

Washburn County

Name & Title of person facilitating the program locally? Kevin Schoessow, Area Agriculture Development Agent.

When the MG program started in your county? 1999

Address of the UWEX office and county website W6646 Hwy 70, Spooner, WI 54801
<http://spooner.ars.wisc.edu>

Number of community/school gardens in the county 6

Amount of produce donated 2500 lbs

A list of 8 places where you can find activities by MGVs in your county

1. Spooner Agriculture Research Station Teaching and Display Garden
2. Spooner School Gardens
3. New Ventures Garden Seminar, Minong
4. Shell Lake School Gardens
5. Stone Lake Lions Park
6. Washburn County Family Fest
7. Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary (Prairie Fling, maintenance of rain gardens/landscape plants)
8. Washburn County Fair

4 Success Stories (75-85 words)

1. We host a Mini Master Gardener Short Course for youth and their families. Twenty-four youths and 16 adults participated in two sessions held at a local greenhouse and the Spooner Agriculture Research Station. In part one the participants explore the secrets of soil, incredible edibles, seeds, sprouts and shoots; paper pots; and tomato transplants. The second session explores hot and healthy composting, weeds, waste free watering, going vertical with pole beans and cucumbers, and small space gardens.
2. The Spooner Agriculture Research Station Teaching and Display Garden is designed and maintained with the help of volunteers. During the growing season the garden hosts many training events and has visitors from schools, garden clubs, and residents of the area. Featured in the garden this year was a revamp of the perennial display garden into a certified Monarch Way Station with native plantings. The garden has won national awards for the past four years from the All American Selections Landscape Garden Design Contest, this year winning second place with the theme of Pollinator Education.
3. The Spooner Elementary School Helping Hands Garden is maintained by third-grade students. The classes started peppers, tomatoes, and squash from seed beginning in April. The last week of May/first week of June, the students planted the garden. The flower beds were designed by the third-graders. In addition to nutritious food crops harvested from the gardens, flowers and an abundance of tasty herbs were enjoyed. This garden as well as the Experiences Garden in the Middle School are open to the community.

4. Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary benefits from Master Gardener Volunteers assisting with maintaining the native plantings and staffing programs. On a very chilly day in mid - May, four MGVs staffed a booth at the annual Prairie Fling held at Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary in Sarona. One of 35 booths, MGVs greeted the 350 visitors with their families, provided information and a hands-on family activity: making newspaper pots, planting bean seeds, and quizzing/reviewing what plants need to grow.

A discussion of all recent projects relating to the theme (within the last 3 years)(theme: The Value of Gardening

1. Washburn County Master Garden Volunteers are involved in a wide variety of activities including education, providing produce and demonstrating techniques to assist local residents in growing their own food and caring for the habitat. This year's focus has been on pollinators with seminars at the local libraries, garden clubs, and at the Spooner Research Station about the value of native plants and the effects on native bees, butterflies and other pollinators. There are several educational events in addition to the annual Twilight Tour at the Spooner Teaching and Display Garden. The seminars at the garden featured Master Gardener Volunteers sharing their experiences and expertise on native plants, shore land preservation, pollinator habitat, and how to support the native pollinators. The seminars and annual symposium hosted over 300 people who provided feedback that the theme of pollinators and native plants was valuable to them.