



The Colonial Master Gardener July 2020

PUBLICATION OF JCC/W MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION & VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY PATSY MCGRADY

Next Meeting:

Because of the outbreak of the coronavirus, the date of the next meeting has not yet been scheduled.

Summer is officially here. I expect this summer will be one to remember, just like the spring has been – not just for the things that we would usually remember a season by.

Plant Sale: Many thanks and much appreciation to our plant sale committee (Janet Smith, Marty Oakes, Susan Shoulet, Hope Yelich, and Donna Tierney) and others who volunteered to assist at our internal MG plant sale on June 13. Also, thanks to the many members who potted and cared for plants donated to the sale. The internal plant sale allowed us to take advantage of the efforts that the committee and many of our members had already put in planning and preparing for a sale. This included the hard work of harvesting excess plants from the yards of people who wanted to get rid of them. The sale also prevented many of these plants from being destroyed.

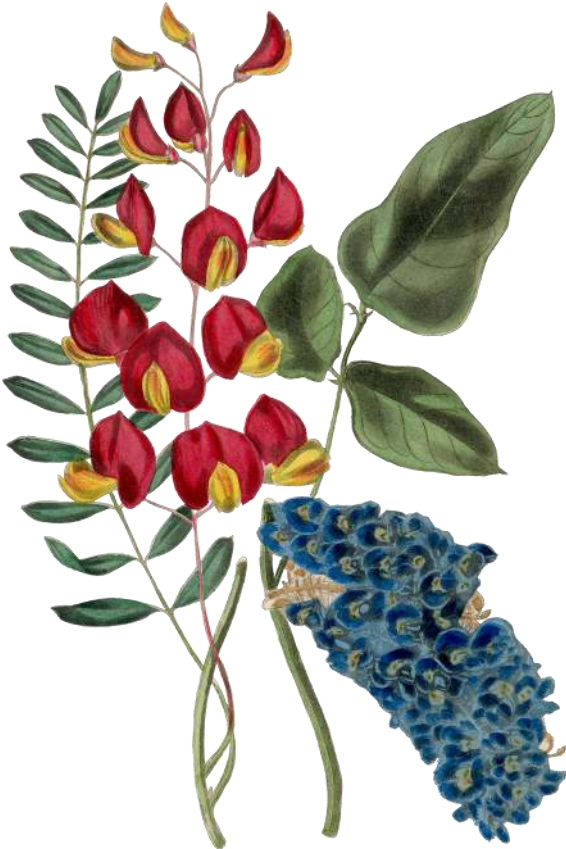
While COVID 19 restrictions prevented us from having a public plant sale, our plant sale committee was able to create lemonade from lemons. This was a bare-bones approach that conformed to the various COVID 19 precautions. The sale was open only to MG members. The plants were in a large open area. Buyers had to wear masks and gloves and practice social distancing. Members managing the sale insured that the number of people in the area at any time did not exceed what was allowed in Virginia due to the COVID 19 restrictions.

Our best estimate of attendance is just fifty members who bought approximately 360 plants that returned over \$2300. Expenses were minimal. Sales tax will take a bit over \$200. Approximately 350 plants were left over and were transported to the Williamsburg Botanical Garden open plants-for-sale area. We will receive some income as these plants are purchased.

Board Membership: Kathy Skube, treasurer, is moving to Alabama in a few months. Linda Neilson has graciously agreed to accept an emergency appointment to the treasurer position.

Meeting: As mentioned in our June newsletter, our August meeting will be via Zoom. We expect to provide guidance and probably also have a practice session the last week of July.

Updated VCE Guidance: VCE added an addendum on June 5 to their April 10 COVID 19 guidance. The addendum is provided at the end of this newsletter. As of June 24, we have not officially received this from our state leadership but became aware of it on June 23 through Master Naturalists. Our MG board will meet in early July to consider the impact of this revised guidance on our ability to work various projects. All members will be informed of the results of that assessment. Please remember, as we are able to open projects a bit more than they have been, no one has any obligation to work in a situation in which they do not feel comfortable. There is no requirement for any service hours for 2020.



2020
MGA Board

President:
Patsy McGrady

President Elect:
Marty Oakes

VP Administration:
Dee Arbegast

VP Projects:
Rick Brown

VP Internal Ed:
Hazel Braxton

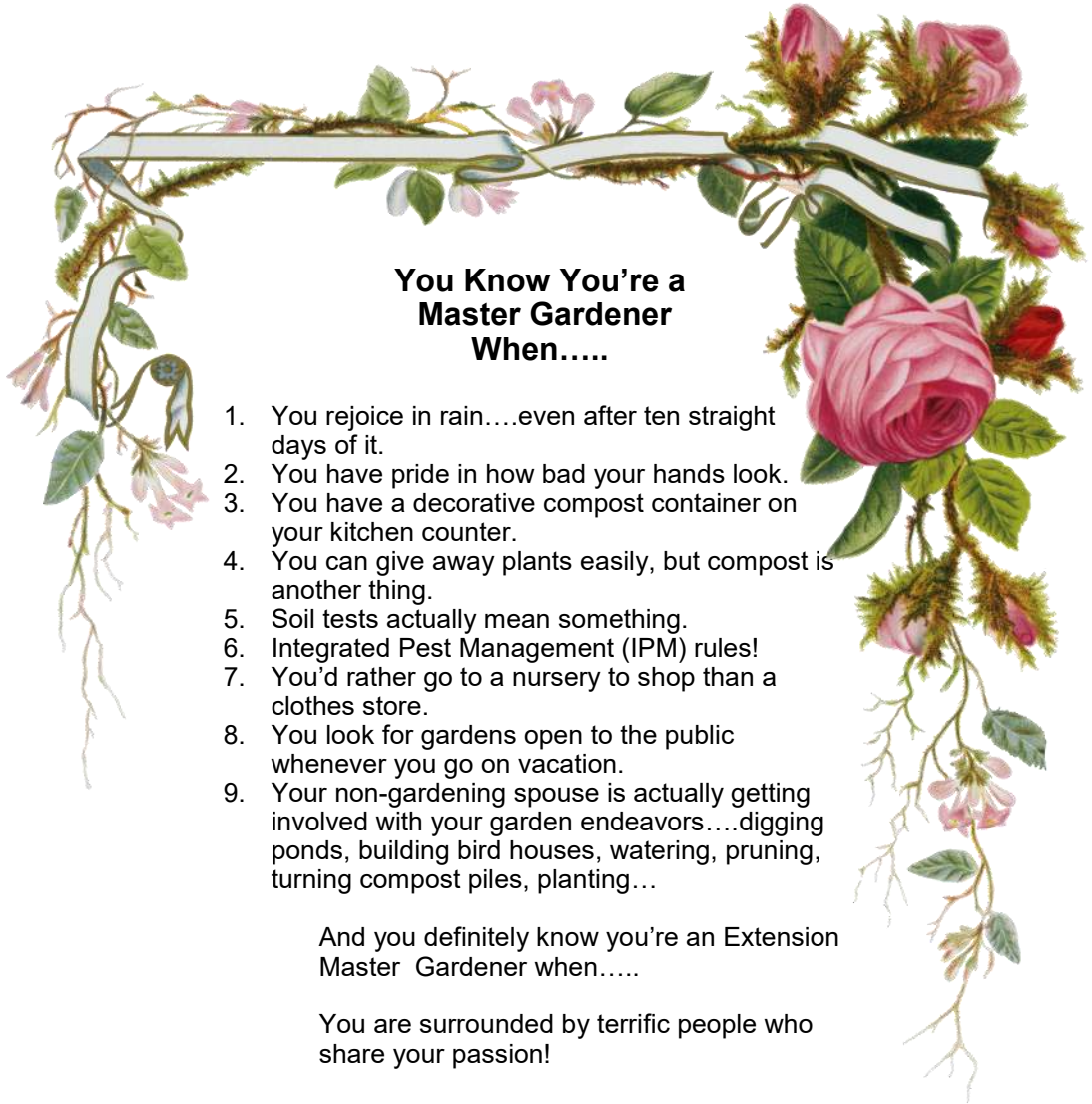
Secretary:
Vacant

Treasurer:
Kathy Skube

VMGA Rep:
Marilyn Riddle

Past President:
Cathy Hill

*VCE ANR Program
Assistant:*
VACANT



You Know You're a Master Gardener When.....

1. You rejoice in rain....even after ten straight days of it.
2. You have pride in how bad your hands look.
3. You have a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter.
4. You can give away plants easily, but compost is another thing.
5. Soil tests actually mean something.
6. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) rules!
7. You'd rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothes store.
8. You look for gardens open to the public whenever you go on vacation.
9. Your non-gardening spouse is actually getting involved with your garden endeavors....digging ponds, building bird houses, watering, pruning, turning compost piles, planting...

And you definitely know you're an Extension
Master Gardener when.....

You are surrounded by terrific people who
share your passion!

Newsletter Editor:
Hope Yelich
hopeyelich@gmail.com

—Variously attributed to Debra A. Aleksinas; Audrey of Emmitsburg, Maryland, and others. Most recently printed in the summer 2020 newsletter *Groundbreakers* from the Green Spring VCE Master Gardeners.

The MGA board meets on the third Thursday of each month at 9:30am at the Williamsburg Regional Library, Room B, on Scotland Street, Williamsburg.

PLEASE NOTE:
During the pandemic and while the library remains closed, the board meets through video conferencing.

Don't forget to check out our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/VCEMasterGardeners/>. Lots of great articles, educational videos, beautiful photographs, upcoming events, and more! Marion Guthrie is doing a great job keeping us up to date, especially during this time when things are changing so frequently.

To get to our VCE James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener homepage quickly, click on <http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/>

THE INTERNAL PLANT SALE REMEMBERED

BY HOPE YELICH, PLANT SALE TEAM MEMBER



June 13 was a perfectly beautiful day— sunshine, brilliant blue sky, cool temperatures, and low humidity. Janet, Marty, Susan, Donna, and I are very grateful to those of you who nurtured plants and to the Master Gardeners who came out to buy them. We are especially indebted to our volunteers (Stacy DeMeo, Gail Weaver, and intern Julie Smith) who worked with us during set up on Friday as well as throughout the sale. Thank you very, very much. We look forward to having a successful sale for the public next spring, complete with Trash & Treasures. See you then!

On another note, Donna Tierney still has not got her green wagon back. She's pretty sure someone exchanged hers for theirs by mistake, but she's quite attached to it. "Tierney" is written on it in several places. If you have it, please contact Donna at dktv@cox.net



Plant Sale Remembered is continued on the next page, page 4

THE INTERNAL PLANT SALE REMEMBERED—CONTINUED



Plant Sale Remembered is continued on the next page, page 5

THE INTERNAL PLANT SALE REMEMBERED—CONTINUED



Photos: Hope Yelich

VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 13 BY MARILYN RIDDLE, VMGA REPRESENTATIVE

This is the meeting that has traditionally been held on Friday night of Master Gardener College in the auditorium in Blacksburg. This year the meeting took place via Zoom conferencing from Virginia Tech.



Wanda Gerard, president, thanked all for helping to make her job easier. She also presented a summary of the activities of those units who sent in a report outlining their activities during the “shelter in place” era. Originally, there were six-seven units who replied before the event but more have been received since. JCCW was one of the original ones who reported.

Most all of the VMGA committee reports had been submitted via PowerPoint items to Frank Reilly for view on the screen. Dave Banks continues as

webmaster. Peggy Fox continues to produce newsletters, a welcome addition after a long absence with no one in that position. Much discussion revolved around the budget. With approximately \$23,000 in total assets as of the end of the fiscal year, the budget showing \$16,455 in expenses and \$9,080 in revenue resulting in a deficit of \$7375 was presented. Those who vote—the officers and standing committee chairs—approved the budget with the \$10,000 sponsorship of the 2021 International Master Gardener College being temporarily pulled aside due to the uncertain times.

The education committee, chaired by Kirk Barley, has been very busy with many substantive initiatives. A speaker’s bureau will be on the website soon and all units are encouraged to use whenever they like. Upon request, the committee will work with units on the enrichment of their programs for the next year rather than concentrating on a stand alone one for the entire state. Fundraising continues to be active, though slowed down by the virus. The VMGA scholarships will resume in the next budget because there will be a virtual MG College this summer and cost is minimal.



Chair Frank Reilly, Nominations and Elections Committee, announced the results of the election:

President: Leslie Paulson, Prince William Co, Vice President: Nelda Purcell, Franklin Co, Secretary: Betsy Brown, Bedford and Treasurer: Georgi Hall, Loudoun Co. Ruth Huber, Audit Committee, gave a favorable report. Kathleen Reed, state MG Coordinator, reported that over 900 EMGs from 13 states have already signed up for MG College. The “Giving” program at Va Tech has been extended to September. She promises to let others know as soon as she knows about any changes in the VCE guidelines.

There being no interest from units, banners will not be purchased for their use. The August meeting will be virtual. There is the expectation that we will be able to go to Charlottesville in October and Danville in December. There is no host unit for February, April, and June of next year. The meeting was adjourned.

THIS AND THAT



What Happened to Vegetable Seeds This Spring?

You might have seen packets of seeds from [Renee's Garden](#) among those from Burpee, Park, Ferry-Morse, and other commercial seed companies. They're the really pretty ones with watercolor images. In addition to selling seeds, the company offers numerous online resources on best growing practices and a monthly newsletter. Sign up for the newsletter from their website or search the [newsletter archive](#). One recent article addressed the recent shortage of vegetable seeds. While the focus is on Renee's Garden, the article explains why many seed companies faced a problem this spring. It boils down to a supply-chain problem. Interesting reading: <https://www.reneesgarden.com/blogs/gardening-resources/what-happened-to-vegetable-seeds-this-spring>

Jerry Babski

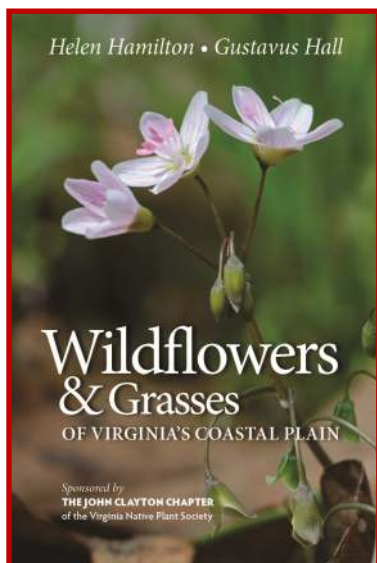
I have been emailing with a former member in the attempt to help him connect with Barbara Gustafson, who will be in the same general area. Many will remember Jerry Babski. He sends his good wishes to all. He had a knee replacement in mid June. His cellphone is (914) 204-1997. I have a home address, but one email indicated that he would not be back there for a long time.

—Marilyn Riddle



Online Continuing Education Opportunities

From the state EMG office, Kathleen Reed lists *several* online CE resources MGs can utilize while away from projects. Click on: <https://mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/ce/>



Get it While You Can

Wildflowers and Grasses of Virginia's Coastal Plain will soon be out of print - fewer than one hundred copies remain in the BRIT warehouse. In an effort to clear their shelves, we will sell the book at cost - \$10 - that covers my discounted price and S/H.

Send a check with your return address to: Helen Hamilton, 119 Reserve Way, Apt 408, Williamsburg, Va., 23185. I will mail your copy, signed.

—Helen Hamilton

This and That is continued on the next page, page 8

THIS AND THAT — CONTINUED

News from the Williamsburg Botanical Garden

- Learn and Grow programs will be virtual events for the remainder of the year. Please check the [Williamsburg Botanical Garden website](#) for updates and be sure that you are on our eNews list: www.bit.ly/wbgnews
- The Butterfly Festival (originally scheduled for September 26-27) has been cancelled for this year due to the uncertainties caused by COVID-19.
- We are delighted to announce that the Native Grasses Garden has been beautifully renovated with defined paths and new plants. Many thanks to WBG volunteer Harry Fahl for his hard work! Thanks also go to Bill Dichtel and Dave Mershon for working with Harry on additional pathway work in the woods and ferns section, and to Mike Whitfield for transporting the logs from the Free Black Settlement section in Freedom Park.



—Judith Alberts

Virginia Native Species Design Contest

The State Extension Master Gardener Office is holding a design contest for prints that will go on t-shirts, tote bags, and other such merchandise that will be sold at the 2021 International Master Gardener Conference (IMGC). The contest is open to Interns, Master Gardeners, Emeritus, Agents, and Coordinators with Virginia Cooperative Extension.

To help highlight our beautiful and diverse state during the conference, we are looking for designs that specifically showcase species that are native to Virginia.

For additional details and the contest rules, please see the IMGC website: <https://www.internationalmastergardener.com/2020/05/18/design-contest/>

Submissions are due through the submission form by Monday, September 7, 2020. Please let me know if you have any questions,



Cow Killer

Last month we had Asian giant hornets. Now Marilyn Riddle sends along an article about velvet ants, aka cow killer ants, which are actually wasps. [Click here for the article](#), “An Ant that Kills Cows? Really,” which appeared in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* on June 13, 2020.



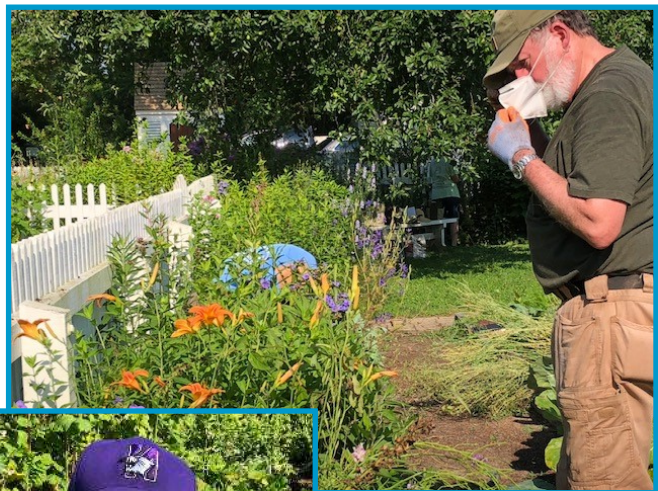
FIRST PANDEMIC WORK DAY IN CW GARDENS ON JUNE 16

BY MARION GUTHRIE, PUBLICITY MANAGER

JCC/Williamsburg Master Gardeners tackled the weed-infested jungle-like Reid and Shield's gardens early on Monday morning, June 22. These gardens have been off limits since March 15.

What a challenge weeding, trying to determine what was what. Our to-do list, emailed the night before, read like a final exam. But we were equal to the challenge. Ignoring the heat and humidity at 8:00am, we donned masks and gardening gloves and armed ourselves with disinfected tarps and sanitized tools. We broke into two groups, a larger one in Reid and a smaller one for Shields. Practicing social distancing, everyone focused on a specific garden bed area.

In two hours, a semblance of order was restored. What a tough lot we are! We know there's more to come, to which we say, "Bring It!"



Photos: Marion Guthrie

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH JULY 2020

BY HELEN HAMILTON
JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

MOUNTAIN-MINTS

Pycnanthemum tenuifolium/muticum

What's not to like about a native perennial that is attractive to bees and butterflies, does not spread aggressively, and is deer resistant? Mountain-mints bloom from June through August, with small white flowers rich in nectar that is food for many kinds of insects – butterflies, skippers, bees, beetles, flies, and especially wasps. Flowers are tightly clustered on the ends of stems, and their structure allows wasps and other short-tongued insects to feed easily.

Two species are common in our area. With very narrow leaves, slender mountain-mint (*P. tenuifolium*) has a delicate, somewhat airy appearance. This native perennial plant grows one-to-three feet tall, branching frequently to create a bushy effect. The leaves are up to three inches long and ¼ inch across. Each leaf is



Photo: Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*) taken by Helen Hamilton in York River State Park

hairless, with a prominent central vein and smooth margins. Small white to lavender two-lipped flowers are in dense clusters in the leaf axils or at the ends of slender, hairless stems.

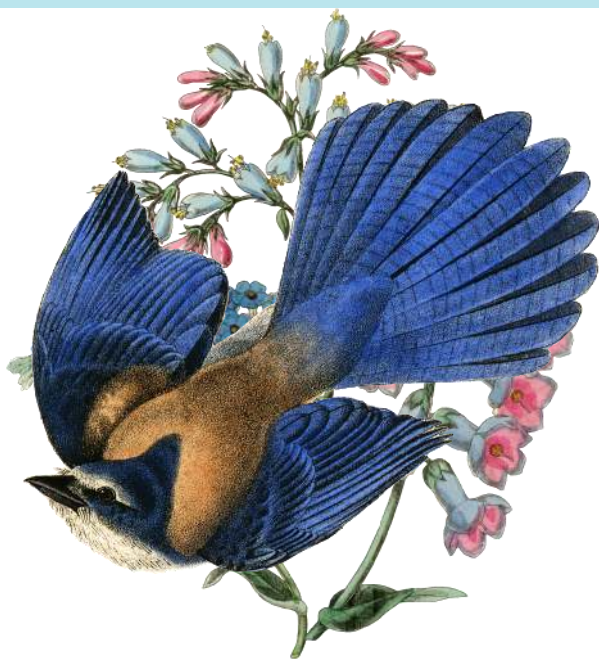
The dark green leaves of clustered mountain-mint (*P. muticum*) are not thin, up to two inches wide, and have a strong spearmint aroma when crushed. The flowers are similar – the two-lipped tubular flowers, each up to ½ inch wide, are in dense flat-topped clusters at the ends of the stems. Each cluster has a pair of showy silvery leaf-like bracts at the base. The entire plant looks like it has been dusted with powdery snow. Massed in groups, the effect is stunning – a clustered plant with tiny pinkish flowers buzzing with insects, surrounded by dark green leaves and snowy bracts.

Both mountain-mints are easy to grow in the home garden, in full sun or part shade. Slender mountain-mint prefers soils that are somewhat drier than the bogs and wet meadows where clustered mountain-mint occurs.

The flowers have no scent, but the leaves have a minty odor and taste. Deer usually don't browse on mountain-mints because of the minty taste; the foliage may contain anti-bacterial substances that disrupt their digestive process. The tiny seeds are disseminated by wind – they are too small to be of much interest to birds. The common name "mountain-mint" does not refer to a preference for the mountainous regions. Both mountain-mints are found in most counties of Virginia, and range over the eastern and central regions of the U.S. and Canada. The genus name derives from the Greek *pycnos* for "dense" and *anthon*, meaning "flower" and aptly describes the crowded flower clusters. The species name *tenuifolium* is derived from the Latin *tenuis*, meaning "thin," a reference to the narrow leaves.

For more information about native plants,
visit www.vnps.org

Important Dates



NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the July 2020 newsletter will be Friday, July 24

Please send any submissions to Hope Yelich, newsletter editor, at hopeyelich@gmail.com

THINKING OF OUR MEMBERS

The organization sends cards to members with difficult medical issues or who have experienced a death in the immediate family.

This month we sent a card to

Carrie Evelyn —Sympathy

We also acknowledge achievements/ milestones and donations made to the association.

All images in this newsletter are from [The Graphics Fairy](#).

JCC/W Master Gardener Mission Statement

The purpose of the James City County/ Williamsburg Master Gardener is to learn, educate, and communicate environmentally sound horticultural practices to the community. Trained by the Virginia Cooperative Extension, Master Gardener volunteers are committed to offering information to the public through sustainable landscape management educational programs.

ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENERS AND VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Virginia Master Gardeners are volunteer educators who work within their communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. As an educational program of Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Master Gardeners bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.



Community Gardening Guidelines Addendum

June 5, 2020

Recognizing the value of ornamental demonstration gardens, wildlife habitat gardens, pollinator gardens, botanical gardens, and arboreta to our communities and community members, we are in support of VCE faculty, staff, and volunteers to begin working to maintain non-food producing gardens.

As you move ahead with opening up opportunities for VCE faculty, staff, and volunteers in your unit to volunteer in this capacity, here are the minimum expectations for anyone who will be actively involved:

- The local Extension office must have documented permission to be on property where the garden exists.
- Communal tools and sharing of personal tools should be avoided at this time. Please refer to the original "Virginia Cooperative Extension Recommended Guidelines for Community Gardening during COVID-19" document released on April 10, 2020 for additional details on tool usage. You should also develop a plan for appropriate handwashing stations on site.
- Please think through and consider how social distancing guidelines will be met in the garden space. Take into consideration the following questions as you plan and implement your work:

o What are the physical dimensions of the garden where you will be working? How will those working be dispersed in the garden space?

- Based on the square footage of the garden, you may have to limit the number of volunteers in order to satisfy social distancing requirements.

We strongly encourage the continued use of virtual programming, however VCE Leadership and Executive Order 65 allow for face-to-face programming to continue as long as social distancing guidelines are being met.

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