



Consumer Horticulture – Gardening in Michigan

Improving lives and communities through gardening education

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension consumer horticulture programs directly influence improvements in Michigan's economy while protecting natural resources.

- 75% - hotline callers with pesticide-use questions who were directed away from or reduced pesticide use.

- Nearly 4,000 Extension Master Gardener volunteers shared science-based, environmentally sound gardening knowledge with 397,410 Michigan residents.

- 74% - Smart Gardening program participants implemented knowledge gained in their own gardens.

- 86% - Smart Gardening program participants who made intentional choices to enhance pollinator survival in their gardens.



THE ISSUE

The actions of home gardeners positively or negatively impact important aspects of a sustainable future such as water quality, food security, healthy soils and pollinator protection. These actions can be influenced through science-based gardening education and increased knowledge of all areas of plant agriculture and research.

MSU EXTENSION ACTION

National gardening statistics reveal that nearly 70 percent of households engage in some type of gardening. Taking into consideration 2010 census data of Michigan households and average number of people per household, this equates to a potential consumer horticulture audience of over 6.7 million Michigan citizens.

In 2016, the MSU Extension Consumer Horticulture team reached over 18,500 Michigan residents with science-based, environmentally-sound gardening messages. Through trained volunteers, nearly 400,000 additional Michigan residents were reached.

THE IMPACTS

- Through the MSU Extension Master Gardener Program, **3,991 Extension Master Gardeners** from 75 counties volunteered **170,380 hours** to educate 397,410 Michigan residents on environmentally-friendly gardening practices.
- **\$4.24 million** - Economic contribution provided by Extension Master Gardeners to Michigan in 2016.
- More than 640 new Extension Master Gardener volunteers from 46 counties were trained in 2016.
 - › 27% - took the training to enhance their profession in green industry, education, health or food service related businesses.
 - › 22% - use the training to help them become better qualified to start a green industry business or work in the green industries.

Contact Us

Learn more about MSU Extension consumer horticulture programs:

http://www.canr.msu.edu/lawn_garden

- › 20% - enrolled in the training to receive the credentials and skills to help them in their current employment position with 18 percent indicating this would advance their current employment position.
- › 12% - will use the MSU Extension Master Gardener certification to help market their business.
- **The Gardening in Michigan (GIM)** website is an important source of horticulture and pest management information for home gardeners.
 - › Site reaches anyone interested in gardening, including home gardeners, community gardens, and small-scale urban farmers.
 - › Our audience continues to grow with 109,673 visits to the site in 2016 compared to 73,000 visits in 2015.
 - › Total page views in 2016 for the Extension news site falling into the category of "home gardening" was 1,874,955.
- **Smart Gardening** provides gardeners with environmentally-friendly, science-based gardening practices.
 - › There were 123 Smart Gardening educational programs and outreach events held in 2016, taking place in 22 Michigan counties and reaching 8,809 individuals.
 - › The fifth annual smart gardening conference attracted 261 participants from 39 counties where 74% of participants adopted Smart Gardening practices in their own gardens and 45% shared what they learned with others.
 - › The "Smart Gardening – Vegetables 101," a multi-lesson, online webinar course was attended by 174 participants who learned smart approaches to vegetable gardening.
 - › 84.8% reported an increased awareness or improved their skills to increase their yield, improve the quality of vegetables or reduce their inputs.
 - › 78% made use of sustainable gardening practices.
- **Toll-free Gardening Hotline and Ask an Expert**
 - › In 2016, more than 7,800 questions from residents representing every Michigan county were answered through the MSU Extension toll-free Lawn and Garden Hotline and 2,600 through Ask an Expert.
 - › Over 2,000 callers were directed away from pesticide treatments or offered information that reduced pesticide use, such as spot treatments.
- **Home Lawn & Garden Soil Test Self-mailer**
Nearly 3,500 soil tests and interpretations from 82 counties (an increase of 12% from 2014) were processed.
- **Nearly 200 additional local consumer horticulture programs** further enhanced educational outreach and MSU Extension's visibility in communities.

- **Over \$73,000 - spent on Michigan agriculture products** because of the Plants of Distinction program.



“The Master Gardener Training Course helped me get a part-time retirement job that has allowed me to grow and be linked to a larger community of plant enthusiasts. As a former English teacher, I am teaching a new botanical curriculum to others.”

- Training course participant