

Online Forums Empower Gardeners

Public Value Statement

Empowering gardeners with science-based information contributes to a more sustainable environment, abundant harvests, and healthier diets.

The Situation

North Dakota State University (NDSU) generates science-based information that is useful to gardeners. The internet has opened new opportunities for NDSU researchers to share this information with the general public.

Extension Response

The Spring Fever Garden Forums gave North Dakotans direct access to researchers of NDSU. Experts shared information on improving home landscapes, restoring soil health, caring for houseplants, reducing the use of pesticides on lawns, conserving bees, and other topics.

Sessions were held on Thursday nights from March 26 to April 16, 2020. The online programs were delivered to over 850 gardeners at their homes.

Presentations were later uploaded on YouTube and watched by over 2,200 gardeners in 2020. Presentations were watched by thousands of gardeners on local cable access television networks.

Impacts

The forums successfully delivered quality information to gardeners across the state. An online survey of registrants showed:

- 97% of gardeners provided at least one specific example of how they will use this information to change and improve their gardening practices. Gardeners mentioned examples such as selecting superior landscape plants, reducing the use of pesticides, and taking steps to improve the soil in their gardens.
- Participants were extremely satisfied with the quality and usefulness of the presentations. Using a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied), the mean and median scores for the 12 presentations combined were 4.41 and 5.00, respectively.



Gardeners learned how to protect their environment and beautify their community.

Feedback

“The information presented was so interesting and really fueled my desire to learn more about the subjects. I’ve listened to the presentations again, printed out presentation slides, and am making notes as I plan for my garden this spring.”

“I always get something useful from the forums. It gives me motivation to make changes or just get out in the garden.”

Primary Contact

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Resource Links

<https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/springfever/>