



July 2022

Jackson County Master Gardeners Announcements



- **An Introduction to Household Greywater Systems class**
July 19th, 2022 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Location: OSU Extension Auditorium at SOREC, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point OR.

To Register: Sign up online at <https://beav.es/UcY> or call OSU Extension at 541-776-7371.

Cost: \$15 per person or sliding scale. Fees help support the Land Steward Program For more information, email Rachel.Werling@oregonstate.edu.



- **Winter Dreams Summer Gardens Symposium 2022** will be held October 28th, 29th, November 4th, and 5th Mark your calendars!



- **JCMGA Holiday Gala** will be this Fall. More information to follow!

Better Know a Native

Lynn Kunstman

You are all well aware that I have been beating the Native Plants drum for some time now. Last year, I wrote a four-part series outlining the reasons for growing native plants. Now, with our Native Plant Nursery back up and running after last year's water crisis, I thought I would begin introducing you to plants we grow. I am going to begin with ground covers and grasses.

Many folks are considering removing part or all of their traditional lawns, as the water situation in the valley evolves and concerns for conserving water grow. Growing native ground covers and native grasses can be a great choice if you are wanting a more drought tolerant, low (relatively) growing area of vegetation in your yard. While these natives will not tolerate the mowing and foot traffic of a conventional turf lawn, they will cover the space, outcompete weeds, and require much less irrigation. Remember that native plants have roots that reach many feet—typically six to fifteen feet—into the soil and therefore require much less irrigation, once established.

Currently we have two ground covers and two native grasses available in the nursery. The groundcovers are native Yarrow and native Self Heal. The grasses are Tufted Hairgrass and Blue Wild Rye. Here is a brief description of each.



Tufted Hairgrass, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, is a native bunchgrass. It grows naturally in moist, high elevation sites; sandy or rocky shores; bogs & fens and requires medium water. It does best in part shade. The seeds are an important food for birds, and it is host to Skipper butterflies (*Hesperiidae* family). If you have an area that gets regular water, this is a grass you might consider.



Blue Wild Rye, *Elymus glaucus*, is a cool season, tufted perennial bunchgrass. The loose to dense tufts have erect to somewhat nodding seedheads. The foliage is blue-green in color. Growing 3-6 feet, this decorative grass likes part shade, and will tolerate dry sites. It is a desirable species for use in erosion control. The attractive, blue-green foliage adds value to commercial landscaping projects. It is host to nine species of butterfly and moth.



Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*, is a tough, lacy gray-green evergreen perennial herb. It grows 2-3 feet tall, with white flowers. It fills spaces aggressively, to form a thick, weed- preventing mat. Bloom lasts from April into September. It does well in both full sun and part shade and is especially drought tolerant. Added benefits are that it is fire resistant, hosts 10 butterfly and moth species, and is of special value to native bees.



Self Heal, *Prunella vulgaris*, is a vigorously spreading member of the mint family. This tough little native grows 6 inches to 2 feet tall and forms a lush green mat. It is topped with lovely purple flower stalks from May through September. It can be grown most anywhere, with a little extra water in very dry conditions. In very hot areas, give it a spot that is protected from the hot afternoon sun. Self Heal is a favorite of bumblebees and butterflies, both as a nectar and a host plant.

All of these plants and many more are for sale in our JCMGA nursery, on the SOREC Extension campus, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point. The nursery is open for sales on **Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to noon** through October, and by appointment. Contact Lynn at kunlynn52@gmail.com to schedule an appointment. We also have seasonal pop-up sales, so be on the lookout for those.



~~~~~ Save the Dates! ~~~~~

**The Jackson County Master Gardener Association is back, virtually!**

**Dates:** Fridays, October 28 and November 4 and

Saturdays, October 29 and November 5, 2022

9:00 – 4:30 p.m.

**In the comfort of your own home via Zoom**

We will have a great variety of gardening topics presented by engaging and knowledgeable speakers. Each presentation will be 90 minutes in length, including time for Questions and Answers.

Topics include: native plants; drought tolerant/fire resistant plants; soil nutrients; berries; fruit tree pruning; native bees; pollinator botanical gardens; year-round vegetable gardening — and many more!

**2022 Winter Dreams Summer Gardens Symposium** is an ideal time to take stock while learning with experts about Gardening in Our Rogue Valley Climate.

**Cost:** \$30. Pick your favorite topics or watch them all. Most sessions will be recorded and available for a limited time for paid participants. Registration to open mid-August.

**Make it a family reunion & invite friends, family,  
and all your far-flung Gardening Enthusiasts!**

**Stay tuned – More details to follow**  
**Watch the JCMGA website for details**



### **The Future of JCMGA** <sup>1</sup>

President's Message, July 2022



Dear JCMGA members,

Your Board is planning a special retreat to be held on Friday September 23, 2022. This event will be designed to be an “all-hands” meeting, with all members invited and encouraged to attend, and will be in lieu of the annual membership meeting. The topic will be “The Future of JCMGA.”

The plan is to make this an “in person” event in the auditorium on the SOREC<sup>2</sup> grounds. We will try to have an adjunct ZOOM™ section if we can figure it out.

The idea originated when a few veteran MGs<sup>3</sup> approached me. They feared for the survival of the organization because so many things have changed during the pandemic and the membership has drastically declined and the program may be under a review by OSU. While I do not fear for the survival of the group, as I see us working away determinedly and adjusting to many challenges, I do agree that we should get the membership as a whole more involved and should try to influence our future rather than being entirely reactive. So, I will work enthusiastically towards this all-hands initiative with the appropriate MG Working Groups. Please, could you put September 23 on your calendars? More details will follow.

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<sup>1</sup> Jackson County Master Gardeners Association

<sup>2</sup> Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center

<sup>3</sup> Master Gardeners

Meanwhile, I would like to share some observations: On June 18, the Member Services Working Group put on a “Par-Tea” for members and former members to get reacquainted. It was a wonderful afternoon; the tea service was “set up to a T” and very pretty. About 10 people rejoined with the special offer. Great job, MSWG!

As I was strolling around and introducing myself to a few people and chatting, I became aware that a common reason for them losing touch was because they did not feel entirely welcome. I am afraid the pandemic and recent happenings in the news may have something to do with this. Everybody seems to be on edge. But this is still not a good situation. I admit that I am sensitive to this issue as I feel that I have been stereotyped since I volunteered to be President. I was more or less called a bully, considered too dense to recognize errors on a website, instructed on time management and efficiency, not invited to welcome the new students. I tried to invite myself, but first the sign-up procedure for the classes was broken. When that was fixed, the link to the classes did not work in our county. That is when I just gave up on inviting myself. And at the “Par-Tea” I was told it would be better if I used a paper cup to drink my tea because the pretty cups were very fragile.

Now I know I’m nothing special, if this kind of stuff is happening to me it is also happening to others. And I inadvertently stereotyped someone myself. We must try to avoid this behavior by realizing that we may have unconscious, perhaps even unfocused biases because we are on edge; by being polite and staying polite; and by maybe even being kind! And we need to treat all our students as “adult learners” (as Dolly Travers put it so nicely when she was helping reorganize the Plant Clinic). Adult learners need to *know how*, but also *why*. They have busy lives and their own style of doing things. Let’s never talk down to them and they may stay members! Also, never turn down someone volunteering! Really, that is not asking a lot, is it? Just be decent. Lake Woebegone decent.

*If you have any comments or advice or ideas about my observations or for the all-hands initiative, please email them to me at the following address: [gardenleader948@gmail.com](mailto:gardenleader948@gmail.com)*

Regula Pepi



## No Strings Attached

Gardening Gourmet

Sydney Jordan Brown MG 2000

Beans, beans, the magical fruit

The more you discover, the more you'll toot...

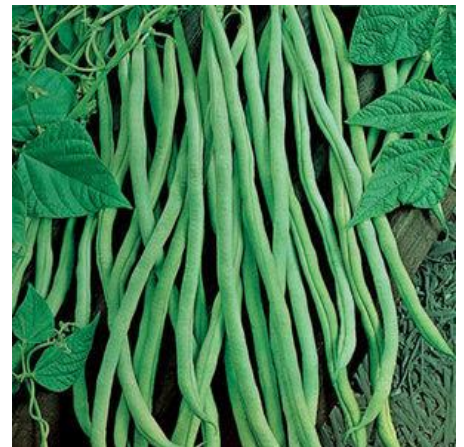
You'll certainly toot your horn for *Phaseolus vulgaris*, specifically French filet beans, (also known as *haricots verts*). Once you've savored them, you'll know why they're so sought after.

While there are many kinds and colors of green beans, there's nothing quite like a French filet bean.

"Filet" translates as "string"—not because of unpalatable fibers holding the pods together but denoting their "string-like" shapes.

Filets weren't always French either. Cultivated over 5,000 years in Central and South America, they were brought as dried beans by Columbus to Europe in 1493.

The first green beans cultivated prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century were nothing like today's beans. Likely tough and stringy, they were grown as garden ornamentals rather than as food.





Although first used dried, it wasn't until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in southern Italy that cross breeding produced more palatable beans consumed in their immature pod form.

Even with the development of Blue Lake truly-stringless beans in 1962, *haricots verts* remain the most tender, succulent and delicious green beans around.

While French filet beans may grow similarly to other green beans, that's where it all ends. These slender-podded totally-stringless beans grow very straight and to remarkable lengths – up to 12" long. Although best harvested when the diameter of a pencil, they remain stringless and tasty when more mature.

Despite the famous filet bean with its dense, buttery flavor being the choice for American's palates, it's not commercially harvested. Filets are difficult to efficiently pick at peak flavor, so if you want them, you'll only get them from your own garden.

To get more of these wonderful bean plants, as well as to beat chewing night critters, sow seed indoors. Start indoors in late April through the first part of May, about two weeks before the last frost date.

Presprouting beans is a great way to start your crop. Place beans on wet paper toweling on a large dinner plate, then cover with a vented microwave dome. Unsprouted beans can be discarded before you waste planting duds.

Pot up sprouted beans (you might want to sprinkle in some inoculant bacteria to stimulate nitrogen-rich root nodes) in six packs after they have about 1" of growth.

Keep beneath a good light source until seedlings have some true leaves and are about 3-4" tall. Acclimate them outside about 5 days before planting out.

Pole-type filet beans are best since their beans aren't prone to tip rot and remain straighter when grown vertically on supports. Sheep wire and 7' steel posts work well for plant support.

Lasting much longer than other varieties, you'll be harvesting filet pods until the frost nips them in the tips! Then devour them steamed and buttered or grilled with olive oil and garlic...delicious and nutritious!!!

So, if you want the greatest green beans, just remember:

The more you toot, the better you'll feel

When you offer your filet beans for many a meal!

#### **Fun Fact:**

Did you know there's a National Bean Day? Paula Bowen created it to honor her father (a pinto bean farmer). It celebrates both shelled as well green beans on Jan 6<sup>th</sup>. It's also the date of Gregor Mendel's death in 1884. An esteemed scientist and Augustine friar, the results of his pea and bean breeding experiments formed the basis of modern genetics. This in turn contributed to the beans we eat today.

#### **Seed Sources:**

Pine Tree Garden Seeds

<https://www.superseeds.com>

They have Fortex (they grow to an amazing 10-12" long) and Monte Gusto, a pole wax bean with very long-straight pods. Both are stringless.

The Seed Vault

<https://www.theseedvault.com>

They have heirloom organic beans.

Johnny's Select Seeds

<https://www.johnnyseeds.com>

They have Fortex pole type beans.

### **Recipe:**

#### Grilled French Filet Beans

1-1½ pounds of fresh filet beans, washed and stem end removed

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

2 cloves of garlic, peeled and pressed

1 teaspoon fresh minced rosemary (or tarragon)

1/8<sup>th</sup> teaspoon sea salt

a pinch of coarse ground black pepper

Parboil beans in water to cover for about 2 minutes. Drain. Put beans in a zip-type gallon bag. Mix together in a small bowl the oil, garlic, minced rosemary, sea salt and pepper. Pour over beans. Seal bag and gently flip over several times until all beans are well coated.

Grill beans over low setting on grill for about 10 minutes until brown marks are visible. Serve immediately or cold. Makes about 4 servings.