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Ramsey County Master Gardeners

Garden advice through the seasons: Spring 2021



In this newsletter

- Garden classes from the Master Gardeners and Universities
- Annual Ramsey County Master Gardener Plant Sale
- New and problematic pests in Ramsey County
- Contribute to local research projects by tracking maple trees, lilacs and hummingbirds

Minnesota Spring

March 1 - May 30		
	Average temperature	Daylight
Start of Spring	24° F	11 Hours 16 Minutes
End of Spring	67° F	15 Hours 23 Minutes
Change	43° F increase	4 hour 7 minute increase

Upcoming events and opportunities - March / April / May

Master Gardener Annual Plant Sale

We're moving our [2021 plant sale](#) online to keep shoppers safe. Shop our online catalog from May 1-8 for native plants, vegetables, herbs, annuals and perennials. (Unlike previous years, we will not be selling landscape plants this year to avoid spreading Jumping Worm eggs; read more below.) Orders will be available for socially distanced pick-up on Saturday, May 15. Shoppers will be notified with details and locations for contactless-pickup.



Ramsey County garden classes

Come learn what you need to know about vegetable gardening (for both beginning and experienced growers,) planting for pollinators, garden advice from spring into summer and more. Due to the risk related to COVID-19, the Master Gardeners will teach all classes online this spring and summer. [Find a class.](#)

Other garden classes

There are many great classes offered right now for home gardeners. The [University of Minnesota Extension](#), [Minnesota Landscape Arboretum](#) and [Minnesota Horticultural Society](#) offer classes on a range of topics. Due to the risk related to COVID-19, all classes are currently taught online. Here are some great classes coming up this spring.

- [Minnesota plants webinar series](#) (March 2-May 25, \$30)
- [Designing, installing and managing native plantings](#) (March 22-May 2, \$375)
- [Tree planting and maintenance for the home gardener](#) (March 23, \$3)
- [Basic home landscape planning](#) (March 26, \$3)
- [How to create a pollinator/rain garden](#) (April 20, free)

Ask Extension - online garden question forms

Submit your garden questions [using this online form](#). An Extension Master Gardener volunteer will reply by email within 48 hours. Please provide as much relevant detail as possible. If you attach photos, make sure the subject of your question (plant, insect, etc.) is clearly visible. The limit is three pictures no larger than 8MB each.

Spring garden information

Navigating garden catalogs



Piles of catalogs! More on the way! Familiar companies and seed companies you never heard of! Do not fret! Joe Baltrukonis, the Ramsey County Master Gardener Garden Sage is here to [help you in your decision making](#).

Planting the vegetable garden

[Planting a vegetable garden is an enjoyable experience](#). With careful planning and preparation, you can have a good harvest.

2020 Minnesota winners (seed trial results)



In 2020, in addition to tomatoes and mini-cucumbers, [Master Gardener volunteers from 46 counties tested](#) six varieties of five different vegetables, two flowers and one herb, including cauliflower, mildew-resistant basil, red lettuce, moss rose and white larkspur.

Turning food scraps into compost

Ever wonder what happens to the food scraps you drop off weekly at Ramsey County collection sites? Ramsey County [created this new video](#) to show you how the composting process works.



Clean water begins at your curb

Commit to reducing water pollution by participating in the [Adopt-A-Drain program](#). Removing leaves, trash and other debris from storm drains in your neighborhood protects the environment and prevents damage to our local waterways. The program is run through Hamline University with the support of [Metro Watershed Partners](#), a coalition of more than 70 organizations committed to water resource education in the Twin Cities. Since Adopt-A-Drain's launch in 2014, participants have prevented more than 325,000 pounds of debris from washing into Minnesota's waterways. Learn more about the program and sign up at [Adopt-A-Drain.org](#).

Ramsey County compost bin sale - save \$20

The Recycling Association of Minnesota is selling compost bins for \$66 (plus tax) this year and [Ramsey County residents can purchase bins for \\$20 off](#). Order online at [RecycleMinnesota.org](#) and enter promo code "Ramsey" to receive the discounted price or call 651-641-4589 and mention that you are a Ramsey County resident. The Recycling Association of Minnesota also sells rain barrels for \$79 (plus tax) but the discount does not apply to rain barrels.

Jumping worm found in Ramsey County

[Jumping worms](#) (*Amyntas spp.*) are an invasive species native to eastern Asia and recently discovered in Ramsey County. Jumping worms

negatively impact soil structure and reduce plant growth, causing trouble for homeowners and gardeners. There are no pesticides to control this insect so everyone needs to help prevent the spread.



- Be on the lookout for jumping worms in soil, potted landscape plants, mulch or compost.
- Don't share any plants that might be harboring jumping worms.
- Be cautious of buying or swapping landscape plants from neighbors and local organizations; ask about their control and prevention methods.
- Report any suspected jumping worms to the [Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#).



Don't treat Japanese beetle grubs during spring

Spring is coming but some gardeners are already thinking ahead to summer and what steps they want to take to protect their plants from Japanese beetles. For those thinking about [treating grubs now to reduce Japanese beetles later, don't do it, it isn't effective](#).

2021 Noxious Weed List

[Japanese honeysuckle](#) and [Bohemian knotweed](#) were added to the [Minnesota Department of Agriculture's 2021 Noxious Weed List](#). Watch for and [help control these weeds](#) in your home gardens and communities.

Spring is tick season

With spring weather fast approaching, we can't wait to get outside and enjoy the warmer weather. Keep in mind that with the warm weather also comes ticks. [With a few precautions, you can still enjoy the outdoors without worrying about them](#).

Get involved!

Citizen science is scientific work undertaken by members of the general public, often in collaboration with or under the direction of professional scientists and scientific institutions. [Citizen Science @ UMN](#) connects people to projects, resources and each other.

- The [City Nature Challenge](#) asks residents to take pictures of local wildlife
- The [Minnesota Phenology Network](#) wants help tracking maple leaf break and lilac blooming

Soil testing: a sure sign of spring



[Plan to get a soil test this spring](#) to make the most of this growing season for all your plants – vegetables, fruits, landscape plants, turf grass, trees and shrubs! As soon as your soil dries out – often later in April – you can collect soil samples from your yard and garden.

Submit your sample to the University of Minnesota soil-testing lab, located on the St. Paul Campus.

Garden resources and services

[Ramsey County Master Gardeners website](#)

[Ramsey County Master Gardeners on Facebook](#)

[Ramsey County yard waste and food scraps drop-off locations](#) (check for spring hours)

[Extension Ask a Master Gardener online and phone services](#)

[University of Minnesota Extension Yard and Garden News](#)

[University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum garden tours and classes](#)

[Minnesota Water Stewards](#)

[University of Minnesota tree care advocates](#)

[Ramsey County Green Ramsey e-newsletter](#)

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