

North Country Gardeners

Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Co.

UW-Extension

Issue 4 , April 2000

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University of Wisconsin-Extension

Area Agricultural Agents Office

Spooner Ag Research Station

W6646 Highway 70

Spooner, Wisconsin 54801

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Toll Free 800-528-1914

Welcome

This is what we've all been waiting for. Spring is officially here. Ready!? Set!? Garden!! Don't let your excitement get ahead of the weather. The average date of last frost in our area is May 27. Weather data for Spooner indicates a 90% frost occurrence May 9, and a 10% frost occurrence June 14. The latest frost was on June 24. Experienced gardeners know the benefits of patience when it comes to planting and/or using early season frost protection techniques.

Hope you enjoy the newsletter. I've tried to incorporate some of the changes you indicated at our spring meeting. As always, topic suggestions or guest articles are welcome. I would like to feature area gardeners in each newsletter as well. If you would like to share a little about yourself, your gardening interests, and community projects let me know I will put it in the next newsletter.

Have a wonderful time in your gardens.



Happy Gardening,

Kevin Schoessow
Area Ag Development Agent

Wisconsin Public TV Features Agriculture and Gardening

If you can pick up Wisconsin Public Television at your home, you might want to check these out.

"Farming from the Heart" is a two-part series that tells stories about the joys and hardships of farming. In part one, Monday, April 17 at 10 p.m., the program will chronicle the varied experiences of 26 Pennsylvania farmers. In part two, Tuesday, April 18, the program visits with a widowed poultry farmer trying to pick up the pieces after her husband's death, a couple who raise elk, and three organic farmers.

"The Wisconsin Gardener," Shelley Ryan and guests take on the challenges and rewards of creating and maintaining a rock garden on Sunday, April 30, 5:30 p.m.

Wisconsin Public Television is a part of University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Did you Know?

Origins of Super-sweet corn can be traced to 1959 when a University of Illinois scientist absentmindedly popped dry corn kernels into his mouth while shelling mutant seeds off cobs. He was surprised by the sweetness of one of the kernels from a mutant known as shrunken2 (sh2 as listed in many seed catalogs). Sweet corn derived from this shrunken2 mutant holds its sweetness, whereas corn with the sugary 1 trait loses sweetness rapidly after picking. If you plant any of this super-sweet seed, make sure it is planted at least 250 ft. apart or allow at least 14 days between maturities to avoid cross pollination from other sweet corn.

Ever wonder how purplish-blue corn chips got their color? If they weren't artificially colored (now why do that?), they derived their natural color from purple ears of corn. Purple corn originates from the High Andes of South America where native people selected this purple color because it was thought to protect the corn from the sun's ultraviolet rays. Native American breeders selected this purple color for ornamental and religious purposes.

Speaking of purple, have you ever seen a purple carrot? Or how about a red, yellow, or white carrot? Plans are underway to grow these carrots in the Spooner Research Station demo garden.

Power of Pigments

The pigments found in plants play important roles in plant metabolism and visual attraction in nature. They are also important for humans: attracting our attention and providing us with nutrients. Continued research also indicates they can act as "chemopreventers" by providing protection against certain forms of cancer and reduction in cardiovascular disease. Pigments that have been identified for their health benefits include: Orange=beta carotene (Vitamin A healthy eyes);

purple=anthocyanin (antioxidant ties up harmful free radicals, helps prevent heart disease from blood clotting); red=lycopene, another form of carotene (helps prevent cancer); yellow=xanthophylls (develops healthy eyes and helps prevent cancer); and green=chlorophylls (contain trace amounts of yellow orange and red pigments, and helps kids keep their mothers happy).

Pruning Tips

Late winter and early spring are the best times to prune most trees and shrubs. The later you wait to prune, the greater your chance of infection from insects and disease and the more stress you put on the plant.

- Don't prune newly planted trees unless a branch is broken, diseased, or dead
- Pruning trees for 2-5 years will encourage a desirable shape
- Never remove more than one third of the crown at one time
- Summer-flowering shrubs (hydrangeas, roses, Japanese spirea, potentilla) produce flower buds on new growth in the spring; therefore, prune when they are dormant or before budbreak
- Wait to prune spring-flowering shrubs (lilac, forsythia, viburnums, honeysuckle, chokeberry, mockorange) until after they have bloomed. They produce flowers on one year old wood.
- When you prune pines, remove about a half to one third of the elongated terminal buds, also called candles, before the needles expand in spring.

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please call 800-528-1914 to request removal from our mailing list.

Calendar of Events

April 26, 2000 Marketing Locally Produced Food to Restaurants, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m., DeWitt-Seitz Building, Duluth.

April 27, 2000 Pleasing Potato workshop, 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., Spooner Ag Research Station.

May 13, 2000 Shoreland Restoration workshop, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Spooner DNR Fish Hatchery.

May 18, 2000 Spooner Demo Garden planning meeting, 1 p.m., Spooner Ag Research Station.

May 22-26, 2000 International Master Gardener Convention, Orlando, Florida

June 1, 2000 Water Gardening Design workshop, 7 p.m. - 8 p.m., Barron County Courthouse.

June 10, 2000 Washburn Co. Dairy Breakfast, Glen & Brenda Albee Farm.

June 15-17, 2000 Tri-State Master Gardener Convention, Ames, Iowa

June 17, 2000 Burnett Co. Dairy Breakfast, Claire & Dorothy Melin Farm.

June 24, 2000 Sawyer County Dairy Breakfast, Martin's Clearview Acres.

August 24, 2000 Spooner Twilight Garden Tour, 5:30 - dusk, Spooner Ag Research Station.

Burnett Garden Club Monthly Events, April - November, call Kris Henning for details, 715-463-5247.

Public Radio Garden Show, Friday mornings 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 88.3 on your FM radio dial.

Master Gardener Name Tags Still Available



Master Gardener name tags are still available for purchase. If you are an active Master Gardener in good standing, name badges can be purchased for \$5.25 each. The official name badge is white plastic with engraved green letters and the WIMGA logo. For more information, call Kevin or check out the Wisconsin Master Gardener website at <http://www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/>.

Free Compost and Mulch Available

If your spring planting and landscape projects require additional compost or mulch, several communities offer free composted leaves and yard waste in addition to chipped tree mulch. Mulch and compost can be picked up from the following locations:

- Siren:** West of Siren, south of Hwy. 70 on Nyberg Road (1/4 mi. south).
Wednesday 8 - 4 & Saturday 8 - 5.
- Spooner:** Private site for Spooner city residents only. Residents should call city hall at 635-8769 for information and key to site.
- Grantsburg:** Old dump site on West Benson, north of town. 1st & 3rd Sat., 9 - 2.

For more information about the yard waste recycling program, contact Rick Schnieder at 635-2197.

Garlic Mustard Threatens State Woodlands

Garlic Mustard a non native species introduced to North America by early settlers is one of several exotic species that threatens native forests. Garlic mustard invades woodlands displacing native wild flowers and tree seedlings. It spreads rapidly, has little wildlife value, and will out-compete most native vegetation. This plant is one of many other exotic species such as buckthorn, spotted knapweed, purple loosestrife, or Eurasian water milfoil.



Garlic mustard is a rapidly growing hardy biennial. It has white terminal four petal flowers on 2nd year plant. It produces 100+ small black seeds per plant. The leaves are kidney shaped the first year, and toothed heart shaped the second year. The tap root is slender, white and has an S-shape curve at the top of the root. It blooms late April to early June and has a distinct odor of garlic when its leaves are crushed. For more information check out the DNR website at www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er and go to invasive species. You can also pick up a garlic mustard bulletin from the area UW-Extension Ag Agents Office in Spooner.

Gardener Profile: Get to know your fellow gardeners

Carol Alcoe, Hayward, became a master Gardener while living in Mt. Prospect, IL, having attended classes at the Chicago Botanic Gardens. As a garden club member, she attended many seminars and lectures at CBG as well as the Morton Arboretum. She remains an honorary member of that garden club and is one of the founders of the Hayward Area Garden Club. Carol's community service takes the form of planning, planting, and maintaining the raised garden at Hwy. 63 and 27 in Hayward, which is usually laid out as an 'H'. A greenhouse containing over 300 orchids is her pet hobby--her favorites are lady's slipper-types (*paphiopedilum*) and some of the tiny species that have dime-sized blooms with giant fragrance. She would be pleased to hear from other orchid lovers or have visitors to share her enthusiasm for these not-that-difficult plants; there's always something blooming.

Liz Metcalf, Hayward, became a Master Gardener while living in Mondovi and Eleva. She attended classes as part of the West Central Master Gardeners in Eau Claire and thoroughly enjoyed the special programs and speakers that were presented. Liz is especially interested in blueberries and has planted about 200 bushes as well as 50+ lingonberries on the farm where her new home is nearing completion. She maintains a large veggie garden to can and freeze food for the family and raises and sells hundreds of pumpkins of several varieties. Liz's public service involves participation in the Hayward Garden Club's civic projects and helping her mom, Carol Alcoe, with the raised bed 'H' planting. Liz's special project this year will be landscaping her new home.

Pleasing Potato Workshop



The Spooner Agriculture Research Station and UW-Extension will be hosting a community, home, and Master Gardener program entitled “The Pleasing Potato.” It will be held on Thursday, April 27th from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the Spooner Agriculture Research Station. Preregistration is required to attend the program.

Historically, the potato is an important yet simple food and has been grown for centuries in gardens and farm fields all around the world. It is very nutritious and a favorite of all ages. Its “roots” can be traced to South and Central America during the earliest days of European exploration of the New World.

Gardeners can find the potato to be a very challenging crop to grow. The Pleasing Potato program is designed to answer your questions about growing potatoes in the home garden.

Kevin Schoessow, UW-Extension Area Ag Agent, will discuss the soil and fertility

requirements of potatoes and how to collect and have your soil’s fertility analyzed. Chuck Kostichka, Superintendent from the Hancock Agriculture Research Station, will give a brief history and background on the potato and talk about the many different varieties that are available, and the importance of planting certified seed. UWEX Horticulture Specialist Bob Tomesh will also be on hand to discuss site preparation, planting, irrigation management, pest control, and storage tips.

If you’ve never grown potatoes, or perhaps need some advice on how to grow them better, this is an excellent opportunity to learn from the best.

Community, home, and Master Gardeners are encouraged to preregister. The cost of the program is \$10.00 per person, which includes samples of seed potatoes and hand-out materials. To register send, fill out the registration form provided along with a \$10.00 check (payable the UW-Extension) to Spooner Ag Research Station, W6646 Hwy. 70, Spooner, WI 54801. Registration will be accepted until April 25th. For more information, call the Area UWEX Ag Agents Office at 635-3506 or 1-800-528-1914. Registration information is also available on the Spooner Ag Research Station web page: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/sars/pdf/pleasingpotato.pdf>.

Summer Horticulture Assistant Needed

The University of Wisconsin-Extension Area Agricultural Agents Office located at the Spooner Ag Research Station serving Burnett, Washburn and Sawyer Counties is looking to hire a summer horticulture assistant. This person would help respond to home horticulture questions through office calls, office consultations, and site visits. This person would also help coordinate activities at the Spooner Ag Research Station Demonstration Garden and work with other community garden projects. Some time teaching and writing news releases will also be expected. Knowledge of pest control measures, diagnosing plant problems, plant and insect identification relating to gardens, trees, lawns, shrubs and household problems is required. Candidates should have extensive experience in home horticulture and have successfully completed the Master Gardener Program or other training in horticulture. Strong interpersonal skills are a must. This position is for 35 hours per week beginning May through Aug.

For a complete job description contact Lorraine at the Spooner Area UWEX Office at 635-3506 or 1-800-528-1914.

Master Gardener Brown Bag ETN Schedule

All ETNs are free and are held from 12 Noon –1 p.m. at any Co. UWEX office. They are on the last Friday of every month. Call ahead so they know you are coming.

- April 28 Disease Resistant Vegetables
- May 26 Japanese Beetle
- June 30 Dynamics of WIMGA
- July 28 Urban Forestry
- Aug 25 Potato Varieties & Their Uses
- Sept 29 Managing Soil for Optimum Productivity
- Oct. 27 Native Plant Restoration
- Nov. 17 Nut Crops in Wisconsin
- Dec. 16 Utilizing UWEX Media Collections for Local Education

The Pleasing Potato: A UWEX Workshop

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail address: _____

Please send a \$10.00 check payable to UW-Extension along with this completed registration form to:

The Pleasing Potato
Spooner Ag Research Station
W6646 Highway 70
Spooner, WI 548001

Volunteering Update -- For Master Gardeners looking for volunteer hours--there are still plenty of opportunities.

Location	Project	Contact	Phone
Spooner Fish Hatchery	Shoreland Restoration	Sheri Snowbank	635-2101
Spooner Ag Res. Station	Demo Garden	Kevin Schoessow	635-3506
Spooner Ag Res. Station	Shrub Rose Experiment	Kevin Schoessow	635-3506
Spooner Ag Res. Station	Perennial Beds	Sharon Terras	635-3593
Spooner	Vets Cemetery	Reba Eslinger	635-8946
Webster	Senior Citizens Center Garden	Lily Gleason	866-4107
Webster	Fort Folle Avoine Garden	Karen Benson	866-8890
Grantsburg	Community Beautification	Kris Henning	463-5247
Hayward	Community Beautification	Carol Alcoe	462-3213
Hayward	Smith Pond City Park	Verna Warman	634-2854

Don't forget about helping the young and old with gardening projects. Consider working with 4-H, Boys & Girls Clubs, Church groups, or Senior Citizens. Share the bounty by planting an extra row of vegetables and donating it to a local food shelf or senior center. Just keep track of the time you spend, and before you know it, your 36 hours will be filled.

Workshop set for Yellow River Shoreland Restoration

Mother's Day--it's coming soon, and with it we think of warm spring days and lovely flowers. But this year, consider giving Mother Nature a hand and come work with others on the Yellow River Shoreland Restoration Project.

Lakeshore property owners and all other interested persons are encouraged to attend a one-day hands-on workshop designed to demonstrate shoreland habitat restoration techniques.

This is more than just a flower garden, over 700 feet of shoreline on the Yellow River Flowage will be restored to its natural state during a showcase project, one of six that are currently underway throughout the state."

The workshop runs from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Saturday May 13 at the Governor Tommy Thompson State Fish Hatchery in Spooner, WI and focuses on techniques used to return native vegetation to the waterfront.

The workshop will demonstrate different approaches to restore the shoreline to native vegetation. For example, there will be a "no-mow" area that will be left to revegetate naturally. This is the easiest and least

UW-Extension Publication Updates

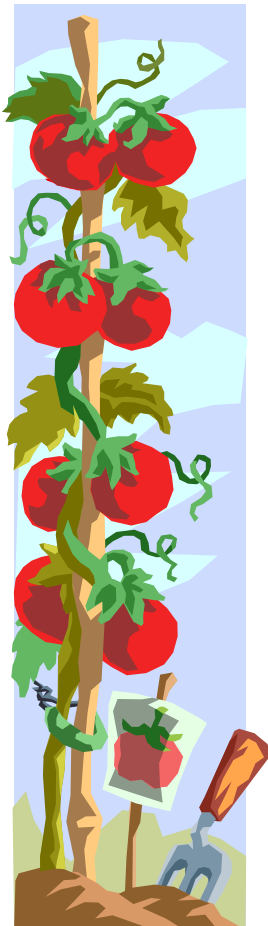
Here is a list of the latest publication updates. You may want to update your files or perhaps create a new one. For a complete list of Extension publications, stop by your local Extension office.

A1597	Growing Strawberries in Wisconsin	\$4.00	04/1999
A1653	Vegetable Cultivars and Planting Guide for WI Gardens-2000	\$.50	02/2000
A1656	Growing Grapes in Wisconsin	\$4.00	12/1998
A1691	Home-Grown Tomatoes for Wisconsin	\$.75	07/1996
A1959	Training and Pruning Apple Trees	\$1.00	04/1997
A1960	Growing Currants, Gooseberries and Elderberries in Wisconsin	\$3.00	12/1998
A2072	Growing Pears in Wisconsin	\$2.50	06/1997
A2127	Strawberry Pest Management for Home Gardeners	\$.15	03/1998
A2128	Raspberry Pest Management for Home Gardeners	\$.15	03/1998
A2179	Apple Pest Management for Home Gardeners	\$.35	03/1998
A2306	Calibrating and Using Fertilizer and Lime Spreaders	\$.50	12/1999
A2865	Guide to Selecting Landscape Plants for Wisconsin	\$2.75	03/1998
A2970	Salt Injury to Landscape Plants	\$1.50	09/1996
A3110	Disease-Resistant Vegetables for the Home Garden-2000	\$3.50	03/2000
A3639	Growing Apricots, Cherries, Peaches and Plums in Wisconsin	\$4.00	12/1998
A3700	Growing Grass in Shade (new)	\$1.50	10/1999

costly of the options. Workshop participants can assist in planting a second area, which will demonstrate accelerated recovery. A third area will remain mowed. Persons will be invited to return to the site in order to compare the results of each type of recovery.

The planning committee for this event is still looking for volunteers. Help is needed on Friday May 12 when 4th- and 5th-grade

students from Spooner and Shell Lake will be visiting the site (volunteers are needed to help kids at various hands-on education stations). If you enjoy working with kids, consider volunteering. Help is needed for both the morning and afternoon sessions. We will have a volunteer meeting on May 8 at the Spooner Hatchery Building at 5:30 p.m. Call Sheri Snowbank at 635-2101 for more information.



North Country Gardeners Newsletter

A publication for gardening enthusiasts from the
Tri-County area of Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn

Cooperative Extension
United States Department of Agriculture
University of Wisconsin Extension
432 N. Lake St.
Madison, WI 53706

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Official Business

Visit us on the web! You may find this newsletter and other useful information by visiting the website of the Spooner Ag Research Station. It has recently been redesigned and updated with new factsheets and program information: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/sars/index.htm>