

Southwest District Plan of Action for 2006- 2009

Regional Event: Southern Spring Home and Garden Show, Charlotte Merchandise Mart (this version incorporates recommended changes/considerations from the 2006 show)

DATES:

2006: March 1 through 5, 2006; Extension Agents and Master Gardeners Luncheon will be Friday, March 3, 2006

2007:

2008:

2009:

Team Members: Consumer Horticulture Agents & Masters Gardeners in the 14 SW District Counties: Alexander, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Polk, Rutherford, Union. Also, Consumer Horticulture Agents from other districts as possible presenters of SG seminars and Communications Services rep as advisor on integrated programming and marketing.

2006 Point Person/Lead: Kevin Starr

2007 Point Person/Lead: David Goforth

2008 Point Person/Lead:

2009 Point Person/Lead:

Responsibilities:

- Remind all agents to schedule Extension's Successful Gardener workshops in counties following show. Appoint follow-up seminars coordinator.
- Attend kick-off dinner that Southern Shows hosts in summer. (Also consider who else needs to attend: MG Luncheon Coordinator, Learning Center Coordinator, anyone else?)
- Prior to show, attend luncheon meeting held by Southern Shows with all key exhibitors. Be prepared to give highlights of Extension's involvement: MG luncheon speaker, SG Learning Center, SG seminars.
- Schedule any team meetings as needed:
 - Late October or early November of each year to organize, secure commitments from team members, go over assignments and set up rotation plan for next 3 years (Nov. 2005 meeting will be scheduled by District Director)
 - January – consider conference call
 - February – consider conference call
- Set up meeting with Southern Shows (Robert Zimmerman and/or David Zimmerman) to touch base regarding upcoming show and to share information on who Extension team is and who is responsible for what. (Nov. or Dec. 2005)

- Discuss with Zimmermans space for Extension's Successful Gardener Learning Center. (Will need to make sure the large SG display will fit in the Learning Center.) Also request that a storage area be located behind the Learning Center to store printed and other materials.
- Schedule Extension's Successful Gardener Series (Seminars) Day (Note: this is usually same day as Master Gardener Luncheon.) With Zimmermans, determine time slots for seminars but do not schedule between 11:30 and 1:30 due to luncheon. (2005 slots were 11, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30, 5:30, 7). Communicate details to SG Seminar Coordinator.
- Inquire about opportunities for media interviews during show; work with news coordinator (commserv rep) regarding this.
- Schedule meetings to meet with show staff in 2006, if possible.
- Keep all team members abreast of decisions made in meetings and confirm dates. (This may be done via e-mail, conference call and face to face meetings as needed.)
- Schedule conference call 1 month prior to show.
- Schedule conference call 2 weeks prior to show.
- Schedule additional meetings as needed.
- Collect cell phone, home phone and office numbers of everyone working show.
- Serve as chief contact with Southern Shows regarding Extension's involvement. (Note: because Jim and Aaron are in Mecklenburg, they may be called upon to help as needed.)
- Through planning period and throughout show, make sure all team members are on task.
- Work with Communication Services rep to ensure news releases are prepared. Send to all agents for them to distribute to their local media.
- Work with Communication Services rep to set up other interviews as needed.
- Schedule follow-up meeting (possibly conference call) within 2 weeks following show to discuss what worked/what didn't/how do we improve next year.
- By end of January/first of February: determine number of comp tickets needed for Extension agents and MGs who are working at show. Collect tickets from show and distribute to team members according to numbers needed from each person. (Note: the Coordinator of Learning Center and Seminars Coordinator will need to give you a count of volunteers and presenters by end of January, the Coordinator of SG seminars will need to give you a count of presenters; you will also need to touch base with Deborah Crandall and Leah Chester-Davis regarding number of tickets needed for promotional purposes to give to sponsors, others.)
- By late January, touch base with Zimmermans regarding Extension's Successful Gardener Learning Center signage.
- Check on tickets for preview night and ask for a couple of volunteers (agents and/or agents and MGs) to be at Learning Center to answer questions during preview night.
- By late-February, arrange for walk-through of show with VIPS after the MG Luncheon. Consult with DED and Communication Services rep to identify who will help with walk-through. Specified team members walk VIPS through show to see Learning Center and described the team effort and benefits of this and the

- Successful Gardener Seminars. It's an opportunity to talk about the importance of the team effort, etc. and to showcase work of team.
- Devise back-up plan in case run out of materials. Ideally have some back issues or supplies stored in Mecklenburg County location that is accessible. Have back-up plan in place regarding accessibility and availability of key team members. (Have to be reachable in case of emergency.)
 - Remind all team members: decisions regarding materials that go in bags are made by the team. Master Gardeners or others do not need to assume that they can bring other items to stuff into bags. Everyone needs to be aware that this is a Cooperative Extension learning center and we are not there to promote other organizations (we do, however, have to be sensitive to sponsor and partner requests but that usually involves a prearranged agreement with sponsors and partners.)

2006 Master Gardener Luncheon Chair: Aaron Lancaster, Mecklenburg County

2007 MG Luncheon Chair: Allen Caldwell

2008 MG Luncheon Chair:

2009 MG Luncheon Chair:

- Serve as contact to help determine speaker (Southern Shows leads this and usually seeks input on speakers, usually during summer.)
- Late November, touch base with Deborah Crandall and Leah Chester-Davis regarding VIP list.
- Meet with Southern Shows' Robert Zimmerman and Sara Stroup, and Leah Chester Davis, Nov. 17, Southern Shows office to touch base about MG Luncheon. (Note: normally, this meeting needs to occur by mid-October)
 - Share VIP list with Southern Shows for invitations
 - Inquire about luncheon tickets for team members (will they be provided like last year or do counties need to purchase?)
- Early December, send Save the Date e-mail to all VIPs (ask Vicki in Dr. Ort's office to send to Dean Wynne and Chancellor Oblinger).
- Provide updated MG agent mailing list to Southern Shows as needed (for NC, SC and other specified states).
- Early December, send Save the Date e-mail and information on speaker to all horticulture agents in state, especially those with MG responsibilities.
- Early December, provide updated mailing list to Zimmermans as needed.
- In fall and spring, meet with Zimmermans as requested.
- Assist as needed with deciding menu and other luncheon arrangements
- Share all speaker and other publicity info with Leah Chester-Davis in December for news releases.
- By January, work with other agents to recruit 10 Master Gardeners to assist with Master Gardener Luncheon.
 - 4 ticket takers at doors

- 6 to handle distribution of Extension bags with items or Successful Gardener newsletters to be placed on all seats, distribute as needed items for door prize drawing, serve as runners, other tasks as needed.
- Late January, send another e-mail to all agents regarding luncheon and encouraging them to attend with their MGs.
- Attend luncheon meeting with Point Person and MG Coordinator, sponsored by Southern Shows for major exhibitors.
- Early February, schedule conference call with DED and Communication Services rep regarding agenda for MG luncheon and to plan head table or VIP tables.
- Early February, double check that Southern Shows will provide equipment for Luncheon.
- Request Southern Shows prepare place cards for VIP tables. Give them list of names of those to be seated at VIP table. Determine seating arrangement with DED.

Day of the MG Luncheon:

- Set up roll-up or large Successful Gardener banner near stage. (In 2006, use roll-up banner)
- Work with Southern Show rep to oversee room set-up and coordinate MGs as needed.
- Greet keynote speaker and other VIPs and guests.
- Recognize the volunteer work of MGs.
- Recognize agents from NC, SC, etc. by asking them to stand.
- Recognize and introduce VIPs
- Express appreciation to the Zimmermans
- Mention Extension's Successful Gardener Learning Center and the Successful Gardener Seminars and encourage people to visit both.
- Mention any special awards SG or MGs may have received through year.
- In 2006, play up the 10-year anniversary for the MG luncheon.
- Breathe, smile and don't forget to eat!

(NOTE: we have discussed briefly what we may do to observe the 10 year anniversary as far as doing something for MGs. What about considering some type of recognition/gift from Cooperative Extension to the Zimmermans. Deborah, what do you think about approaching Dr. Ort about this???)

2006 Extension's Successful Gardener Learning Center Coordinator: Mark Blevins

2007: Daniel Shires

2008:

2009:

- In December, ask all agents to determine what day they want to schedule for their MGs and remind them to have their MGs hold the dates.
- In early December, reserve large SG display from [Jennifer Mitchell@ncsu.edu](mailto:Jennifer_Mitchell@ncsu.edu) (copy Leah)

- In January, confirm dates for specific agents/counties, determine number of MGs needed for specific shifts and ask agents to recruit volunteers to fill shifts on those dates.
- By end of January, confirm all sign-ups and provide total count of volunteers to Point Person/Lead so that tickets can be obtained.
- By mid-February, arrange for pick-up or delivery of SG display from Butler to your county center.
- Arrange for team member to bring CES banner on day of set-up.
- During November meeting, recruit team to help transport items and set up Learning Center on Feb. 28.
- During November meeting, recruit team to help tear down Learning Center at end of show on Sunday evening, March 5. (Note, this does not need to wait until Monday because items disappear.)
- Attend luncheon meeting with Point Person and MG Luncheon Coordinator.
- Oversee Learning Center each day (or train other agents to do this on the day that is assigned to them. ????)
- Make sure Extension bags and other items are always stocked at Learning Center. Communicate with team members regarding whereabouts of stored items.
- Bring some type of basket or container for e-tips sign-ups.
- Collect data for evaluation.
- Deliver large SG display to show and help set up with lights. Check beforehand for cords, bulbs, etc.)
- Arrange to borrow plants to decorate Learning Center area. Two large plants (3 or 4 feet tall to be placed at front corners; possibly 2 other large plants for other corners, three or four plants for counter space.
- Bring plastic sheeting to cover booth since the area gets dirty while gardens are still being installed.
- Bring some type of message board.
- Remind agents working to bring helpful resources during their shifts (MG manual, ag chemical manual, other items as needed.)
 - Set-up team (note needs of transport team on next Coordinator's list) (at team meeting on Nov. 30, develop list as needed. (NOTE: Learning Center coordinator needs to check with show to ensure our area is constructed prior to having people travel to Charlotte. Perhaps have set-up team on standby until confirmation is made that show is move-in ready.)
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2006 team:
2007 team:
2008 team:
2009 team:

- Tear down team (at team meeting on Nov. 30, develop list as needed)
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2006 team:
2007 team:
2008 team:
2009 team:

2006 Extension's Successful Gardener Learning Center Materials Coordinator:
2007:
2008:
2009:

- During late October/early Nov. meeting called by Point Person/Lead, determine with team what materials need to be at Learning Center.
 - Usual items (quantities needed based upon last year's show – (8,000 copies used in 2006; consider 10,000 for 2007):
 - Extension's Successful Gardener newsletter (March 2006) (Note: if we have newsletter sponsor then the March 2006 is the only issue of SG to use, unless we run out and then we can use back issues. If we don't have a sponsor we most likely will use a mix of issues.
 - Tree Planting Guide
 - Be Healthy: Grow What You Eat
 - List of Successful Gardener Workshops in counties following show
 - Soil Sample Kits with instructions (contact is regional agronomist Ben Knox, 704-278-9414) Request delivery by week prior to show. 2,000 soil boxes and forms were ordered for 2006 show.
 - Extension plastic bags
 - Extension information cards
 - E-tips sign-up slips (register to win free SG subscription)
 - Signs for free drawing
 - Signs as needed to recognize sponsors
- By early January, order Extension plastic bags and all publications and have them delivered to county center where items will be assembled.
- By early January, recruit agents or Master Gardeners to stuff bags.
- By early February, touch base with Point Person to make sure Extension's Successful Gardener Learning Center signage is created by SS.

- Determine with Communication Services rep, what goes in bags and in what order.
- February 22, March 2006 Successful Gardener issue will be delivered.
- February 23 and 24, stuff bags.
- On Feb. 28, deliver all bags, other items and SG display to Merchandise Mart
 - Team helping load and transport items (which will also help set up)
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- Make sure Extension's Successful Gardener Learning Center signage is created by SS
- Incorporate SG display as part of Learning Center
- Decide with team whether to have Plant Discovery Garden (like in other markets) (no-go for 2006)

**2006 Extension's Successful Gardener Seminars Coordinator (offered at show),
(Friday, 3/3/06)**

2007:

2008

2009:

- By first of December, reserve large Successful Gardener display from [Jennifer Mitchell@ncsu.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Mitchell@ncsu.edu) (copy Leah)
- By January 3, recruit Successful Gardener team members to make presentations. Preference goes to district team members but we usually need agents from other districts and schedule them as well. Ask each presenter to provide name of talk and 2 or 3 sentence description. Collect photos as needed (touch base with Leah; she has photos of past presenters but will need photos of others.)
- NOTE this comment from 2006 coordinator: programs closer together in afternoon such as 1:30, 2:15, 3, 3:45, 4:30 might be a better schedule. Attendance at 4:30, 5:30 and 6 p.m. time slots were poorly attended in 2006.
- By January 6, send compiled information on speakers/topics/descriptions to Leah for news release and other publicity (do not send directly to the show!)
- By Jan. 6, provide information to Point Person on number of tickets and parking passes needed for presenters.
- Ask Southern Shows to make a sign listing all ESG seminars, to be placed at Learning Center.
- By mid-February, arrange to pick up large SG display or have delivered to your county. (NOTE: this time of year the displays are heavily used, you may have to be very diligent in making sure you get the display. It's very important to have it set up with the lights. Check beforehand for cords, bulbs, etc.

- Before show opens on March 3, deliver display to mart and set up on The Great Garden Stage. (if you need help with this, make arrangements to recruit help beforehand.)
- Ask point person to check with Zimmermans regarding electricity in the stage area, sound system and whether a laptop will be available (it probably won't)
- Arrange to have a laptop and LCD projector available all day and early evening for speakers.
- Make sure all equipment is set up for show.
- Bring basket or other container to collect e-tip sign-ups during/after each presentation.
- Distribute stuffed Extension bags on seats before each speaker.
- Introduce each speaker, promote Extension's Successful Gardener newsletter, promote the Learning Center and encourage people to visit it.
- Ask people to sign up to receive SG e-tips. (Keep these sign-ups separate from the ones collected at Learning Center.)
- Be available as need to help presenters
- When SG seminars are complete, take down SG display and deliver to designated county or location (do not leave at the show).
- Collect data for evaluation.
- Provide data to designated person.

2007 Follow-up Seminars Coordinator (classes/events/etc. offered after show)

- Ask agents to schedule Extension's Successful Gardener classes in counties following show and to send schedule of classes or other ESG events in specified format to you. (specified format, per Communication Services, is at end of the document). All agents are asked to include upcoming classes on a combined listing to be handed out to show on all days (not just when specific group of MGs is working).
- Establish date with Communication Services rep for when compiled list is due and provide deadline list to agents. (Comm. Srvc. Rep to have info designed on SG flier shell to be printed for distribution at Learning Center.) Arrange for district or 1 or 2 counties to provide copies of designed flier.

2006 Advisor: Leah Chester-Davis with Point Person

2007:

2008:

2009:

- Leah will serve as advisor as needed by various coordinators.
- By January 13, prepare news releases to send to Southern Shows, team members and to Department of CS; all team members are encouraged to distribute to their local media.
- Point person and Leah will need to make sure Learning Center is mentioned in show program.

- By Feb. 6, try to have sponsor for SG newsletter. (Suggestions and help from team would be appreciated.)
- During early January, work with Point Person to place agents on a Charlotte Talks show for week of spring show.
- In February, set up interviews with agents during show.

Important Notes: For future reference, any garden constructed by Master Gardeners or Extension agents or other Extension entities needs to be part of Extension's Successful Gardener Learning Center and coordinated through this team. Otherwise, planning, marketing and work with Southern Shows becomes extremely disjointed and frustrating for many involved.

The key to making this work is teamwork and communication, communication, communication!