website for further details.

Passionate about waste reduction? 2024 Master Recycler Composter new volunteer training information will be posted on our webpage from after July 15. Applications are due by September 1 and training runs from September 19 and runs through November 14. Do you have a gardening, composting, or recycling question? Email our certified volunteers via our Question/Answer clinic at [master@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:master@co.thurston.wa.us).

Check our website for further details on our outreach activities and demonstration gardens.

WSU THURSTON COUNTY EXTENSION

## Dirt Works Demo Garden 2024 Open Garden Dates

DIRT WORKS GARDEN INSIDE YAUGER PARK, OLYMPIA WA

Explore 2 acres of inspiring fruit, vegetable, sensory, and ornamental gardens that use scientifically-proven gardening practices.

Dirt Works Demonstration and Learning Garden is located inside Yauger Park at 530 Alta Street SW, Olympia 98502 in West Olympia.

Dirt Works is open on the following days/times:

Tuesdays	9 a.m. to 1 p.m.	March to October
Wednesdays	5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	July 24, August 7, August 21
Saturdays	9 a.m. to Noon	April 13, May 18, June 15, July 13, August 27, September 14, October 12

Visiting the garden is free and open to all. No pre-registration needed, just show up.

Scan code for more information and location directions.

Website: [extension.wsu.edu/thurston/gardening/](https://extension.wsu.edu/thurston/gardening/)  
 Email: [master@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:master@co.thurston.wa.us)  
 Phone: 360-867-2189

Dirt Works Garden is sponsored by:

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension office. If you require special accommodations please contact the Master Recycler office at least two weeks prior to the event at 360-867-2189.

## 2024 Master Recycler Composter Volunteer Training

**WANTED:** Passionate people who love to:

- Recycle or compost
- Re-use or re-purpose items
- Reduce food waste
- Raise community awareness

The WSU Thurston County Extension and Thurston County Public Works are recruiting for the 2024 Master Recycler Composter (MRC) Volunteer Training.

MRC volunteers are trained on how to reduce waste and increase public awareness about waste reduction, recycling, and composting in Thurston County. Upon completion of training, course graduates agree to give a minimum of 25 hours of yearly service inspiring others to reduce waste at home and work.

2024 Training Schedule	Training Fee
Thursdays 6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. September 19, 26 October 3, 10, 17, 24 November 7, 14	\$25
Saturdays 9:00a.m. – 1p.m. September 21 October 5 November 2	Application Period
	Monday, July 15 at 5 p.m. to Sunday, September 1 at 5 p.m.

Scan code for more information

Visit our website for more information on the MRC Volunteer Training <https://extension.wsu.edu/thurston/gardening/mc>

Applicants must be 18 years of age or older, and either live, work, or operate a business in Thurston County.

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension office. If you require special accommodations please contact the Thurston County Master Recycler Composter office at least two weeks prior to the event at [cori.carlton@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:cori.carlton@co.thurston.wa.us).