



NEWSLETTER FOR MG PROGRAM COORDINATORS

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MG COORDINATORS WEBINAR, FRIDAY DEC. 7TH, 10-11 AM.

Our regular "First Thursday" online discussion is changed this month (only) to Friday, Dec 7th. Nicole Martini, PC in Pierce County has worked with the WSU Computer Resources Dept. to assimilate your ideas into the MG Program SharePoint site. She has recreated tabs and folders to make the site easier to use for all MG coordinators to find and share documents and resources with each other. To participate in this webinar, go to <http://breeze.wsu.edu/mg> and login as a guest a few minutes before 10 AM.

MG ONLINE TRAINING COURSE, 2013

Instructions for how volunteers register for and access the online portion of their training were sent in an email from me to all Coordinators on November 27th. Course registration is now open for MGs and will remain open through March 31st. Access to the course, once volunteers have received confirmation of their registration, begins Dec 10th and will remain open all year. *For counties that train in Fall 2013, registration will begin in late summer.* Please contact me with any questions.

MG MARIJUANA POLICY

Although I-502 has passed making marijuana use and possession legal under certain circumstances in Washington; federal law still considers the growing and possession of marijuana illegal. This means that our personnel must refrain from being in possession of the plant for diagnostic purposes, and shall avoid consulting visits to grow sites and other educational efforts that directly support the cultivation and management of cannabis. The policy stated below remains in effect as long as the possession and cultivation of cannabis remains a violation of federal law. Failure to adhere to federal law could place our federal formula funds for Extension at risk, as well as exposing our personnel to federal prosecution.

The current WSU Extension policy on cannabis is as follows: **WSU Extension personnel shall not provide diagnostic services or advice / information on the cultivation of cannabis. Until there is reconciliation of both federal and state law on the legality of this crop, we will not engage in any Extension or Outreach activity to support the cultivation or management of this crop. This applies to any cannabis grower, whether licensed for medical marijuana or not.**

GARDEN PROFESSORS BLOG

Dr. Linda Chalker Scott, WSU Extension Horticulturist is one of eXtension's "Garden Professors." They started a Facebook page for home gardeners to complement their already popular blog. You can find it at <http://www.facebook.com/TheGardenProfessors>
Their blog can be found at www.gardenprofessors.com

If you would like to read about this blog please refer to this article posted to eXtension:
<http://www.extension.org/pages/65624/discuss-garden-science-trends-and-techniques-on-the-garden-professors-blog>

THREE LEADING SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES TAKE AN OBJECTIVE LOOK AT THE ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH "LEAST TOXIC PESTICIDES" APPLIED AS A "LAST RESORT" (Nov 12, 2012)

Several of you asked if this article, when it was released jointly by the Weed Science Society, the American Physiopathology Society and the Entomological Society of America [Press Release \(PDF\)](#) , would affect how we train WSU MGs. I reviewed the MG Manual Chapter 19, *Plant Health Care & IPM*, and found no words to the effect that gardeners should "use last toxic pesticides" or apply them "as a last resort."

I also checked with Dr Catherine Daniels, WSU Pesticide Education Specialist, and she wrote this:

"I agree with the authors that IPM doesn't mean always picking the pesticide with the lowest toxicity rating. The answer is situational based on application method, pest, mitigating factors, product toxicity, weather, product efficacy, etc. Running the question through that matrix will give different answers to different client situations. Which means it's not simple to translate or always easy to do. However, the MGs are well trained and highly versatile, so I believe they are up to this challenge.

However, it's equally important that, if the client specifically states they don't want to use pesticides (whether based on a value system or other mitigating factors) that we still try to help them devise a solution to their pest problem. In some cases that means working twice as hard at cultural or mechanical controls, or at accepting the damage that comes from partial pest control, or in taking out plants that they can't keep pest-free without pesticides. It's important that the MGs and clients understand that what we are advocating in this scenario is not called "IPM" but "pesticide-free solutions".

I'd like to point out that this discussion is consistent with our mission of providing "research-based" information. The advice to apply only least toxic pesticides and only as a last resort is not advice that is based on science. The issue is more complicated than that, as explained in the article and in Chapter 19 of the WSU MG Manual.

In short, then, our training of MGs does not need to change. Our training of MG Volunteers is in concurrence with this article.

PUT THE CHILD FIRST

Please view and encourage all MG volunteers to view the important (and mandatory) training presentation described in my email of November 27th. When volunteers register for it, their

names will be recorded in a database accessible only by WSU Computer Resources Systems. Bob Hoffmann will send me and other Volunteer program leaders a list of volunteers who have viewed the presentation.