



Submitted by Arvis Sullivan

We had a banquet on September 27th, 2021 to end the season. There was a very good turnout at Double R in Elroy. Ridge Revels did a wonderful job of serving almost 30 master gardeners/guests. We are hoping to continue something like this in the next year. Suggestions for the future included: a gathering during December, nursery/garden center trip in the Spring and another progressive dinner or two at local gardeners next year.

Hear Ye !!! Hear Ye !!!

Holiday Get-together

Come join us for a last gathering the year 2021

*When: Saturday, December 4, 2021
Starting at 4 pm*

*Where: Margarete Hummelbeck
W7940 Klempay Rd
Mauston*

*Main Course will be supplied
As well as coffee and beverages*

*Please join us with either a **S**tarting appetizer,
a **S**ide dish, a **S**alad, or a **S**weet treat to pass*

RSVP *by November 27, 2021
Margarete at 562-3856
or Irene at 847-7562*

Hort - Q&A:



Here's a sample of horticultural questions received and answered by Juneau & Sauk County Agricultural Educator -, Alana Voss or a Juneau County Master Gardener Volunteer. Have a question or comment just call 608-847-9329 or cell 608-477-3945 or email alana.voss@wisc.edu

Juneau County - Extension, 220 E. State Street, Rm 104, Mauston, WI 53948, Website: <https://juneau.extension.wisc.edu/>

Greetings Friends!

It was so wonderful to see everyone at the meeting the end of September. I hope everyone has been able to enjoy being in their gardens this year while staying safe and healthy. As the year begins to wind down remember that you can input your volunteer and continuing education hours until December 31st, 2021. Due to Covid there is no required number of hours for volunteering, but there is still the required 10 hours for continuing education hours. We are still continuing to use the Online Reporting System (ORS) to input continuing education and volunteering hours and can be accessed at https://volunteers.wimastergardener.org/vms/sec_Login/. I would suggest entering any numbers you have for volunteer and continuing education hours for this year. Next year is going to open up more doors for flexibility in the number of hours needed to keep up your certification, but doesn't change until next year. If you need assistance or additional projects added for you to add your hours please feel free to contact me at 608-477-3945 or alana.voss@wisc.edu and I would be happy to help.

There is some exciting news coming from UW-Madison Division of Extension's Master Gardener Office on the new changes that are coming in January 2022! You should have all received the letter from Mike Maddox and Jay Dampier on Monday, October 10th and if not please see a copy of the letter (*Editor's Note: See Page 3*). (This is bringing the ability to volunteer in new places, more flexibility and less burdens from Master Gardener Program Requirements. Lastly the Associations can operate independently and decide on how they will manage their own memberships.

Master Gardeners can continue to be certified Master Gardeners with or without being involved in an Association. Continue to watch your emails (and mail boxes for those without email) to learn more on the upcoming changes for 2022 and when to re-enroll on the ORS website for the 2022 year. There are no dues needed to stay a certified Master Gardener (*Editor's Note: See note below from Maureen*) and if you have questions or need assistance you can still reach out to me continuing your certification status. I know the Association has been debating on their next steps and I think the new opportunities in 2022 may help with answering many of your concerns and the "what next" questions for the group. If you are still interested in seeing the group come together as an association or however you choose for your membership please continue to follow along with Master Gardener State office and Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA) for more details on the changes for 2022.

I know there are a lot of changes taking place in the last couple's years and a few more coming up in the New Year, but the hope is to make it better for all individuals involved with creating more flexibility and ease of access. As we work through these changes together, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or assistance needed to continue your great work as Certified Master Gardeners! Take care and enjoy this beautiful fall weather!

Keep Smiling,

Alana Voss

Agricultural Educator
UW-Madison | Division of Extension

Update from Maureen



At our recent gathering, I promised to gather information for those of you who would like to remain active in the Master Gardener program and remain members of WIMGA.

Your membership to WIMGA renews yearly and dues should be paid by January 15. The cost of membership is \$5.00 per year and is payable by check (made out to WIMGA). Send your check and personal contact information to:

Byron Hacker, WIMGA Treasurer, N4511 Highway 57, Chilton, WI 53014

Once again there have been major changes in the UW Extension Master Gardener Program. Please read the message reprinted in this newsletter for the new guidelines and procedures. By my reading many of the earlier program changes have been reworked and it is now easier to work independently without requesting program approval for every project.

If you need additional information regarding WIMGA, feel free to contact me.

Maureen Fox
(608)462-4228 or (608)548-5013
mefox@umich.edu



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

HORTICULTURE PROGRAM

Updates to the Master Gardener Program

Extension is excited to bring you a set of updates to our Master Gardener Program that will create more opportunities for you, broaden our reach in communities, and address the great feedback we've received from you. We're announcing a new framework that is in direct response to what you've been asking for!

Before we detail what's in store, we want to thank you for the dialog you've participated in and the feedback you've provided on making our program even better. We at Extension cannot deliver on our mission of bringing University research to communities across the state without your help and your dedication. You are vital to improving our communities, and it's with that in mind that we're eager to have your help in our improvements.

Here is a brief overview of the updates that are detailed fully below

- Increased ability to volunteer where you want.
- More flexibility and reduced burden in the Master Gardener Program requirements.
- Associations can operate independently

More opportunities to share your skills and knowledge

We want to make it easier for you to choose where you provide your horticulturally-related community service. With the new framework, you can choose what public organizations you'll volunteer for without having to go through an Extension project approval process. In doing this, you will be a volunteer of that organization, which will take the lead instead of Extension in coordinating and guiding your activities. As long as the volunteer service falls within our Master Gardener Program purpose you can count it toward your Master Gardener requirements. Our hope is that this allows you to keep doing the activities you've done with as little disruption as possible while also exploring additional opportunities in your community. This will create stronger local connections and broaden our reach for both local and statewide needs.

Changing program requirements

We want to make it easier to become a Master Gardener and maintain your Master Gardener status!

First, we're eliminating the need for new Master Gardeners to obtain a criminal background check and take mandated reporter training to enter the program. Minimal conditions of service will still be required, such as a Code of Ethics agreement.

You will need to seek to understand, follow, and abide by the policies and guidelines of the organization's you volunteer for. For example, if you volunteer in an Extension office to do horticulture diagnostics, you will still need to do our criminal background check and conditions of service; similarly, if you are working in a garden at a school or hospital, that location may have their own requirements. It really depends on where you volunteer!

Second, we are changing our annual enrollment requirements. You should still strive to report 24 hours of community service and 10 hours of continuing education by December 31, annually. If you report less, you will remain in the program with no penalty, and will no longer require an exempt status. We hope this better accommodates the busy lives and schedules of our volunteers, without additional paperwork. We hope this change also makes the program more accessible to new members.

Recognizing associations' autonomy

Extension will no longer need to pursue and complete Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with associations. We were able to find a path forward without this added burden. Associations are independent of Extension and operate without the requirements of university policies and procedures. Associations may also choose how to manage their own membership.

Addressing feedback and your suggestions

We heard loud and clear that there is a real need for flexibility in terms of the Master Gardener Program, how you benefit communities, and what makes a successful volunteer. We are confident that the changes described above continue to support your love of learning while also opening up new avenues for you to try new things and flex the creative muscles we know you have.

We will begin implementing our new framework on January 1, 2022. Until then, all current procedures remain the same. As we continue to work through the details, we need your help! Please send us your thoughts and questions so we can use them to inform our future state. Please submit them here and we'll be collecting those for a video Q-and-A we'll be releasing in early November.

We will continue to provide updates and look for ways to ask for feedback as we move forward.

Sincerely,

Jay Dampier
jay.dampier@wisc.edu

Mike Maddox
mike.maddox@wisc.edu

Now is the Time to Start Preparing Next Year's Spring Garden

Reprint from Dave's Garden by Laura Foreman September 18, 2017

Good garden preparation now means healthier blooms and plants in the spring.

There's a saying in the business world that works well in gardening, too: "Proper preparation prevents poor performance." When it comes to gardening, preparation (particularly of the soil) is essential for growing healthy plants. Many gardeners wait until the snow melts in the spring to begin preparing for the growing season, but by then, you're already off to a late start. In reality, the best time to prepare for the spring growing season is after you've harvested your fruit and vegetables for the year and before the first frost, which in many areas means *now* is the perfect time to start. If you're not sure what to do or where to begin, here are a few suggestions.

Remove Debris, Leaves, and Weeds

Editor's Note: See page 5 for an alternate view

Pull anything that's dead or dying and tear the large weeds and their roots from your garden beds. It's often hard to pull weeds during the growing season, especially if they're tangled up with the rest of your plants. Instead, try pulling them when you pull your annuals to help reduce their population in your garden the following spring.

The soil is arguably the most important part of your garden. Once the growing season has finished, think about having your soil tested. A soil report will not only tell you what's in your soil, but it will also offer suggestions of things to add into it to make it balanced and healthy.

Don't fertilize without knowing exactly what to add. Use a test kit like this one for an exact reading.

When you add amendments now rather than in the spring, you give them ample time to work themselves into the soil and ensure that your plants will be able to access them by the start of the growing season. Good amendments include fish emulsion, rabbit manure, and cottonseed meal for nitrogen, rock phosphate, wood ashes, bone meal, and fish waste for phosphorous, and liquid seaweed and well-rotted cow or poultry manure for potassium.

Many gardeners also apply compost to their soil in addition to these amendments. If you don't have a composter on hand, try checking with your local officials. Many cities offer their residents free or at least discounted compost. Be sure to dig into the soil about a foot or so to work in compost, manure, or any other amendments. Tilling aerates the soil, which helps oxygen reach further down into it. Place straw or shredded leaves over your garden beds when you're finished to prevent erosion. Keep in mind that if you use wood mulch, you may need to add some additional nitrogen into the soil, as woody mulch tends to use up nitrogen as it decays.

Renovate Your Garden

With fewer plants to worry about, it's easier to add on to your garden and improve the design of your beds. Did you plant a sun-loving plant in a shady spot? Now's the time to move it to a sunnier part of the garden. While you're inspecting your plants, take the time to remove any pests you see to keep them from infesting the entire yard later on.

If you've been thinking of incorporating raised beds into your garden, consider building them now to eliminate the potential time crunch you may feel when doing it in the spring and give the soil amendments you put into them sufficient time to settle. Fill your beds with finished manure, compost, and topsoil, and they'll be more than ready for planting in the spring.

If you've been thinking of collecting rainwater to use in the garden next year, now is also the time to purchase and position a rain barrel. Install one now and you'll be able to collect a full winter's worth of water.

Once you've cleared your garden of annual plants, you'll probably have a better view of the hardscaping and structures in it. Make repairs to worn or damaged fences, gates, trellises, and support structures, and give them all a good cleaning if you plan to put them away for the winter.

If you have a greenhouse or potting shed, give it a good scrub from top to bottom, paying special attention to the glass as you go. Wash pots and seed trays and cover them with plastic wrap or cloth to ensure they'll be ready to use when you need them in the months leading up to spring.

Take this time to clean your tools, so they stay in great shape for the following spring. Sharpen the blades of cutting tools and remove any dried-on dirt from hand and garden tools. This will help prevent rust and wear. Toss any old or broken tools that seem to be beyond repair.

Order Spring Bulbs and Seeds

Vegetables like garlic, rhubarb, onions, leeks, and shallots and flowers like tulips, crocuses, daffodils, and hyacinths are most commonly planted in the fall before the first frost. Seeds (including those from poppies and other wildflowers) are also often planted in the fall so they can take root during the winter and bring life to your garden beds in the spring.

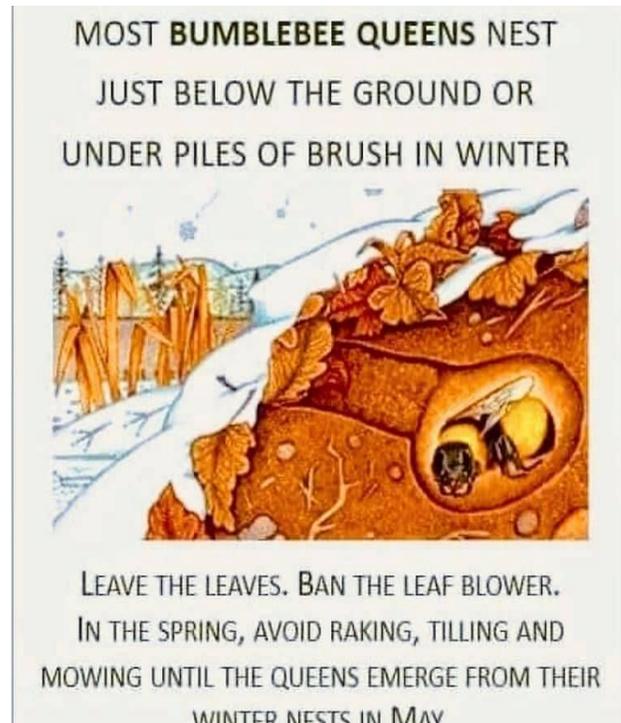
Plant crocus now for a springtime show.

By putting in the work now, you'll save yourself time in the spring and get your seeds, sprouts, and starts in the ground much sooner than you normally would.



LEAVE THE LEAVES

Maybe just rake them onto your flower beds and veggie plots. There are several reasons to leave the leaves. They add nutrients to your soil, acting as a natural fertilizer as they decompose over the winter and resulting in healthier plants in the spring. Leaf litter is a vital food source for decomposers, like millipedes, snails, and worms. In turn, these beneficial decomposers are creating beautiful soil and providing food for our songbirds, and 15 percent of bee species nest in cavities, such as hollow plant stems or holes in wood so you are also supporting bees! Still not convinced? The layer of leaves act as a natural mulch and will provide an extra layer of insulation for your perennial plants. Spread Awareness and show that your yard is a native plant sanctuary for pollinators and other invertebrates!



Can woolly bear caterpillars really forecast the weather? Do they "bear" watching?

The woolly bear caterpillar, also called the black-ended bear and banded woolly bear, actually is the larvae of the Isabella tiger moth (*Pyrrharctia isabella*). Common throughout most of North America, that moth flutters yellow-orange and ecru wings lightly marked with darker stripes and spots.

All the woolly bears are preparing for their winter hibernation now, where an antifreeze-like compound prevents them from freezing.

The worms supposedly have 13 segments, each of which represents one week, with the black segments meaning bad weather, the reddish-brown segments good weather.

Naturally, we aren't supposed to take any of this too seriously. It's just one of those weird weather prediction tricks rural folk used to come up with back before there was Internet to entertain us. Others include how tight the corn husks are, how high the hornets' nests hang, and the shapes inside persimmon seeds.

WOOLLY BEAR CATERPILLAR WINTER PREDICTIONS



HARSH WINTER. THE MORE BLACK THE MORE HARSH



MODERATE WINTER



MILD WINTER. THE MORE BROWN THE MORE MILD



WINTER BEGINS HARSH. ENDS MILD (MORE BLACK NEAR HEAD)



WINTER BEGINS MILD. ENDS HARSHLY (MORE BLACK NEAR TAIL)

Reblooming plants reflect the growing season

Did you notice lilacs blooming in late summer and early fall? These are spring-blooming plants, so why were they blooming in again?

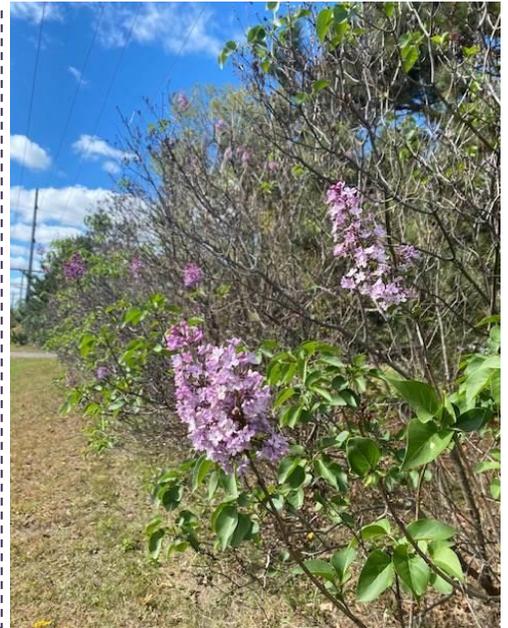
The weather has a lot to do with this phenomenon. Environmental stress such as heat and drought may cause plants to respond in a variety of ways. For example, plants may flower and produce a great deal of seed, called "masting," due to stressful environmental conditions. And there were loads of maple seeds this spring. Plants that rebloom are termed "remontant" when they flower a second time in one growing season.

Spring blooming plants produce or "set" their buds soon after blooming. If bud set is followed by environmental stressors such as heat or drought and then a cold period simulating winter, flower buds may break dormancy and open.

The good news is that late blooming won't significantly affect next year's spring bloom, since it usually only affects a few, but not all, of the flower buds developed for next year.

It's a good idea to note these kinds of observations in your gardening journal and record how the plants perform next spring. In the meantime, enjoy lilacs in autumn!

Information taken from Minnesota Extension Horticulture Educator, Julie Weisenhorn



Winter Squash



Delicata
Cut into rings, brush lightly with olive oil, season & roast on a baking sheet at 425F; use as a base for a pretty salad.



Acorn
Halve, bake at 425F cut side down for 30 mins; turn, add butter, salt, lots of pepper & maple syrup, then roast for 20 mins more.



Buttercup
Transformed by steaming! Halve & steam cut side down for 20 mins. Then mash with cream or olive oil & stir in sauteed onions, garlic & thyme.



Pie Pumpkin
Small but just enough for a pie! Or cookies or muffins or pancakes or Halve & roast cut side down for 1 hr.



Spaghetti
Halve, bake cut side down in 1 inch of water for 30 mins at 350F. Use a fork to tease out the noodly goodness - toss with pesto.



Sweet Dumpling
Cut off the top, scoop out the seeds, add butter, olive oil or cream, put the lid back on & roast for 1 hr.



Kabocha
Cut into large cubes & use in stews, chunky soups or curries. The skin is edible & nutritious!



Red Kuri
Also known as Hubbard. Makes a lovely fluffy mash.



Butternut
Perfect for soups because of its size & density. Saute with onions, garlic & tomato paste before simmering in stock.

Winter Squash

- ♦ Winter squash and pumpkins tolerate light frost but not a hard freeze.
- ♦ Squash harvested after frost will be sweeter but will not store as long as squash harvested before frost
- ♦ Cure them in warm dry conditions after harvesting
- ♦ Store winter squash in a cool, dry place; store winter squash at 50° to 55° F with a relative humidity of 50 to 70 percent—higher humidity can result in rot.
- ♦ Store cured squash on a shelf or rack, not on the floor.
- ♦ Acorn and spaghetti squash, about 1 month. The skin of Acorn-type squashes stored longer than 1 to 2 months will become yellow and the flesh stringy.
- ♦ Butternut, 2 to 3 months.
- ♦ Hubbard types, 3 to 6 months.
- ♦ Banana, 3 to 6 months.
- ♦ Buttercup or turban types, 3 to 6 months.
- ♦ Jack O' Lantern and Connecticut field pumpkins can be stored 2 to 3 months.

For all of the cooking suggestions, scoop out the seeds.

FORCING BULBS - A TRICK AND A TREAT!

Bruce Company Oct 7, 2021 | [Blog](#), [Garden Center](#)

Forcing spring bulbs into winter bloom was the rage in the 1800s. Hyacinths were especially popular. But there are others to try, too. I love pots of showy amaryllis during the holidays. Though fragrant paperwhites are not my favorite, they are very easy to force in vases. And with a little prep time, you can have pots of tulips and daffodils blooming in your kitchen in late February.

Hyacinths can be forced in special, pinch-necked containers called forcing vases, or planted in pots. They are very easy, as long as they undergo a chill period of 10-12 weeks. You can provide this by keeping the bulbs in your refrigerator for a few months. It is best to store them planted in their containers, watering as needed, so that the roots develop while the sleeping flower buds chill out. And if you plan to force them in a vase, keeping them in the fridge in paper bags will work just fine. *(Editor's Note: If planting hyacinth bulbs, use gloves; some people develop skin irritation after handling them.)*



In fact, you can force just about any kind of bulb. Tulips and daffodils will do best when they're chilled in soil. Plant the bulbs close together and just below the surface of the soil, leaving as much space available for root development as possible. Water them and set in a cool, dark place for 12-16 weeks. The inside corner of an unheated garage is ideal. You are looking for a temperature between 40 and 45 degrees. Keep the pots evenly moist, but never soggy. When the roots are visible through the pot's drainage hole, coax the bulbs out of hibernation in a cool spot with filtered light.

Paperwhites, cousins to the daffodil, are incredibly simple to force and are available in the Garden Center now. For best results, choose a deeper container as the bulbs will develop lots of roots. You can use a pot or a glass vase. Fill the container to within a half-inch of the top with gravel, pebbles or marbles. Set the bulbs on top and gently wiggle them into the gravel to keep them upright. Fill the container with enough water to just touch the bottoms of the bulbs. You should see flowers in 2 to 3 weeks.

Amaryllis are native to South Africa, and in our warmer regions, can be grown outside. In the chilly north, we enjoy their exotic blossoms indoors during the winter holidays. Like paperwhites, amaryllis are ready to grow as soon as you get them home. Choose a pot that's an inch larger than the diameter of the bulb and use well-drained potting soil. Plant so that the top third of the bulb exposed. We call these the shoulders of the bulb. Water sparingly until growth begins. When the first spike has finished flowering, cut it back and wait for the second. The Garden Center is expecting our first Amaryllis shipment to arrive next week.

And what to do with the bulbs when they are done blooming? Paperwhites have used all of the energy and should be discarded. Amaryllis can be moved outside in late April and fertilized through the summer. Start their dormancy period in early September and they will be ready to re-pot at the end of November.

And those hardy bulbs can be planted in the garden once the foliage yellows and the ground warms up. Cut back the foliage and be sure to plant them at the proper depth, about 3 times the height of the bulb. This is much deeper than they were planted in the pots. The bulbs may take a year or two off from flowering. And if you are unsure about the process of forcing, you still have about another month, right up until the ground freezes, to plant them in the ground. We know it's a lot of work, but those first flowers of spring make it all worthwhile. The rewards of delayed gratification are familiar to all gardeners.

Christmas Present Ideas for Gardeners

- Gardening gloves with reinforced or rubberized fingers
- A garden book or subscription to a gardening magazine
i.e.: Garden Gate- magazine - You can order and/or get a sample issue at www.gardengatemagazine.com
- Gift memberships to a local botanic garden or nature center
- Gift certificate from a garden center or nursery
- A nifty new tool such as by-pass blade type pruners and loppers or pruning saws
i.e.: Garden Supply Company - Check for useful information, ideas, etc. - <http://www.gardeners.com>
- Holiday gift plants such as poinsettia, Christmas cactus or an amaryllis
Or a handmade forced flowering bulb following directions at the top of this page.





UW-Madison | Division of Extension
Juneau County Courthouse
220 E. State Street, Rm 104
Mauston WI 53948

An EEO/Affirmative Action employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal Opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX and ADA requirements.

Reminders

- **Holiday Gathering - Saturday, Dec 4, 2021 - Please RSVP by Nov 27, 2021**
- **Volunteer Hours Requirements Due to COVID**
 - In 2021, you may report less than 24 hours of volunteer time at 2021 COVID approved projects (this may be zero hours). Only volunteer at approved projects if you feel you can do so safely
 - We continue to require the minimum of 10 hours of continuing education. The 10 hours of continuing ed plus completing all the volunteer mandates will be required to certify next year.
 - You have until December 31, 2021, to complete and report your hours @ ORS (ONLINE REPORTING SYSTEM) Login @ https://volunteers.wimastergardener.org/vms/sec_Login/
- **Have a Great Thanksgiving**
- **And a Safe Hunting Season**

Happy Thanksgiving

*We're Thankful For...
We're thankful for the basics:
food, clothing and comfortable shelter;
the rest is a bountiful bonus.
We're thankful for work, play,
and the treasured people
who make these experiences
richer and more meaningful.
We're most thankful
for family and friends,
especially the dear friends
who are reading this card!
Happy Thanksgiving!
By Joanna Fuchs*

