Program Focus Team Action Plan:

Kansas Healthy Yards and Communities

2013-2014

Strategic Opportunities Addressed:

- Sustain Profitable Agricultural Production Systems
- Enhance Effective Decision-Making Regarding Environmental Stewardship

Situation:

Ever-changing weather patterns make growing horticulture plantings in Kansas an on-going challenge as residents struggle with managing valuable resources such as water. The state has recently experienced one of the worst droughts in history. As a result, Kansans are concerned.

Kansas residents are faced with decisions on how to use these resources in maintaining their home landscapes. How will they balance the need to plant and maintain an environmentally responsible landscape that results in increased property values and community vitality while conserving water and other resources?

Communities are demanding we that we live within our available water and other resources.

Kansans need to become more educated about conversation of natural resources, best management practices, waste management, integrated pest management, and how to identify and select plant materials for health of people and the environment.

Public Value:

Tools and educational opportunities made available by the KHYC program will enable Kansans to have increased capacity to manage the effects of challenging environmental conditions, limited water and increased environmental concerns.

Outcomes:

Short-Term:

1. Participants will increase their awareness of methods for reducing water use in horticulture plantings; and the impact of yard waste, fertilizers, pesticides and other pollutants into the storm drainage system.
2. Participants will increase their knowledge of and motivation to use water sparingly and adopt best management practices such as proper plant selections, watering, fertilizing, managing pest, mulching, mowing, and maintaining healthy soil.

Evaluation Questions:

1. Have participants increased their knowledge and awareness of practices that result in water conservation in the landscape and garden?
2. Have participants increased their awareness of the impact of yard waste, fertilizer, pesticide and other pollinates on the storm drainage system?
3. Have participants increased their knowledge of and motivation to use best management practices for the lawn and landscape?

Medium-Term:

1. Participants will reduce unnecessary inputs in the landscape in the form of irrigation water, labor and time, money, fertilizers and pesticides.
2. Gardeners will practice good soil management by testing their soil every 3 to 5 years.

Evaluation Questions:

1. Have participants changed practices that result in less water use in the landscape and garden?
2. Have participants made efforts to reduce unnecessary inputs their lawn and landscape management?

Long-Term:

1. Kansans maintain water quality and quantity by conservation and reducing non-point source pollination from the lawn and landscape.
2. Kansans have yards and communities that enhance our quality of life through earth-friendly practices.

Evaluation Questions:

1. Have Kansans conserved water and left an ample supply of quality water for future use?
2. Do Kansans demonstrate earth-friendly practices in their yards and communities?
3. Have Kansans reduced non-point source pollution in lawns and landscapes?

Outputs:

Outputs - Participants - who is the target audience

1. Home Gardeners
2. Neighborhood Associations
3. Extension Master Gardener volunteers
4. Counties, municipalities, schools, parks, etc.
5. Horticulture Industry – nurseries, garden centers, lawn care operators, etc.

Outputs - Activities - what will you do to carry out the program
Website which includes fact sheets, videos and other web-base applications

1. Healthy Yards Assessments
2. Extension demonstration gardens and plant trials
3. Educational programs for gardener, industry and volunteers
4. News releases

Plan Contacts:

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