

2023 Dakota County Master Gardener Spring Expo: Let's Get Growing
Class Descriptions, Speaker Biographies and Speaker Photos
Saturday, February 25, Rosemount Community Center

Keynote Speaker Meg Cowden – 1:00 p.m. “Plant Grow Harvest Repeat”

Meg Cowden

Garden Writer
Photographer
Organic Gardener
Natural Resources Mgmt.



“Plant Grow Harvest Repeat” is **Meg Cowden’s** 2022 vegetable gardening book about mastering succession planting across the seasons. It might surprise you to learn that it is possible to grow food from April until November here – and that’s exactly what Meg hopes to encourage every Minnesotan to pursue. From the right seeds at the right time to examining how to layer flowers and perennials on your landscape, you will learn how to plan and plant a robust and diverse succession garden for many seasons to come. You will learn the main tenets of succession planting, which crops are best suited for spring, summer, and fall succession planting, and tips and tricks for finding space in your summer garden for a robust fall garden.

Meg Cowden resides in the western Twin Cities and thrives on living creatively. With a formal background in natural resource management, her current wheelhouse includes stay-at-home mother, garden writer, photographer, volunteer, and her ‘day job’ as full-time resident gardener. She shares her passion for growing food, educating, and inspiring through her photography in her new book, *Plant Grow Harvest Repeat*, on social media @seedtfork, and through her new gardening club, The Modern Garden Guild. Meg relishes the challenge of gardening year after year in a cold climate and is never short on growing challenges.

Morning Session I—9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. – Five Class Selections

Heidi Pence

“Gardening: A to M”



In “Gardening: A to M,” Master Gardener **Heidi Pence** will include topics both specific and broad in an alphabetical journey (A-M) about Minnesota gardening. Growing tips, tricks and advice about fruits, vegetables, bushes, trees, plant care, insects, diseases will be in her presentation. Heidi will cover topics from the second half of the alphabet in her Session II presentation.

Heidi Pence is the Co-Leader of the Dakota County Master Gardener Seed Trial Garden. Her full horticultural bio is on the Session II page.

Gail Hudson

“Planting
Perennials for
All Seasons”



Learn more about “Planting Perennials for All Seasons” with Horticulturist and award-winning garden writer **Gail Hudson**. Consider adding Gail’s all-season, easy-care perennials to your planting palette! As soon as the snow melts, these “ever-green” winners stand out in Minnesota’s brown landscape, ready to bloom for spring. You will hear about some of the new varieties that make these perennials perfect!

Gail Hudson is a multiple Emmy® award-winning journalist: a writer, photographer and video producer with a Master’s Degree in Horticulture from the University of Minnesota. She writes and photographs gardens for the Minnesota State Horticultural Society’s *Northern Gardener®* magazine, the horticulture industry publication *Greenhouse Grower* magazine, and is a professional garden speaker. Gail is also a Garden Coach and Landscape Designer for homeowners in the metro area and out-state. Additional biographic information for Gail is attached to her second hour class.

Annie Klodd
“Easy to Grow
Fruits in Your
Minnesota Garden”



Are you new to growing fruit, and not sure where to start? Join **Annie Klodd** in her presentation titled “Easy to Grow Fruits in Your Minnesota Garden” to learn more about three fun, low-maintenance fruits you can add to your garden: honeyberry, raspberry, and currants. In this session, you will learn fruit plant selection, how to plan and prepare the space, and how to keep your fruit healthy and bountiful through pruning, trellising and pest management.

Annie Klodd is a statewide Extension Educator for fruit and vegetable production at the University of Minnesota. She works with farmers and Master Gardeners across the state, delivering research-based recommendations on growing fruit crops including apples, grapes, berries, and pumpkins. She manages the UMN Extension Fruit and Vegetable Newsletter and co-hosts the Cold Climate Fruit Webinar Series. Annie grew up on a vineyard in Iowa and has a Master’s Degree in Plant Biology from Penn State University. She lives in Eden Prairie with her husband, Eugene, baby girl Fiona, and her dog Rusty.

Sam Talbot
“Navigating Native Plants”



Native plants provide a wide range of benefits and can be easily incorporated to your backyard garden. In his presentation “Navigating Native Plants,” **Sam Talbot** will draw from his experience restoring habitat in Dakota County Parks to discuss the benefits and challenges associated with planting natives in the landscape. He will highlight some of the tools and resources available, as well as opportunities to gain hands-on experience through volunteer opportunities in Dakota County. Topics will include propagation methods, planning native plantings, and species considerations.

Sam Talbot is a local Extension Educator in Dakota County. In this role he manages the county’s plant propagation program to enhance native habitat restoration efforts and provides support for the Dakota County Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program. He brings his experience and passion for finding science-based solutions to the challenges of growing plants, while engaging volunteers and stakeholders.

Kristine Moncada
“Lawns and Legumes—
The Importance of
White Clover in Bee
Lawns”



Bee lawns provide food to a huge variety of pollinators and can be an easy addition to a home landscape! White clover is particularly valuable because not only is it an excellent source of nectar and pollen, but it is also a legume that fixes nitrogen. **Kristine Moncada** will cover an introduction to bee lawns, the benefits of white clover, other flower options for bee lawns, the latest bee lawn resources, and the newest UMN bee lawn research.

Kristine Moncada is a turfgrass researcher in the Department of Horticultural Science at the University of Minnesota. She has been with UMN for 17 years and was previously involved in research and education in organic agriculture and native plants. She now specializes in low-input lawns, lawn water conservation, roadside turf, and bee lawns. Her hobbies include growing vegetables, planting for pollinators, and observing insects. She has an M.S. in Applied Plant Sciences and a B.S. in Ecology.

Morning Session II-10:45-11:45 a.m. – Five Class Selections

Heidi Pence

“Gardening: N to Z”



In the class titled “Gardening: N to Z,” Master Gardener **Heidi Pence** will continue to speak on topics both specific and broad in an alphabetical journey (N-Z) about Minnesota gardening. She will share growing tips, tricks, and advice about fruits, vegetables, bushes, trees, plant care, insects, diseases and more.

In her bio, **Heidi Pence** states, “My gardening began many years ago when I wanted to feed my family from the land that we lived on in Wisconsin. With help from other gardeners, trial-and-error, and advice from Rodale's organic gardening books and magazines, I began a journey of learning that continues. My expertise and interests have expanded to include perennial flowers, fruit trees and recently to expanding the season of growing in a greenhouse.”

Jean Chrysler

Julie Deane

“Selecting and Planting Annuals: The Secrets to Success”



In the session titled “Selecting and Planting Annuals: The Secrets to Success,” **Jean Chrysler** and **Julie Deane** will provide an overview of annual plants and tips for helping them flourish. They will cover plant selection and design for containers, and tips for filling in around perennial gardens for added color. This session will also cover discussion of planting and maintaining annuals to add color and flare to your spaces in multiple ways. They will provide examples of tried-and-true annuals, and examples of how you can use annuals to show off your shady and sunny areas.

Master Gardener **Jean Chrysler** has had a leadership role in the Flower Seed Trial Garden at St. Joseph's Church in Rosemount since 2019, where they grow 16 varieties of annuals. These plants are measured for pest resistance, disease resistance, height, width, and blooms. She recently retired from an amazing career in nursing and can be found digging in the dirt with her Westies, Bogart and Tater.

Master Gardener **Julie Deane** is an avid container gardener with lots of experience choosing annuals. Julie plants over 30 container gardens, a raised bed vegetable garden, and maintains multiple perennial beds each year. Julie has been a Master Gardener since 2019 and is co-chair of the Flower Seed Trial Garden in Rosemount with Jean.



Gail Hudson

“Gardening for Minnesota’s Future: E-Z Steps to Sustainable Gardening”



From planting to plastics to peat, learn the “how-to’s” of sustainability and eco-friendly gardening in “Gardening for Minnesota’s Future.” Horticulturist and award-winning garden writer **Gail Hudson** will show us how to make some simple, small changes to grow more sustainably right in your own Minnesota backyard, and slow climate change at the same time. She will talk about the problem with peat, how to become “water-wise,” reasons to reduce the size of your grass lawn, sustainable gardening design and techniques, and how to reduce the use of plastic pots.

Gail Hudson owns Gail Hudson Media, a video production and communications company. She works with many clients including the University of Minnesota Extension’s team of horticultural educators. Gail is co-author of the teachers’ guide for *Ten Plants that Changed Minnesota*-- a Minnesota Historical Society textbook that is used by hundreds of schools across Minnesota. In the summer, you will find her tending her extensive collection of perennials and a water garden in Minneapolis, as well as volunteering in the grass collection at the Arboretum and coordinating her church’s community vegetable garden.

Joe Barten

“Landscaping for Clean Water”



In his presentation “Landscaping for Clean Water,” **Joe Barten** will share information on the Dakota County Landscaping for Clean Water program. This is a partnership program with residents concerned with water quality and wildlife habitat to not only learn about water resource issues, but also to learn what they can do to help fix them. He will share information on the educational workshops held every year on water quality issues that provide solutions such as backyard conservation projects, native gardens, rain gardens, and native shoreline plantings.

Joe Barten holds a Bachelor of Environmental Design degree from the University of Minnesota. Professionally, Joe has helped hundreds of homeowners design and install raingardens, native gardens, or native shoreline restorations on their property. As Senior Resource Conservationist for the Dakota County SWCD, he provides planning, design, and project management of urban stormwater and shoreline restoration projects.

Andy Scott
“Resilient Native
Plantings For a
Changing Landscape”



After three planting seasons of drought, the importance of resilient gardens and landscapes has become apparent. In his presentation, “Resilient Native Plantings for a Changing Landscape,” **Andy Scott** will cover native garden basics and highlight how native plants and landscape techniques can address the challenges we face in a shifting climate.

Andy Scott started his small native garden landscape and design business in 2017. He has helped residents and commercial properties convert lawn and wasted space to wildlife-friendly gardens that support beneficial insects, birds, and other wildlife. Education driven, Andy prefers client involvement in the design and planning phases and encourages them to help with planting as well so they can demystify the plant/pollinator relationships that they will be fostering. Andy holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Design from the Minneapolis College of Art & Design. He has over 10 years of hands-on experience in permaculture practices and native landscaping.