

impact

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

Horticulture inquiries highlight need for a master gardener program

AT A GLANCE

A master gardener program will educate community members in horticultural practices, empowering them to enhance their skills and share knowledge with others.

The Situation

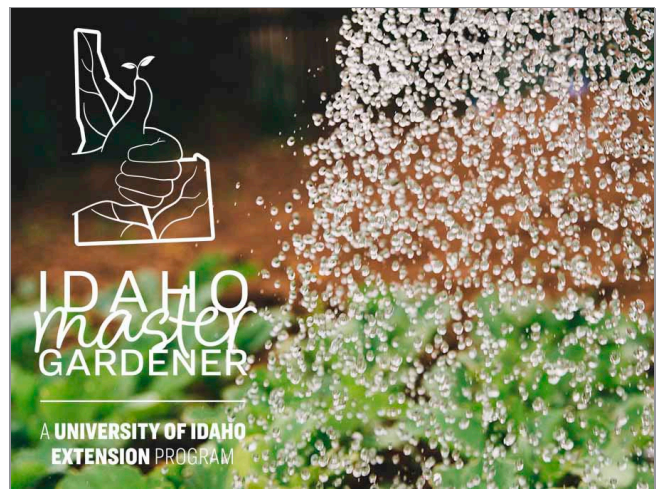
It has been 10 years since a dedicated University of Idaho Extension educator has been able to address horticulture concerns in Power County. This prolonged absence has left a noticeable impact on gardening and plant care education, making it essential to begin an Idaho Master Gardener Program.

Since May, the UI Extension office has received a high volume of horticulture and lawn inquiries. The questions our office has addressed include insect identification and management, tree disease and cultural practices, as well as plant/weed identification and control strategies. Additionally, we have handled concerns regarding pocket gopher/vole control and management techniques.

These questions have encompassed a diverse range of topics that are included in the Idaho Master Gardener Program. These diverse inquiries underscore the need for a master gardener program to enhance horticultural practices and broaden expertise in the county.

Our Response

To address the significant gap in horticulture education in Power County, we will establish a master



University of Idaho Extension's Idaho Master Gardener logo on cover of the handbook placard from website.

gardener program. This program will provide foundational and specific training for community members. The program will equip the community with the knowledge and skills needed to solve common horticultural challenges. The program will also develop informed gardeners to enhance local practices, improve plant and soil health, increase understanding of pests and diseases and ultimately strengthen the community's horticultural knowledge and capabilities. This program is scheduled to begin in the spring.

Program Outcomes

Currently, the University of Idaho Extension program in Power County has been able to provide the community with resources to identify and manage the high

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volume of horticultural inquiries over the summer. However, a more comprehensive approach would be to implement the Idaho Master Gardeners Program.

Increasing community involvement through this program will enhance horticultural education across the county and help identify concerns that the community may not yet recognize. The master gardener program will also provide many benefits to the County including but not limited to increase knowledge, enhance community engagement, improve plant care practices, develop leadership skills, expand access to resources, generate community partnerships, strengthen pest and disease identification and strengthen the local ecosystems. By bringing more community members into the fold, the Idaho Master Gardener Program would significantly expand the impact on horticulture resources. While the University of Idaho Extension team has been able to address the horticulture inquiries within a week to several weeks. The master gardener program would allow for a timelier response and more accumulative accounting of concerns within the county.

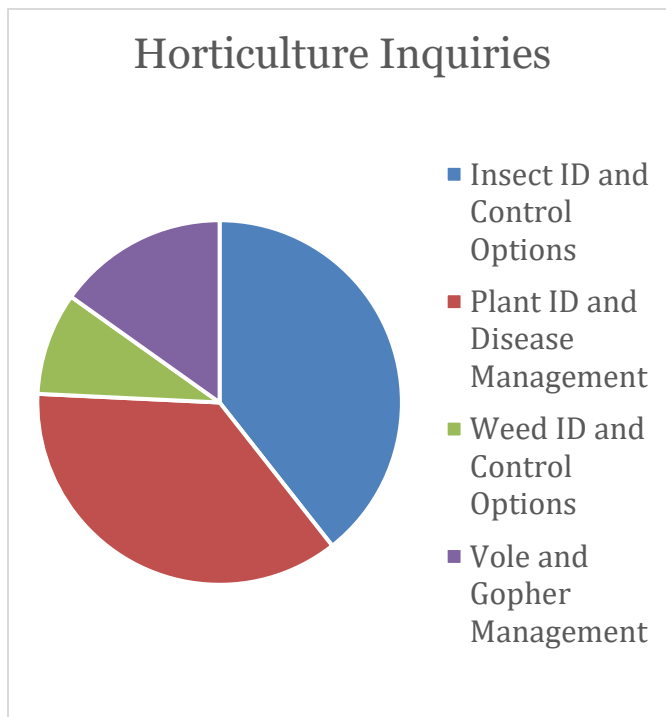


Figure 1 Types of reported horticulture questions reported in 2024.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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