

Spring and Fall Garden Care

The Situation

Many of the homeowners/gardeners struggle with caring practices for their lawns, gardens and trees such as pruning, weeds, diseases and insect issues. Raspberries and juneberries are popular fruits grown in backyard gardens. The recent invasion of Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) has caused devastating losses to fruit growers in ND. Gardeners are not aware of this new invasive pest and are reaching out to Extension offices for information on the insect and how to manage it.

Extension Response

Extension serves clients with unbiased research-based information through various outreach techniques such as news articles, one-on-one visits, home/farm visits, and workshops. Agents Anitha Chirumamilla and Steve Sagaser (Grand Forks) conducted two workshops in Cavalier County in June and September 2016, to 13 and 6 people respectively. The agents presented on the topics of fruit tree pruning and grafting, disease identification and management, tree and lawn care and insect pest management. Gardeners gained knowledge on:

- techniques and importance of spring and fall pruning to maintain the health of trees;
- fertilizing, watering and mowing practices for healthy and beautiful looking lawn;
- common tree and garden diseases;
- insect pest identification and their management
- importance of knowing good bugs from bad bugs and encouraging their populations; and
- identifying, monitoring and managing spotted wing drosophila.

Impacts

A total of 19 people attended the two workshops. Responses (from 13) are shared:

- 62% of the participants stated an increase level of knowledge in tree and garden care
- 100% of participants stated an increase in their skill level of garden care from moderate to high
- 100% of the participants indicated an increased level of awareness and identification knowledge of garden insect pests, good bugs, and spotted wing drosophila
- 69% of the participants indicated at least one action they would intend to take

- 46% stated an intension to change their behaviors in tree and garden care within next 12 months as a result of information learned in workshops

Additionally, more than 50 people were helped in one-on-one visits and home/garden visits by agent Chirumamilla during the growing season.

Feedback

From workshop participants:

- *"Thank you for the good information. I have an educated eye out for drosophila now".*
- *"Did not realize that pruning techniques make a difference in the health of trees".*
- *"Now I know that I have to mow the grass shorter".*

Public Value Statement

Healthy gardens lead to increased sustainability of homegrown fresh fruits and vegetables leading to improved local nutrition, health or increased property values adding to the state economy.

Primary Contact

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Raspberries invaded by Spotted Wing Drosophila

Collaborator

Stevan Sagaser