

March 20, 2020

Subject: WSU Guidance for the MG Program

To: Master Gardeners and Trainees of King County,

Below is a message from Jennifer Marquis, the WSU Master Gardener Statewide Program Leader:

First and foremost, we all must listen to the guidance, recommendations and requirements communicated by federal, state, and county government and local health jurisdictions. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the White House on <https://www.coronavirus.gov/> lists current recommendations to slow the spread of the virus and further advises that everyone over the age of 60 should stay home and away from other people

([https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20\\_coronavirus-guidance\\_8.5x11\\_315PM.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf)).

Because the majority of the WSU Master Gardener volunteers are over the age of 60, and many have underlying health concerns, WSU Extension discourages all volunteers over the age of 60 from participating in events and activities that are held in a face-to-face environment, regardless of the number of people and of the non-pharmaceutical interventions being practiced until further notice is provided.

Authorities require that each of us practice non-pharmaceutical interventions for limiting the spread of the virus. These strategies include:

- Stay home if you are sick or feeling sick
- Practice Social Distancing - 6 feet between you and the next person
- Wash your hands frequently
- Sanitize shared surfaces before and after use
- Cover your coughs and sneeze with your elbow or with a tissue that is thrown away.
- Limit group sizes to 10 or less and practice social distancing

Governor Inslee has made observance of these safety precautions, under the direction of an identified responsible party, a requirement for any meeting. If these strategies cannot be easily and continually practiced, the event, activity or meeting must be postponed or cancelled.

WSU Extension supports its volunteers to make the best decisions for themselves. Individuals over the age of 60 and with underlying health conditions are strongly advised to remain at home and away from other people. Our responsibility as volunteer administrators is to support the people who give their time and efforts to their communities. This includes their health and safety. Please highly encourage your volunteers and colleagues to follow all recommendations and guidelines.

The following guidance attempts to further clarify the messaging from Friday,

March 13, 2020 using updated guidance from WSU Extension.

Demonstration Gardens, Community Food Bank Gardens, Greenhouses  
The WSU Extension Master Gardener Program empowers and sustains diverse communities with relevant, unbiased, research-based horticulture and environmental stewardship education. In the face of this pandemic, it is our responsibility as part of a Land Grant Institution, to continue to serve our mission and be a part of the solution to our communities' needs and response to this pandemic.

#### Demonstration Gardens

In order to mitigate the risk of plant loss, WSU Extension Master Gardener volunteers may volunteer in outdoor demonstration gardens at a minimal level provided all non-pharmaceutical interventions are upheld.

#### Community Food Bank Gardens:

In order to support community recovery, WSU Extension Master Gardener volunteers may ready plants for community food bank gardens and teach community members how to grow their own food (via virtual means). All non-pharmaceutical interventions must be upheld.

#### Greenhouses:

In order to mitigate the loss of plant starts for plant sales and community food bank gardens, WSU Master Gardener volunteers may work in greenhouses, in groups of less than 10, provided all non-pharmaceutical interventions can be upheld.

#### Actions we can Take

The WSU Extension Master Gardener program understands the need to generate revenue to support our educational outreach. You have all done a tremendous job brainstorming ways to hold plant sales virtually. To facilitate the virtual plant sale effort, Jennifer will coordinate a Zoom meeting with interested program coordinators and plant sale volunteers for idea sharing. WSU Extension encourages the continuation of events and programming via virtual means.

#### Compliance

Reports of non-compliance with non-pharmaceutical intervention protocols will result in the complete closure of all locations, events and activities. As a representative of WSU, you are a community leader and educator. It is your responsibility to model expected behaviors.

Please note: This is an extremely dynamic situation. Guidance, recommendations and requirements change quickly and we will update you as quickly as possible through your county program coordinator or county director

Thank you for your commitment, leadership and support.

Todd, Jim and Jana

Jennifer Marquis

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This email is being sent by the Master Gardener Foundation of King County on behalf of the [WSU Extension Master Gardener Program in King County](#).

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