

## **Support for Gardening and Wildlife Management**

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the city and county of **Broomfield, Colorado** (38,300), and Colorado State University have joined together to offer programs in gardening and wildlife management, as well as a 4-H program for children and teens.

### **Leadership/staffing**

The program's full-time director reports to the university but is housed in city-county office space. The city and the county also provide secretarial support, and classes are taught primarily by faculty from Colorado State University.

### **Timeline**

Broomfield's extension service program began in 2003 after the city and county received permission from the state legislature. The 4-H program was initiated in October 2005.

### **Budget/funding**

The program is funded by the USDA. Several of its activities, such as the call-in line for gardening questions and the annual garden fair, are offered to the community at no charge. However, children pay a modest fee to join 4-H, and those who take the master gardener class are charged \$160.

### **Program description**

The program currently has 18 volunteers who have completed 50 hours of master gardener training. During the growing season, these individuals answer telephone requests on Mondays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. to address gardening questions on a wide range of topics such as maintenance of lawns, gardens, or plants in residents' landscapes or homes. Volunteers can also refer callers to hundreds of fact sheets that are available on the Web or send the fact sheets to callers who don't have Internet access.

At the city-county building, the volunteers designed and maintain a demonstration garden to demonstrate the principles of xeriscaping and showcase the wide variety of water-wise plants available. During the growing season, the master gardeners conduct tours of the demonstration garden showcasing low-water-use plants, and they lead discussions on various xeriscape and gardening techniques. The volunteers also write a weekly column in the *Broomfield Enterprise* about gardening. The program's special events include an annual garden fair and an Earth Day event for children.

Volunteers who have achieved "wildlife master" status help citizens solve wildlife problems by providing information and recommendations based on current research results from Colorado State University and other land-grant universities. Broomfield's new 4-H program provides a wide variety of experiences to youngsters aged 8–18. Participants select projects in such areas as crafts, computers, rocketry, gardening, baking, and veterinary science.

## **Results**

In 2005, the master gardeners answered more than 100 calls about gardening. The 2005 garden fair attracted more than 50 people, and a series of workshops on xeriscaping drew 100 people. So far, almost 50 children and teens have signed up for the new 4-H program.

## **Contact**

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