



Resourcefully preserved foods
Photo: D. Batura

tools for resourceful living

Issue:

In densely populated King County, it is critical that we offer innovative and accessible programming in order to address energy efficiency, resource conservation, and climate change.

What's been done:

WSU King County Extension delivers a FREE, 4 class series designed to help King County residents save money while reducing their impact on the environment through making simple changes in their homes and gardens. Each class features a specific stewardship theme and teaches feasible ways to limit inputs into the waste stream, conserve resources, and save money. Our method for delivering these programs was inspired by the historic Extension Train approach of bringing the University to the people.

2009 Tools for Resourceful Living Topics:

Spring Location: Renton Technical College, Renton

Fall Location: SeaTac City Hall, SeaTac

Local Food Year-Round: Simple Methods for Preserving Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Start thinking about preserving food for winter! Consider options for food preservation so you can plan your garden for year-round eating. Learn safe, simple techniques for saving the flavors of summer to enjoy in the dark season of root vegetables!

Productive Vegetable Gardening in Small Spaces: Planning Raised Beds and Containers

Has a lack of garden space kept you from growing vegetables? Learn how to garden in containers or raised beds and enjoy the delicious freshness of home-grown veggies. Discover the advantages containers can offer over growing in the ground.

Composting 101: Turning Waste into a Resource

Are you interested in improving the quality of soil in your yard and garden? Join us to learn quick and easy ways to turn yard trimmings and kitchen scraps into rich soil amendments. This hands-on workshop will cover all you need to know to start building soil using yard and food waste.

Household Hens: Raising Chickens in Your Backyard

Raising Chickens yields far more than just fresh eggs and you don't have to live on a farm to do it! This event will give you a chance to find out about resources related to raising chickens in our area and hear from knowledgeable local chicken owners. This class covers the basics of keeping a small flock of laying hens in your back yard. Topics include breed selection, nutrition, housing, city regulations, health and behavior. You will leave the class with a good sense of what is involved in successfully raising your own backyard flock. Come see how fun and rewarding raising chickens can be!

Program Goals:

Cultivate community leaders

Provide education to foster capacity

Give individuals tools to protect the places that sustain them, including neighborhoods, farms, and forests

Engage new people in Extension programs, and offer continuing education credit for WSU volunteers



2009 Program Accomplishments

In 2009, the relevant, hands-on classes were offered in the cities of Renton during the spring and will begin in SeaTac in August. The community’s response to the program has been extremely positive with an average of 80 participants attending each session - nearly double the average attendance in 2008. This approach has also fostered new partnerships and collaboration opportunities with cities and non-profit organizations around King County, as all efforts are made to collaborate with our host city and promote local resources. Additionally, residents are getting a chance to connect with Extension and learn what can be done to protect our water, land, forest, farms, and food. Over the last five years, participation has grown from about 8 to 15 individuals per class to an average of 80. The program has directly engaged nearly 1,600 King County residents, with many indicating that they will implement positive changes as a result of the classes.

The classes have also garnered significant media exposure, including airing on TVW, Northwest Cable News, and in feature articles in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and other local newspapers.

Our overall outreach goal for 2009 was to take the class series to urban communities in an attempt to bring country-living techniques to urban King County residents; our survey results indicate that we achieved this goal, with the vast majority of participants indicating they intend to make a positive change in their home or landscape as a direct result of the Tools for Resourceful Living workshop content.

Testimonial:

“Very interesting and motivational class! I’m totally inexperienced, but now I have all the information to get started! Thanks!”

“Thanks for the great presentation and for answering all my questions!”

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Histogram indicating when workshop participants plan to begin composting as a result of the class

