

2009 Master Gardener Classes

The West Virginia University Extension Service conducts the Master Gardener program in West Virginia with individual county programs. Locally there are two training programs planned for the Fall of 2009. One program will be in Martinsburg and one will be in Berkeley Springs. The training provides gardeners with the opportunity to improve their horticultural knowledge and then share their experience with the public through organized volunteer activities. Topics covered include: botany, soils, pest management, plant problem diagnosis, fruits, vegetables, landscape design and plant propagation. The classes run for 11 consecutive weeks. This year classes will be offered in two locations in the Eastern Panhandle. The fee for materials is \$100. The Berkeley/Jefferson County class will be held on Tuesdays (from 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.), beginning September 1, 2009. The Morgan County class will be on Thursdays (from 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.), beginning August 27th.

The Berkeley County Extension Office is located at 400 West Stephen Street, Suite 302, Martinsburg telephone 304-264-1936. The Morgan County Extension Office is located at 129 Fairfax Street, Berkeley Springs, telephone 304-258-8400.

If interested in becoming a Master Gardener, contact the respective Extension Office. For an application for the Berkeley/Jefferson class go to the <http://www.berkeleyextension.com> website under the Agriculture and Gardening section listed as Master Gardener Class Application. Applications will be accepted for the Fall 2009 Berkeley/Jefferson class until noon on Wednesday, July 29, 2009. Due to space limitations, it is possible that not everyone who applies for the 2009 class will be accepted.

What is a Master Gardener?

The Master Gardener Program got its start in Seattle, Washington in 1973 and since then has spread to all 50 states. The West Virginia Master Gardener Program started in 1993 in Marshall County under the leadership of John Jett, WVU Extension Service horticulture specialist and key county Extension agents. Master Gardeners are now active in 41 of West Virginia's 55 counties. There are over 1,249 active Master Gardeners in WV. In 2005 Master Gardeners, across the state, volunteered approximately 33,104 hours of service to their communities at a value (at \$14.00/volunteer hr) of \$463,456.

Master Gardener volunteers are trained in classes and activities provided by the West Virginia University Extension Service and Extension Agents in the counties. Master Gardeners receive a minimum of 30 hours of instruction. Along with an orientation, volunteers are given core training in plant science, plant propagation, soil science, plant pathology, entomology, communication skills, and integrated pest management. These subjects give the Master Gardener trainee the horticultural knowledge necessary to assist extension staff effectively. Specific gardening topics like pruning techniques, composting, house plants, vegetable culture, herbs, tree and small fruit culture, lawns and landscape design allow the Master Gardener to specialize in an area of particular personal interest. After successfully completing the Master Gardener training program, each volunteer receives a Master Gardener Intern certificate. To fulfill their volunteer commitment, West Virginia Master Gardener Interns:

- answer gardening questions
- assist county extension office staff
- conduct garden tours
- conduct school gardening programs
- coordinate Master Gardener programs
- create and maintain community and school landscapes
- conduct plant clinics
- garden with the elderly and disabled
- make home gardening visits
- photograph Master Gardener activities
- plan and complete community beautification projects
- present lectures or demonstrations to groups interested in horticulture
- staff county and state exhibits
- work on special events

After an intern has satisfactorily completed the formal training and 30 hours of volunteer service, he or she then receives an official Master Gardener certificate and name badge. To maintain the title of Certified Master Gardener, a volunteer is required to attend a minimum of six hours of education and serve a minimum of twelve hours' volunteer time per year. The Master Gardener designation becomes void when an individual ceases active participation in an organized program. Many county programs have established local associations that provide leadership and sustain Master Gardener programs and activities. For more information about local Master Gardener programs contact your county Extension office.

West Virginia Gypsy Moth Suppression Program

The Gypsy Moth Suppression Program is a cooperative regional suppression program between landowners, the County Commissions in the generally infested counties, The West Virginia (WVU) Cooperative Extension Service, WVDA, and the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USDA-FS). Aerial treatments will be done in the generally infested area on a demand basis only to minimize the damage to forests and reduce the impact of the gypsy moth in future years. Treatments will not be done with the intent of eradicating the pest. Landowners in the 34 participating counties of West Virginia that have had problems with the gypsy moth may sign up for the program any time between now and the end of August at the West Virginia University (WVU) Extension Service county office, or through the WVDA offices at: Charleston (304) 558-2212, Elkins (304/637-0290), New Creek (304)788-1066, or Morgantown (304) 285-3133. The completed applications must be submitted by August 31, 2009. Brochures about the gypsy moth and the 2010 CSCL Program are also available from Extension agents or they can be downloaded from the WVDA website at www.wvagriculture.org. A gypsy moth egg mass survey is needed to determine if your property qualifies for the CSCL Program. Contact your local Extension agent or the WVDA's Charleston or Elkins offices to obtain an egg mass survey application. This form may also be downloaded from the WVDA website. Landowners must provide a 7.5 minute topographic map with their property boundaries clearly marked, or an ESRI shape file projected in UTM Zone 17 - NAD 83. The WVDA cannot map your property for you. Topographic maps are available from the United States Geologic Survey at 1-800-ASK-USGS or their website at <http://store.usgs.gov>. A topographic map of the property must be attached to the application. Keys or combinations for locks must be provided with the application at the time of sign up in order that the egg mass survey evaluation can be completed. The minimum acreage required to participate in the CSCL Program is 50 contiguous acres or more of wooded land. If you have fewer than 50 acres, you may contact neighbors and join their property with yours to meet the minimum acreage requirement. Treatment blocks must be made as rectangular as possible in order to be treated properly by aircraft without incurring significant overspray. The presence of electrical transmission lines, communication towers, etc., may prohibit some proposed treatment blocks, or portions of these blocks, from being treated. Treatment costs vary from year to year depending on the aerial contract cost (i.e. fuel, pesticide, and spray application). In the past the WVDA received cost sharing dollars from the USDA-FS that paid approximately 50 percent of the actual treatment cost. According to the USDA-FS, this cost sharing may no longer be available. If the cost sharing is no longer available the WVDA would still contract for the aerial application and pesticide and should be able to obtain a less expensive cost than private landowners working on their own. A final decision to participate in the program must be confirmed by the landowner signing a contract and making a deposit to the WVDA by December 5, 2009. The amount remaining must be paid to the WVDA prior to actual treatment. Notification of the deadline for final payment will be made by mail. For more information, contact Gary Gibson, Director or S. Clark Haynes, WVDA, Assistant

Division Director of the Plant Industries Division in Charleston, at 304-558-2212 or Quentin "Butch" Sayers, WVDA, Gypsy Moth Program Manager, at 304-788-1066.

Additional information and assistance may also be obtained through you local WVDA offices located at: Charleston (304) 558-2212, Elkins (304) 637-0290, Morgantown (304) 285-3133, and New Creek (304) 788-1066. Or on the WVDA New Creek Web site at <http://wvdanewcreek.home.comcast.net>

Bloomin' Bash at Hillbilly Daylilies ~ A fun event for the whole family to benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Eastern Panhandle This July, Hillbilly Daylilies will present their first-ever "Bloomin' Bash" to benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Eastern Panhandle. Hillbilly Daylilies, located in Bunker Hill, WV, specializes in field grown daylilies and every July invites customers to visit and experience over 350 varieties of daylilies in peak bloom. Customers are able to purchase the daylilies of their choice and Hillbilly Daylilies digs and prepares them on the spot. The Bloomin' Bash, being held on July 11th, will not only showcase thousands of beautiful flowers in bloom, but also gives visitors the chance to participate in several educational workshops ranging from growing a kitchen herb garden to encouraging pollination in your own back yard. Hillbilly Daylilies owner and event coordinator, Lisa Giles, is excited about this inaugural event, "We have worked very hard to make this a fun event for the whole family. With the educational workshops for adults, fun garden projects for the kids, live music, vendors, and food, there really is something for everyone. And, it is a great way to support Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Eastern Panhandle." Admission is \$5 per person and children under 5 years old are admitted free. Gates open at 9am and the event lasts until 6pm. Food and ice cream will be available from Texas BBQ and Rock Hill Creamery with live bluegrass music by Sleepy Creek and Skystone. Antique Tractors and Steam Engines will be on display and daylilies will be for sale. The Berkeley-Jefferson Master Gardener Association will be on hand giving out lots of gardening info and answering questions. Workshops for adults include Growing a Kitchen Herb Garden 10am; Rain Barrels 11am; Native Plants in the Home Landscape 12pm; Composting 101 1pm; Pollinators in Your Backyard 2pm; and Growing Herbs to Use and Enjoy 3pm. The kid's tent will be hosted by Denis Scott, WVU extension agent, and will hold fun garden projects. For more information and to pre-register for workshops: call 304-229-6698 or visit their website at www.HillbillyDaylilies.com Hillbilly Daylilies is located at 1105 Giles Mill Road, Bunker Hill, WV 25413.

July 18, 2009-Food Preservation Workshop

Just as home gardens and farm markets are brimming with produce, a timely food preservation workshop will be given on Saturday July 18, 2009 at Trinity Episcopal Church, 200 West King Street, in Martinsburg. Guest speakers including, Sue Flanagan, Berkeley County WVU extension agent, and Master Gardeners will give demonstrations and provide directions on proper food handling, crop selection and home preservation of fruits and vegetables. The speakers will demonstrate the different methods of preservation such as canning, freezing, vacuum sealing, drying or cold storage and discuss how to choose the best varieties of produce from the garden or the market. There will also be educational exhibits, light refreshments and door prizes. The workshop is free and open to the first 60 participants that pre-register by calling 304-264-1936. Sign-in will be from 8:30-9:00am and the workshop will be 9:00am-11:00am. Please use the entrance and parking lot on the College Street side of the church. This workshop is sponsored by the Berkeley County WVU Extension Service, Berkeley Jefferson Master Gardener Association and co-sponsored by Trinity Episcopal Church.

Berkeley County Youth Fair Dates and Dates to remember

- Poultry Blood Testing - Saturday, July 18, 2009 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am.
- 62nd Annual Berkeley County Youth Fair dates are August 3 - 8, 2009
- West Virginia State Fair dates 14-22, 2009. For more information on the WV State Fair go to <http://www.statefairfowv.com/>
- Penn State Agricultural Progress Days August 18 - 20, 2009 for more information go to <http://apd.psu.edu/>

Garden Tips

- Plant grape tomatoes for fall
- Seed beets
- Watch for Japanese beetles
- Plant Chinese cabbage

Until next time ... Happy Gardening and Farming!