



University of Hawai'i Master Gardener Program

Kaua'i Master Gardener Newsletter: December 2015-February 2016

By Joshua Silva, MG Coordinator

This quarter was off to a late start with the beginning of the new Kaua'i Master Gardener Coordinator, but we hit the ground running. With the combined efforts of the KMG team and the coordinator, the KMG group was able to pull it off in the nick of time!

In one month, we successfully recruited applicants for the 2016 class. Applications and phone calls were sent to interested applicants in early December. Advertising also played a key role in our application process this quarter. Through the connections of various Master Gardeners, we put in two advertisements in the Garden Island newspaper, Josh was interviewed by KONG Radio and KKCR stations (1st radio appearance!), and Master Gardeners set up a booth at the Kaua'i Community College Farmers' Market every Saturday to actively recruit interested members of the community. Applications flew in from all parts of the island, from the bright sunny coast of Kekaha to the verdant valleys of Hanalei. The final 2016 class is now comprised of 28 eager Master Gardeners in-training! The first day of class was held on February 10th, and included a short introduction by Josh, as well as a fun "Garden Charades" game where new MGs acted out different gardening topics such as fruit trees, gardening equipment, and leafy greens! The year is off to a fun start!



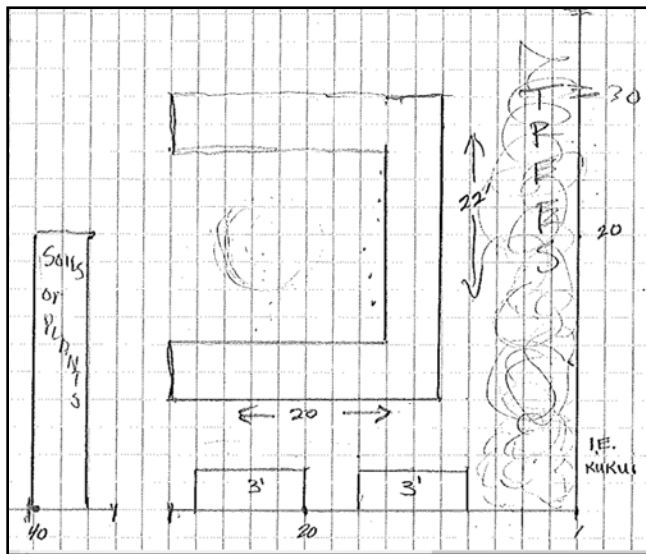
New Master Gardener trainees act out "Garden Charades" for a certified Master Gardener to guess. The word: Mountain Apple.



The weekly appearances of the KMG at the KCC Farmers' Market not only served to attract interested applicants to the upcoming 2016 classes, but also allowed Master Gardeners to show the community what the KMG has to offer. We sold over 120 packets of UH seeds to avid home gardeners.

Kaua'i Master Gardeners recruiting applicants, selling seeds, and answering plant questions at the Farmers' Market.

in just four Saturdays! Gardeners particularly ate up the UH Mānoa and Anuenue Lettuce, UH Sweet Basil, Koba Green Onion, and Hirayama Kai Choy seeds, with more requests for those still coming in. Master Gardeners were also able to utilize their vegetable and soil knowledge, describing to seed buyers the harvest cycles and growing conditions of seeds sold. One of the interesting highlights at these Farmers' Markets was the number of out of state visitors that visited our booth who also happened to be Master Gardeners. We hit-it-off with vacationing Master Gardeners from North Carolina, Washington state, Missouri, Minnesota, Oregon, Alaska, and even Canada, and enjoyed pondering together over the question, "Can these seeds grow where I'm from?" Given the fun that we've been having, the KMG are looking to continue our involvement at future Farmers' Market events.



In addition to putting our skills to use at the Farmers' Market, the KMG are looking to keep their horticultural skills sharp and get their hands dirty (literally!) with the planning of a demonstration garden at the Kaua'i Agricultural Research Center. Currently, the field is fallow, but with careful planning and coordination amongst the gardeners and station, the demonstration garden will bloom into an educational tool with which KMG can practice skills learned in class and teach the community about different aspects of home gardening. The upcoming Master Gardener class will also have an active role in developing the garden, with the class project involving students planning the crop selection, soil amendments, landscape design, and management practices based on the site and the preferences of the community. Look for updates on the fruits that come out of the KMG's work in future newsletters!

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