The University of Maryland Extension Home & Garden Information Center and Master Gardener Program work together to provide you with up-to-date, science-based information and answers to your yard and garden questions.

go.umd.edu/hgic  go.umd.edu/mg
Website

The Home and Garden Information Center (HGIC) develops and delivers science-based, sustainable gardening and integrated pest management education for better human and environmental health.

New and updated resources on:
- Composting and Climate Change
- Watering Trees and Shrubs
- Keys to Common Problems of Tomatoes, Squash, and Cucumbers
- How to Build a Bucket Garden
- Beach Leaf Disease, and more!

77% of the top 500 most viewed pages on the Extension website were on home gardening.

Feedback from Website Visitors
- 85% said the information was very helpful or somewhat helpful.
- 64% said they would recommend our site to a friend or colleague.

I work for the City of Rockville doing environmental outreach. I wanted to say how much I love your new pages on climate-resilient gardening. It is such a wealth of information and we plan to link to it on some of our updated webpages.

Thank you for putting together this set of resources on native plants that work well for lawns in Maryland. I have been looking for something like this and stumbled upon the link in Terp magazine. Happy to see my Alma mater provide such great tools!

Top 5 topics viewed on the website in 2023
- Recommended Native Plants
- Vegetable Planting Calendar
- Identifying Household Insect Pests
- How to Identify Poison Ivy
- Spiders in Maryland

Feedback from Website Visitors
- 85% said the information was very helpful or somewhat helpful.
- 64% said they would recommend our site to a friend or colleague.

New! Recursos en Español!
- 6 Pasos Básicos Para Empezar o Pantar un Huerto Vegetal
- Cultivar Hortalizas en Macetas
- Tipos de Huertos
- Construcción de Camas Elevadas Para un Huerto
**Results & Impact**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,386</td>
<td>people answered our survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94%</td>
<td>felt more confident about handling a plant, pest, or gardening issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91%</td>
<td>said they learned something new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>said they are very likely to recommend Ask Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73%</td>
<td>intend to change a practice or behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55%</td>
<td>expect to save time as a result of the answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48%</td>
<td>intend to manage a weed, plant disease, or pest problem without using pesticides</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6,386 questions answered in 2023

go.umd.edu/AskExtension

**Hot Topics in 2023**
- Crapemyrtle Bark Scale
- Boxwood Decline
- Cherrylaurel & Cherry Problems
- Aster Yellows Disease
- Spotted Lanternfly

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**Testimonials**

- This is a big THANK YOU for steering me in the right direction with my vegetable garden. So glad I contacted the Extension service before digging up the entire garden.
  - Deen, Harford County

- You all are wizards. Thank you once again for such thorough and informative replies.
  - Justin, Montgomery County

- Thank you so much for such a thorough response! I appreciate your thoughtfulness and look forward to harvesting my "bounty" at the appropriate time.
  - Lillian, Prince George's County

- I am grateful for the valuable information your team has shared with me. All responses have been prompt, professional, informative, and helpful. What a tremendous positive resource your center presents!
  - Vicki, Baltimore County

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**Ask Extension Online Service**

Our Certified Professional Horticulturists, Extension faculty, and Master Gardeners answer questions from Maryland residents. We help people use Integrated Pest Management and sustainable gardening practices to solve problems and support a healthy environment.
HGIC creates and shares educational content on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram.

Reach on Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube

1+ million views

The Maryland Grows Blog provides timely articles about food gardening, invasive species, solving plant problems, and supporting pollinators.

Most Viewed New Articles in 2023
- The Value of a Pile of Sticks
- Early Spring Lawn Tips
- Invasive Shrubs With Red Berries
- Mosquito Source Reduction
- Invasive Trees
- Starting with Small Fruits

Survey feedback
- 87% said the blog helped them learn something new.
- 70% said they considered changing garden practices as a result of reading.

Our quarterly newsletter delivers timely gardening resources, tips, and educational event notices.

9,312 subscribers
45k deliveries
24k opens
56% open rate avg.
HGIC educates the public through weekly and bimonthly gardening columns and interviews in the media.

Since 1996
HGIC has published a weekly gardening column and Q&A in The Baltimore Sun.

449K household subscribers
75K digital subscribers
12.5K views per issue
We published a bi-monthly gardening column in Washington Gardener magazine.

Collaboration
Faculty leaders in the field operate the county and city Master Gardener Programs, educate residents, support volunteers, and extend our statewide outreach.

Special thanks to faculty and students in the following University of Maryland departments who helped to support and advance our work in 2023:

- Department of Entomology
- Institute of Applied Agriculture
- IPM Net
- Community Learning Garden
- UMD Arboretum and Botanical Garden
- Plant Diagnostic Lab
- Department of Environmental Science and Technology
Top left: Master Gardeners from across the state gathered for the summer Grow It Eat It meeting in St. Mary’s County
Top right: A Dorchester County Master Gardener tabling an event at a local library
Bottom left: Charles County Master Gardeners demonstrating winter sowing
Bottom right: Master Gardeners and coordinators at Garrett County’s first Annual Tomato Festival

2,350
Master Gardener Volunteers

101,251
Volunteer Hours

$3.42 Million
Value of Volunteer Time to Maryland

11,904
Pounds of Produce Donated

22,838
Continuing Education Hours

48,844
People Educated
The State Office and local Master Gardener programs collaborated to host a Spring 2023 hybrid Master Gardener Basic Training.

Trainees reported a higher comfort level in teaching others about ALL Best Management Practices surveyed including:

- Testing soil to see if it needs amendments
- Incorporating a variety of plants that provide habitat & food for beneficial insects
- Reducing the amount of lawn on your property in favor of trees or other plants
- Reducing the use of fertilizers or using organic fertilizers

Trainees increased their proficiency in multiple volunteer skills important to the MG program including sharing scientific information with the public in a way that is easy to understand and doing research to learn more about horticultural subjects from reputable sources.

Praise from 2023 MG Trainee

“I encourage UME to continue with this format. The online classes in the evening give most people a good opportunity to attend. Also the exposure to the various instructors and experts from the state was really helpful. I would think it’s easier for them too so they don’t have to travel as much. I also really got a lot out of the Baltimore County supplemental training they did online and in person for us.”

Statewide Trainings

- Ask A MG Plant Clinic: 132 MGs attended
- Grow It Eat It: 128 MGs attended

State Continuing Education

The State Office hosted 12 continuing education events

State Office

609 MGs attended

181 Trainees

14 Counties

78%

20%
Local Master Gardener Programs offered 1,205 programs and 539 Ask a Master Gardener Plant Clinics in collaboration with food banks, nature centers, schools, libraries, garden clubs, non-profits, hospitals, nursing homes, and community gardens! As a result of these programs, participants reported:

- 76% feel more confident in their ability to care for their landscape and/or plants
- 79% increased their gardening knowledge
- 74% understand more about the ways they are connected to the environment and how their actions can impact the environment

Check out successes and stories from a few of our 21 local programs this year:

**Washington County**
- Children's Learning Activity team taught a record 654 children through STEM activities and hands-on learning in their garden beds

**Harford County**
- Partnered with Harford Land Trust to establish a Pollen-Aider yard certification program

**Howard County**
- Provided 62 Bay-Wise landscape consultations

**Charles County**
- Established a Senior Education Programs team conducting 16 classes with 267 participants

**Garrett County**
- Held its first Annual Tomato Festival which featured 85 taste testing samples

**Calvert County**
- Donated 4,500 pounds of produce from their project sites
In summer of 2023, we launched our pilot Sustainable Horticulture Certificate. This online, self-paced course is based on our Master Gardener basic training and provides an educational opportunity that does not require a volunteer commitment. The course is nine weeks, and participants are able to earn a certificate for 2.1 CEUs upon completion of a final exam and project.

As a result of this course, participants reported that they are very likely to:

- Use native plants in their landscape
- Add soil amendments to improve their soil health
- Reduce pesticide use or use pesticide alternatives
- Water wisely to reduce water use and plant disease
- Use native plants in their landscape
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- Use native plants in their landscape
- Add soil amendments to improve their soil health
- Reduce pesticide use or use pesticide alternatives
- Water wisely to reduce water use and plant disease

90.5% was the average course grade

Praise from Participants

“"The Sustainable Horticulture course allows you to gain knowledge about the environment and how you can make better personal decisions to manage your property that will also benefit the environment around you.""

“This is a good, broad introductory course to horticulture. It is jam packed with information. The pace is good and the tests are fair."
Answers to your gardening questions are only a click away! Our Certified Professional Horticulturists, Extension faculty, and Master Gardeners are ready to help.

Join us for a class, workshop, or event near you.

Order the Maryland Master Gardener Handbook.