

Purdue Extension Master Gardener 2022 Program Impacts

Issue

Home horticulture and gardening continues to be an area of knowledge desired by many Indiana residents. An increased interest by consumers to learn to grow their own food may have also led to a need for gardening information. Indiana residents have found the Purdue Extension Master Gardener (EMG) Program to not only satisfy their need for gardening education but also offer opportunities to share their new knowledge with their local communities.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE!

Purdue Extension Educators held EMG Basic Trainings (in-person and virtual) for gardening enthusiasts who have a desire to volunteer in consumer horticulture education projects. These 13-18 week trainings covered the following required core topics:

- EMG Orientation
- Plant Science
- Soils and Plant Nutrition
- Plant Disease Diagnosis
- Weed ID and Control
- Insect ID and Control
- Invasive Species
- Pesticide Safety Alternatives
- Lawn Care
- Herbaceous Ornamentals
- Woody Ornamentals
- Vegetable Gardening
- Fruit Gardening
- Animal Pests

In 2022, 456 EMG Interns were trained as volunteers!

Participants who complete the basic training and pass an exam over the material become Purdue EMG Interns and commit to contributing volunteer hours assisting with gardening education in Indiana communities.

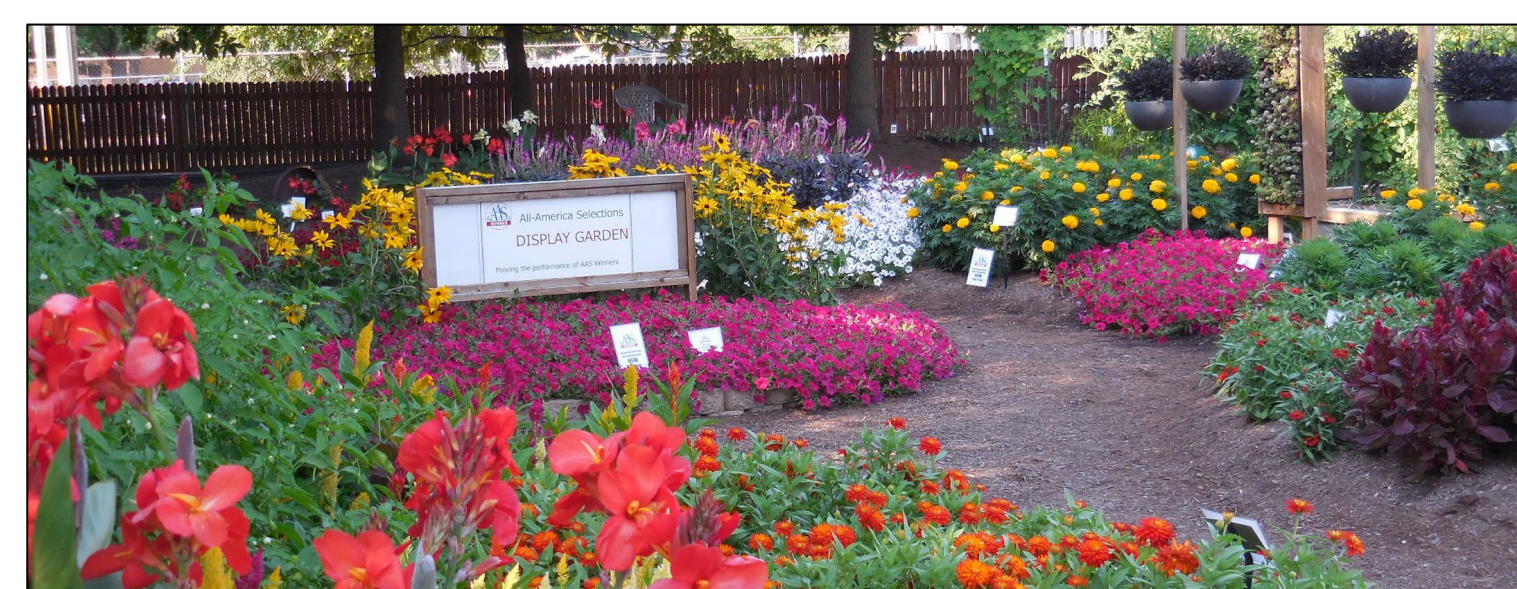


Figure 2. Marion County EMG demonstration gardens at the Indiana State Fairgrounds. These gardens draw thousands of visitors each year!



Figure 3. Elkhart County EMG volunteers partnered with other agencies to develop a community garden at the city airport. The city of Elkhart provided essential funding to install a fence to protect the gardens from theft and animal pests.

IMPACT SURVEY

Purdue EMG volunteers changed their gardening practices (% of respondents):

- Increased use of pollinator plants or use of practices that protect pollinators - 16.32%
- Chose the right plant for the right place - 15.13%
- Removed or replaced invasive plant species - 14.12%
- Reduced yard waste headed to landfills by composting and/or leaving grass clippings on the lawn - 13.60%
- Used environmentally sound pesticide practices - 12.54%

Purdue EMG's completing the survey reported (% of respondents)

- Increased efficiency of gardening practices - 35.92%
- Saved money by choosing the right plant for the right place - 26.37%
- Saved money through more effective use and/or purchase of pesticides or fertilizers - 18.50%
- Increased fruit and/or vegetable yields - 15.19%

2022 By the Numbers!

Active Purdue EMG Volunteers	2,767
Volunteer Hours	159,821
Education Hours	39,603
Educational Contacts	358,559
Pounds of Produce Donated from Educational Demo Gardens	49,805
Value of Volunteer Time according to the Independent Sector	Over \$4.0 million

CONCLUSION

Purdue EMG learn about gardening and put this new knowledge to work by assisting Purdue Extension with home horticulture education in Indiana communities. The program impacts the volunteer and communities in powerful ways!

CONNECT



<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/>

Author

John Orick, Purdue EMG State Coordinator,
Department of Horticulture and Landscape
Architecture, Purdue University
orick@purdue.edu



Figure 1. Bartholomew EMG volunteers preparing for their plant sale to raise funds for projects and scholarships.