2023 ANNUAL REPORT

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION



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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.





HOME& GARDEN INFORMATION CENTER

go.umd.edu/hgic

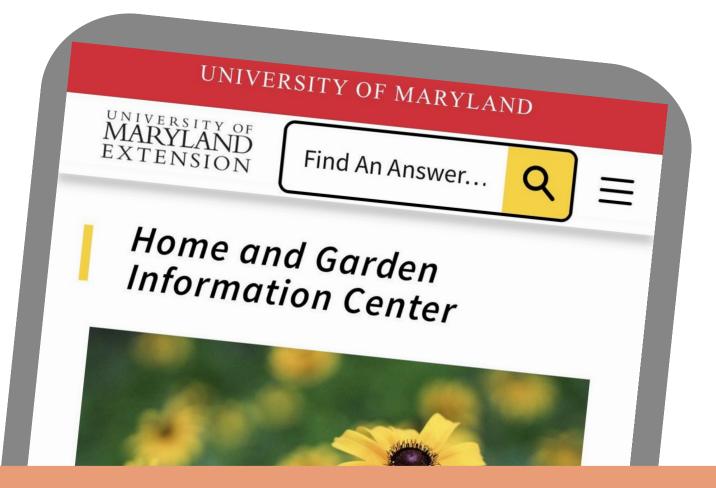
Website

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.



Feeback 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.



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

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!



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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



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.

Results & Impact

1,386

94%

- people answered our survey
- felt more confident about handling a plant, pest, or gardening issue
- said they learned something new

6,386 questions answered in 2023

go.umd.edu/AskExtension



90% said they are very likely to recommendAsk Extension

73% intend to change a practice or behavior

55% expect to save time as a result of the answer

48% intend to manage a weed, plant disease, or pest problem **without using pesticides**

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

Hot Topics in 2023

- Crapemyrtle Bark Scale
- Boxwood Decline
- Cherrylaurel & Cherry Problems
- Aster Yellows Disease
- Spotted Lanternfly

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

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

HOME& GARDEN INFORMATION CENTER

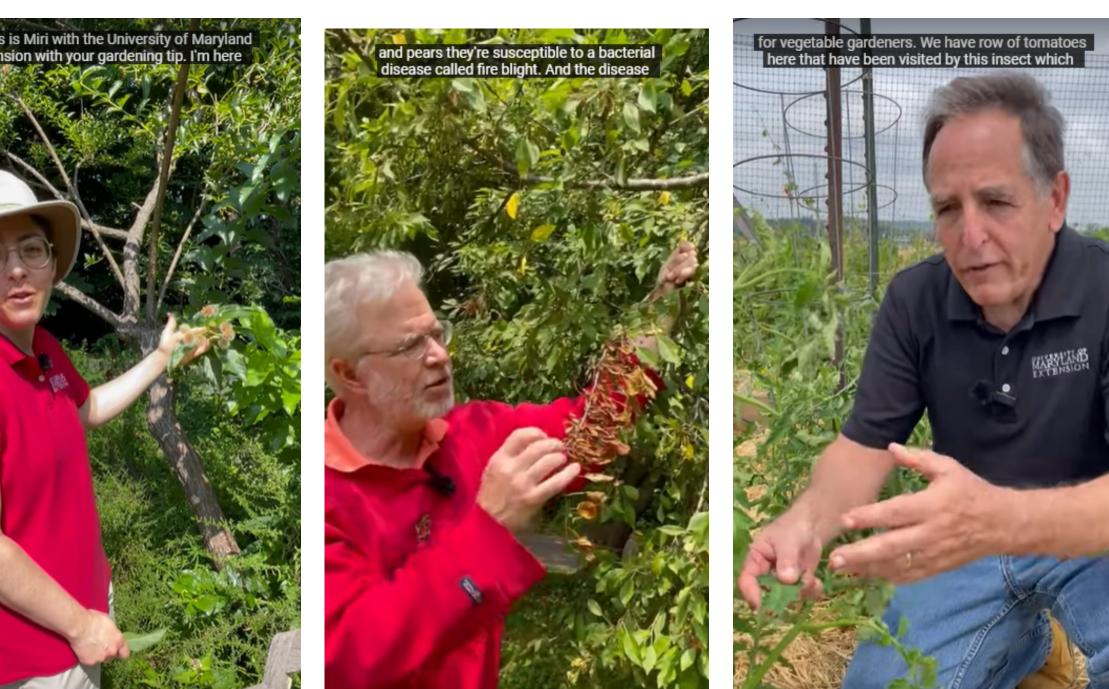
Social Media

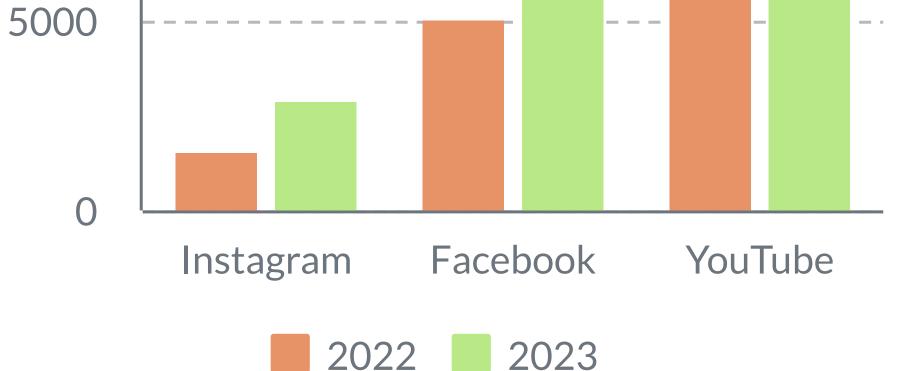
HGIC creates and shares educational content on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram.

58 New Videos in 2023 youtube.com@UMDHGIC

All Social Media Followers from 2022 to 2023

10000	











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

1,172 546,021 Subscribers Visitors

Survey feedback

• 87% said the blog helped them learn something new.

• Starting with Small Fruits

 70% said they considered changing garden practices as a result of reading.



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

45k 24k 56% 9,312 subscribers open rate avg. deliveries opens



News Media

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

THE BALTIMORE SUN



Garden Q&A: Why did raspberries have DECEMBER 21, 2023 AT 7:00 A.M.

It's called "white drupelet disorder," and is essentially a sun-scalded or sunburnt section of the



Garden Q&A: How do I know my tree was pruned correctly? DECEMBER 14, 2023 AT 7:00 A.M.

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

MASTER ** GARDENER *

go.umd.edu/mg



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

Master Gardener Volunteers

11,904 Pounds of Produce Donated

Volunteer Hours 22,838 Continuing Education Hours

Value of Volunteer Time to Maryland **48,844** People Educated

MASTER * State Office

State Continuing Education

The State Office hosted 12 continuing education events

609 MGs attended

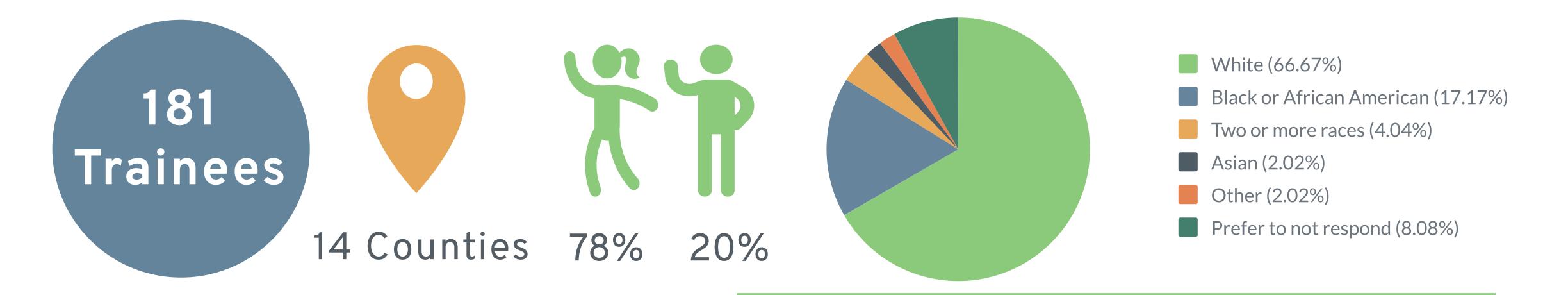
Statewide Trainings

Ask A MG Plant Clinic 132 MGs attended

Grow It Eat It 128 MGs attended

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

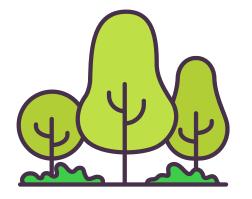
Incorporating a variety of plants that provide

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

amendments

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

"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."

MASTER GARDENER Local Programs

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



79% increased their gardening knowledge



74% understand more about the ways they are connected to the

landscape and/or plants

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

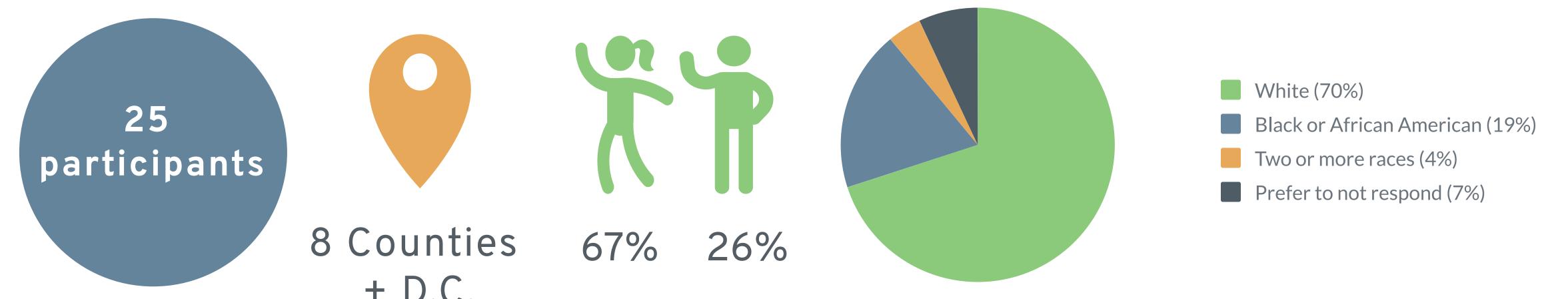
Held its first Annual Tomato Festival which featured 85 taste testing samples

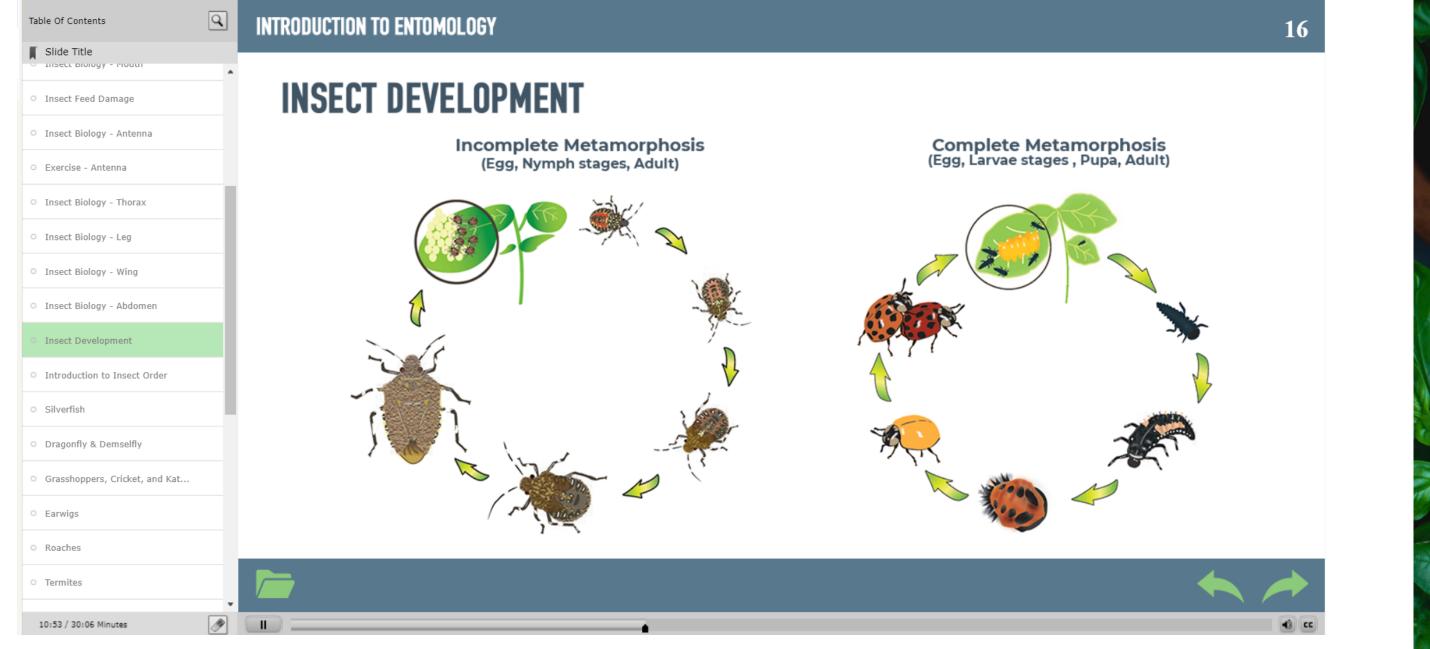
Calvert County

Donated 4,500 pounds of produce from their project sites

MASTER Sustainable Horticulture Certificate

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:





90.5% was the average course grade

Praise from Participants

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

"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."

CONNECT WITH US

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SEND YOUR GARDENING QUESTIONS

Answers to your gardening questions are only a click away! Our Certified Professional Horticulturists, Extension faculty, and Master Gardeners are ready to help.





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LOCAL PROGRAMS

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

MASTER GARDENER HANDBOOK Order the Maryland Master Gardener Handbook.



UME Home and Garden Information CenterUME Master Gardener Program12005 Homewood RoadEllicott City, MD 21042410-531-5556

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