

# Community Environment



## 2020 Impact At-A-Glance

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Gardening has helped many through the COVID-19 pandemic by providing them with local produce & an outside activity for the family. Extension Master Gardeners are resources for managing donation gardens.

In 2020, the COVID pandemic led many to gardening which helped provide stress relief while staying mentally & physically healthy. Over 100 Nebraska Extension Master Gardener Volunteers helped manage community gardens. 20 community gardens became donation gardens for food banks. Volunteers grew 56,000 pounds resulting in 168,000 servings of fresh produce donated.

*"Helping with the raised-bed vegetable garden was fun, something we got to do as a couple & got to see the plants start to finish. They did better than our garden!"*

-Doug & Alisa Soderstrom, Gage County Master Gardeners

**"Community gardens are a great volunteer opportunity for Master Gardeners & helps food pantries provide for community members. It's a huge partnership between Nebraska Extension & the community."**

# 55 OF 93

Counties in which Nebraska Extension Master Gardeners volunteer

# 107%

Increase in client contacts from Backyard Farmer throughout 2020

# 1,741

Packets of Bachelor's Buttons flowers were distributed to youth in 82 of 93 counties across Nebraska.

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### A Bug's Life

**Fun facts**

- Largest assassin bug in US
- Active from June to November
- All life stages are predatory
- Nymphs hatch in spring
- Males in fall and male guards female
- 1 generation per year

**Identification**

**Egg:** Laid in hexagonal clusters on stems, trunks, limbs and drunks

**Nymphs:** Bright red with black marks, get darker in later stages

**Adult:** Large, gray-black bug with long antennae, large beak like mouthpart and "wheels" on back

### Wheel bug

**Management**

- None recommended
- Beneficial because of free pest control services for a range of pests

**Caution**

- Do not handle, can inflict a painful bite

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## 80 'A BUG'S LIFE' RESOURCES

These are one-page, easy to read, visually interesting, electronic resources help identify arthropods through Nebraska Extension virtual platforms.

Extension professionals work shoulder-to-shoulder with Nebraskans to sustainably manage community green spaces, protect natural resources, improve their landscapes and grow safe, nutritious food. Through Extension experts and resources, Nebraskans have what they need to make well-informed decisions related to their businesses, their health, their families and their hometowns. Nebraska Extension is an integral partner in helping Nebraska live up to its well-earned reputation as “The Good Life.”

## Community Environment 2020 Highlights

- 732 were certified as Commercial Pesticide Applicators. Green Industry Professionals contributed to 47% of all horticulture samples reviewed by Plant Diagnostic Clinic.
- 150 Green Industry Professionals were taught best practices for landscape management. 93% of the time, these participants utilized one or more Nebraska Extension resources to assist them and their clientele with landscape issues.



## Online Learning

1,098 participants joined in online learning about gardening & trees, 861 viewed the recordings later. Participants rated their learning a 4.51 out of 5 & said, “Having these sessions available via Zoom was a wonderful gift during this time of boredom & isolation. Thank you for all of your work!”

88%

Number of participants in a follow-up survey said they had adopted or changed a practice.