

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

Idaho Master Gardeners educate the public at spring gardening events

AT A GLANCE

Idaho Master Gardeners serve the public by sharing timely gardening information and publicizing local and regional horticulture and gardening educational events.

The Situation

In the spring of each year, there are several gardening events in Bannock County. These events include the Spring Environmental Fair held at Caldwell Park, the Spring Gardening Fair held in the Pine Ridge Mall and the opening events associated with the Pocatello Farmers Market. These events are attended by hundreds of gardeners.

These area gardening enthusiasts have a desire to garden in an efficient and responsible manner. They need up-to-date research-based information. It is important that University of Idaho Extension has a presence at area gardening events. Idaho Master Gardeners are uniquely qualified to provide gardening information and to direct inquisitive gardeners to the educational resources they need to improve their gardening practices.

Our Response

University of Idaho Extension's Idaho Master Gardener Program in Bannock County is very active in the community. This group of volunteers devote many hours of their time to support community gardens and gardening events.



Idaho Master Gardener educational and informational booth at one of the Bannock County spring fairs.

For the past four years, Idaho Master Gardeners have manned booths at all the spring gardening events in Bannock County. Idaho Master Gardeners answer questions about which varieties of vegetables to plant, when to plant, what vegetables are frost tolerant, how to deal with weeds and disease and other topics.

The group also directs gardeners to other gardening educational events such as the Victory Garden classes, Idaho Master Gardener classes, our Everyday Gardening classes and Tree Walks. The sign-up sheets for classes are usually filled by the end of each event.

This year 12 Idaho Master Gardeners assisted at the booth at the Spring Environmental Fair and eight Idaho Master Gardeners helped at the Spring Gardening Fair.

Program Outcomes

Approximately 550 people attended the Spring Environmental Fair this year. A large portion of these attendees viewed the Idaho Master Gardener Program booth. One hundred seventy-five people came to the booth and talked to the Idaho Master Gardeners to receive information on gardening questions. Participants were given handouts providing answers to basic gardening questions. Each year Simplot gives away tomato plants at this event, but it is much too early to plant tomatoes at that time. The Idaho Master Gardeners provide information on how to take care of these early tomato plants. This single effort was instrumental in preserving the plants and teaching the proper timing for planting.

At the Spring Gardening Fair, 125 people received information at the Idaho Master Gardener booth. The information provided was similar to what was distributed at the Spring Environmental Fair.

The general public became more aware of the educational resources University of Idaho Extension has to offer to gardeners, and over 45 people signed up for information on the Idaho Master Gardener Program and the Victory Garden educational series. Additionally, the Idaho Master Gardeners became more proficient at fielding gardening questions and learned what the common disease, weed and production issues area gardeners are facing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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