



## Tips for New Gardeners



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World War I saw thousands of people begin planting war gardens. In addition, the US government encouraged children to garden through the development of school gardens and the establishment of the Children's War Garden Army. World War II saw similar growth in vegetable gardening with Victory Gardens which produced as much as 40% of the country's fresh produce. With the Covid-19 pandemic, seed sales have been on the rise. What all these events have in common is an increase of both new gardeners and people who haven't garden for years. If you are one these new gardeners here are a few things to consider to prevent frustration and discouragement.

Keep it manageable. If you are new to gardening, a 10'X10' plot will get you started. Enlarging it to a 10'X20' the following year will enable you to grow much of what a family of four will need for an entire season. The larger the garden the greater your time commitment. Do not assume you will be unemployed for the entire growing season. If you haven't planted a garden in years don't assume you can physically handle the same work load you previously did.

Plant only what you will eat. It is easy to get carried away by the pretty pictures in the seed catalog. Don't plant a dozen broccoli plants if your family doesn't eat broccoli.

Manage your expenses. Don't invest in power tools or expensive raised beds. Start with a few simple tools; a spade, hoe, rake and trowel. Look for used tools and add as you are able.

Vegetable plants require 8 hours of sun. If your landscape lacks that, consider a few containers before removing trees or shrubs.

Consider the history of your site. Did your spray your lawn with persistent herbicide last year? Were there any walnut or butternut

trees on the site? Both conditions are likely to suppress the growth or completely kill your vegetables.

Prepare your site. When turning sod into a garden remove the grass and perennial weeds. If desired, use an herbicide such as glyphosate and turn the soil after three days. Alternately cover the area with an opaque tarp or several layers of cardboard for two or three weeks to smother the weeds and turf.

Don't over fertilize. A soil test is always a good idea when beginning a garden. Sod turned into a garden is not likely to need additional nutrients for several years.

Start with crops that have fewer pests and don't require special handling. Green and yellow beans, carrots, cucumbers, onions, snap peas, tomatoes and peppers are a good starting point. Sweet corn, melons and squash require significant space; cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower need protection from persistent insects; potatoes are can be difficult to dig in some soils.

For science-based information check out The Learning Store from the University of Wisconsin Extension. <https://learningstore.extension.wisc.edu/> A simple search for 'vegetable garden' yields excellent publications covering selection, growing, pest control, harvesting and storage. "Vegetable Cultivars and Planting Guide for Wisconsin Gardeners" has suggested planting dates for most garden crops and an average yield per foot of row. Additional questions can be answered by sending an inquiry to [askamastergardener@att.net](mailto:askamastergardener@att.net).

Welcome to vegetable gardening. Remember to involve the whole family, maybe even give a child responsibility for a section or a few plants. It is a great way to instill responsibility and build self-esteem.

John Schellinger  
Certified Master Gardener



## Upcoming Meetings

Anyone with an interest in gardening is welcome to attend the following free programs. Master Gardener meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month. Unless otherwise noted, the meetings are at 6:30 p.m. in the Administration Building, 127 E. Oak Street, Juneau.

Until further notice, in-person Master Gardener meetings are on pause.  
For meeting updates watch for emails or Facebook posts.



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### Master Gardener Websites

<http://www.wimastergardener.org/>

<https://wimga.org/>

<http://dodge.uwex.edu/master-gardener/>

### Master Gardener E-mail

[askamastergardener@att.net](mailto:askamastergardener@att.net)



## 2020 Scholarship Recipients

Carter Beaulieu and Alexander Coughlin have each been awarded a 2020 Dodge County Master Gardener Association \$1000 Scholarship.

Beaulieu, a senior at Randolph High School, plans to attend UW La Crosse and major in Biology and Chemistry, with a career goal in plant research. In high school he has been active in FFA , student council, and athletics. He was named a state winner of Career and Technical Education for the US Presidential Scholars Program. Beaulieu has also volunteered in community activities and has been employed at area Ag businesses throughout his high school years. He also operates his own lawn care business.

Alexander Coughlin, a senior at Watertown High School, plans to attend Iowa State University and major in Agronomy. Coughlin has been an FFA officer and leader including conducting the chapter’s crop plot for three years. Under his leadership the chapter created and organized an annual field day. Coughlin has also been active in community events and was employed as a farm equipment operator, field scout and mechanic throughout high school.

The Dodge County Master Gardener Association awards an annual scholarship to a high school senior who is planning a career in some area of horticulture.

Kay Voelker, Dodge County Master Gardener Scholarship Committee



## Certified Master Gardeners

Connie Alderden	Jacque Huebner	Jann Seegert
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Diane Hemling	Jean Ramer	Terry Zimmerlee
Tina Hopp	John Schellinger	

# Congratulations

## Level 1 Training

The class of 2020 completed 6 of the 15 classes face to face. Due to Covid-19, they had to switch to remote training. They did a remarkable job of adapting and continuing to learn despite the set-back. The first week or two we had some glitches, but we worked through them and I think it was successful in the end.

Carol Shirk

Carolyn Aita  
Denise Knuth  
Joe Riese  
Rhonda Ritchie  
Virginia Robbeloth

Renee Schmitt  
Dawn Shillalies  
Rosie Sullivan  
Cheryl Uttech  
Susan Uttech

Thanks to our dedicated teacher, Carol Shirk, who quickly switched our classes over to a Zoom video meeting, we never “missed a beat”. I didn’t even have the Internet but was able to get a hotspot, be connected and continue to learn. Zoom was easy to use and the preparation and class helped distract me for a bit from the depressing pandemic news. I really enjoyed and applaud the outside speakers who “zoomed in” to present lectures. My camera didn’t work well, but I did put on a virtual vegetable background and who knew there is a built in beautification filter on Zoom? I was disappointed not to get to know other class members but we are planning a big party when the restrictions lift. All in all, it was a great opportunity to learn, be safe at home and become interns. I’ll miss seeing everyone and will always cherish this unprecedented Dodge County Master Gardener course with Carol.

Rhonda Ritchie - 2020 DCMG Intern



“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember,  
involve me and I learn.”  
— Benjamin Franklin

My MGV Level 1 teacher Carol Shirk asked us to write about how we felt about completing our training remotely. I was in a different situation than the others in the class because for all but the last three weeks of the session, I lived in Shorewood, WI, about 1.25 hrs. from Juneau. The benefit of remote training was that I no longer had to make the trip, sometimes along dark country roads in not-so-great weather. For the last three weeks of class I was living at our vacation house, on the northwest corner of Beaver Dam Lake, only 20 miles from Juneau, so the appeal of not having to drive for 2.5 h round trip was not in play, and I really missed the in-person interaction. This may be class-specific: I was part of a group of terrific interns, each bringing something different to the discussion.

And then there was our teacher, Carol. SHE MADE THIS CLASS WORK FOR EVERYONE. The reason that our class could be successfully conducted by ZOOM was because Carol made remote-learning work. When there was a technical problem, she was persistent about finding a solution. She adapted her teaching style, especially the labs, for remote learning. I felt that she was there, in my living room, because she made sure we were all engaged. I understand that we are her last class, and I am honored to be her student.

Carolyn Aita





**Dodge County Master Gardener  
VOLUNTEER HELPLINE**

**May 5 - September 4, 2020**

**Tuesdays: 9 am-12 pm**  
**Thursdays: 1 pm-4 pm**

PHONE OR EMAIL ONLY.  
920-386-3790/ASKAMASTERGARDENER@ATT.NET

  
DODGE COUNTY  
**Master Gardener**  
ASSOCIATION



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## Ground Covers

Ground covers are low-growing plants that spread and form a dense mat over the surface of the soil. There are ground covers to meet most needs from sun to shade and wet to dry. They can help with soil erosion, reduce weeds, and provide habitat for insects, birds, and other wildlife.

Ground covers spread by rhizomes, stolons, and suckers. Some spread slowly, while others may be aggressive, and in some cases, even invasive.

Select the right plant for the location. Take into consideration the site conditions such as light, water and soil (including soil texture and soil pH).

Spring is the preferred time to plant ground cover, as it allows the plants to become established before winter. Ground covers fill in more quickly if they are planted in a diamond or staggered pattern rather than in rows. During the first growing season, plants will develop healthy root systems with mulching, regular weeding, and supplemental watering. Once established, there is minimal maintenance with ground covers.



### ***Asarum canadense***

Common Name: Wild ginger

Zone: 3—6

Native to eastern and central North America.

Wild ginger is a herbaceous perennial with large, heart-shaped leaves. Take a peak under the leaves and you will find a unique flower hidden below the leaves at ground level. The flower attracts small pollinating flies that emerge from the ground in the early spring. Once the flower fades away, the seed capsule splits open to release the seeds. Ants will carry the seeds to their underground home where the seeds germinate.

Wild ginger is not related to culinary ginger. However, early Americans used wild ginger as a spice, which is no longer recommended as it may contain poisonous compounds. Historically, it was also used as a covering to treat wounds. Researches have found two antibiotic compounds in wild ginger to validate its use.

Wild ginger is easily grown in average, medium to wet, well-drained soil in part to full shade. Wild ginger makes a great ground cover for the shade garden. It tends to grow in colonies spreading slowly by rhizomes. Once established, it may help fend off Garlic Mustard and other invasive species.

Wild ginger is an alternate host plant for the Pipevine Swallowtail butterfly.

### ***Brunnera macrophylla* 'Jack Frost'**

Common Name: Siberian bugloss

2012 Perennial Plant of the Year by the Perennial Plant Association

Hardy: Zone 3—8

'Jack Frost' Brunnera has striking silver variegated heart shaped leaves with hundreds of powder blue flowers that bloom in spring. It prefers consistently moist, organically rich soils in shady areas. It's deer and rabbit resistant. 'Jack Frost' Brunnera spreads slowly by creeping rhizomes to form a thick ground cover.

Remove spent flower stalks in early summer and remove ragged foliage in late fall to keep plant looking its best.

The common name, bugloss, comes from Greek meaning ox tongue in probable reference to the roughness and shape of the leaves. While the Genus name honors Swiss botanist Samuel Brunner (1790-1844).

