Action Plan:

Extension Master Gardeners

2011-2012

Strategic Opportunities Addressed:

- Enhance Effective Decision-Making Regarding Environmental Stewardship
- Create Opportunities and Support People in Kansas to Improve Their Physical, Mental, and Emotional Health and Well-Being

Situation:

Extension Master Gardeners are a vital part of K-State Research and Extension. Donating time in return for horticultural training, Extension Master Gardeners help our county agents meet the need for horticultural information in their communities. The Master Gardener program is designed to provide trained volunteers to help meet that need at minimal cost.

The means of providing this information is diverse including horticultural "hotlines", demonstration gardens, working garden shows and community events, public presentations and providing garden tours. Kansas Extension Master Gardeners donated over 80,000 hours during 2008 for a total value of well over 1.4 million dollars. This is equivalent to 40 full time extension staff positions.

Extension Master Gardeners require continual education in best management practices, conservation of natural resources, waste management, integrated pest management, and identification and selection of proper plant materials for healthy people, plants, and the environment.

Outcomes:

Short-Term:

*Community members will have increased awareness of the EMG program.

*EMG volunteers will improve their horticultural skills and knowledge of adaptable plant materials, best management practices, products, and cultural practices.

Evaluation Questions:

Are more community members aware of the EMG program?

Have EMG volunteers improved their knowledge and skills related to adaptable plant materials, best management practices, products and cultural practices?

Medium-Term:

* EMG volunteers demonstrate leadership skills that they apply in the organization and community.

* By providing timely, accurate information, our Extension Master Gardeners influence our clientele to use less and more effective inputs.

Evaluation Questions:

What leadership skills do EMG volunteers demonstrate in the organization and the community?

How does the information EMG volunteers provide influence clientele behaviors, including their use of fertilizers and pesticides?

Long-Term:

* Extension Master Gardener volunteers, with their enthusiasm and commitment, influence family, friends and neighbors to use proven horticultural practices.

* Extension Master Gardener volunteers preserve and beautify the environment and improve quality of life in the community by promoting sound horticulture practices with honesty, patience, and respect for the public and each other.

Evaluation Questions:
Do the family, friends and neighbors of EMG volunteers use proven horticultural practices?

How do EMG volunteers work to preserve and beautify the environment and improve the quality of life in their communities.

Outputs:

Outputs - Participants - who is the target audience

Potential volunteers who may have horticultural expertise, enjoy sharing the love of gardening with others, and will provide KSU recommended information to the citizens of Kansas.

Outputs - Activities - what will you do to carry out the program

* Work with Ward Upham, State EMG Coordinator, who provides leadership in organizing and implementing Advanced Master Gardener Training each year as well as provide assistance with counties determining state-wide rules and regulations.

* Time and expertise of horticulture agents, EMG coordinators and area/state specialists will be utilized for the purpose of providing ongoing training and program guidance.

* Horticulture Rapid Response Center - Provide Extension Master Gardeners rapid informational support if Horticulture Agent is unavailable.

* Weekly Newsletter - Provides timely information on current problems and appropriate cultural practices.

* New EMG training - Agents, specialists and industry leaders are used to provide accurate, research based horticultural training to beginning volunteers. Potential Extension Master Gardeners are given 40 hours of horticulture training in return for 40 hours of volunteer time. The basic training course consists of a minimum of 12 core-curriculum topics.

* Fall Advanced EMG Training - Provides over 40 different classes in areas not covered in Basic Training or provides more in-depth information in areas that were covered.

Plan Contacts:

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