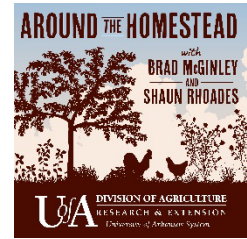


## Around the Homestead Podcast

Episode Transcript

Audio Link - [Episode 12 – Holiday Plants](#)

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Welcome to Around the Homestead Podcast, where we share information on topics from gardens to goats.

Our aim is to provide small farmers and landowners valuable education on projects that may arise around the homestead.

Whether you have been on the homestead all your life, or you have just began the farm lifestyle, we hope you garner helpful tips to make your rural lifestyle most rewarded.

Now here are our hosts, Brad McGinley and Shaun Rhoades.

Well, hello and welcome to the Around the Homestead Podcast.

It's good to be with you guys again.

We haven't recorded a session in a while, but it's good to be back.

Have my co-host, Shaun Rhoades, over in Scott County with me.

This is Brad McGinley, County Extension Agent in Grant County.

How's things over in Scott County, Shaun?

Well, we're starting off fairly dry this fall.

That is for sure.

We've had a pretty good growing season for the majority of the season, but we are getting into a pretty prolonged dry period here, and it's getting pretty crunchy out there on the grass right now, for sure.

Yeah, it's getting kind of hard to find some grass, too.

That for sure.

That's for sure.

But we are having some cool mornings.

You kind of feel a touch of fall in the air.

I think there's a cold front schedule to really come in and cool things down over the next week, and so it's kind of starting to get in that fall frame of mind.

And the things that come into my mind when I think about fall is, number one, deer season.

Hunting season is coming around, and for us hunters, it's kind of gets you in the mood.

And then football as well.

Football season has kicked off, and we've had a fairly decent football season.

But we also think about the holiday season coming up, and we've asked a guest to come join us.

We're going to talk about some holiday plants today.

And we've asked Randy Forst, who's a state horticulture specialist.

He also runs a Master Gardener, Arkansas Master Gardener Program, to join us today.

And Randy, we appreciate you jumping on with us.

Sure thing, Brad.

Sure thing, Shaun.

Thanks for having me.

You bet.

And talking about dry, you are correct.

It's dry here, and I'm tired of watering my grass, and I'm actually starting to feed hay from a livestock.

So please send rain my way.

Yes, yes, for sure.

You know, I was talking to a local newspaper reporter here, and we just went under a burn ban

here in Grant County this week.

And they were asking about how that impacts Ag World here.

And certainly we've had a good hay season, but we might get into those hay supplies a little earlier than we want to this year, for sure.

Yes, I've already did it.

I started yesterday, so.

Well, that's not...

Always say better now than July.

That's correct.

You're right, John.

You're right about that.

Well, Randy, we're going to talk a little bit about holiday plants today.

And, you know, I guess the first holiday plant that kind of comes to my mind, and I've already seen some for sure out at the stores and those kinds of things are mums.

And tell us a little bit about what we should look for if some of our listeners want to go out and purchase some mums, how to select one, how to care for them, and just kind of tell us a little bit about those.

OK.

Well, Brad, you're right.

They're out everywhere.

And it's not...

You know, I was just at Sam's the other day, and they were selling cases of them.

And you go and get a case of mums.

So everybody's selling them.

But I tell people, it depends on what the occasion is.

If you're doing an event and you need that flower power color immediately, you're going to buy them already, you know, starting to bloom heavily.

But if you're selecting a mum, or you know, the bigger bang for your buck, to last a long time, you're going to actually select them when they're barely showing any color.

And then when I say that bud color, because you're going to have them, they're going to be blooming from now till after Thanksgiving.

And so you can have them for a long time.

As long as you keep them watered moist evenly, they'll carry on.

And they can even take a light frost with no problem whatsoever.

So mainly it's critically that if you are looking for one of the longer period of bloom power, period time, look for that bud, where it's just showing that, you know what color it's going to be, but it's not bloomed out.

Because if you pick one that's already bloomed out, you're probably going to keep it for maybe five days of color and that's it.

And then it's going to start senescent and going downhill.

So that's the first thing to consider when you're picking them out.

And then another thing to consider, if you want to even plant this mum afterwards, you're probably going to select like what they call the Belgian garden mum.

It's more or less the smaller blooming ones, smaller bloom than the ones that are, I want to say like a spider bloom, the bigger ones like Fuji.

That's a consider a big spider one.

It doesn't really overwinter well here.

It doesn't grow very well for the people that want to plant them in the garden.

But if you do decide to do that, most of them on the market will be able that you can, once they bloom, they're through, you can go ahead and plant them in the ground and actually clip them off

halfway at that stem.

And they're going to die back to the ground.

They are perennial.

So next spring, you'll see them coming back up.

And so they want to do that.

That's great for a lot of people who want to grow them out from that pot.

And I know they offer them in a variety of different colors as well.

They do.

They come in many colors.

Any color you could think of, there's probably a mum color.

Mainly the ones you see around town now are going to be the bronzies, the golds, the ones that are fall color.

But I've seen the purple.

And let's see, I saw Sam's two nights ago, and they even had beautiful white ones blooming there.

I mean, you can probably get them in any color.

They had red ones too.

So multiple, multiple colors.

Now, for those that are growing them or want to grow them, you know, with a mum, when they come up next spring, they'll get leggy unless you pinch them.

So that's what mainly the cause that we get.

Why are my garden mums that I planted from last year all tall and leggy and are blooming at the top?

Well, the reason being is when you plant them, the first thing to do is when they come up in the

spring to divide them into smaller plants, because they'll fill out really nice.

But you're going to have to keep those pinched back, meaning you're pinching them back six inches until the middle of July.

And the reason you're doing that is you're going to cause axillary buds to break out.

You're going to get more blooming bracts, in other words, and you're going to get that nice cushion, what they call it, cushion mum look, versus if you don't pinch, you're going to get long-legged blooms.

The blooms are going to be at the top.

They're going to lodge over and they're going to fall over.

And so that's usually when we get the call saying, okay, what can I do to prevent that?

Yeah, we had some that some of our master gardeners had left over and or I think some from some project and we planted them and I didn't pinch them back and they kind of all fell over and there's kind of a big dead spot in the center.

They looked pretty bad there for a little while.

So that's exactly what happens.

They have to be pinched up into the middle of July.

And then you stop.

Then the new growth and the buds form and then you get that ball bloom again and they're going to be up there tight where they're not going to fall over.

Gotcha.

So that's the best thing for them.

And they're hardy.

I don't think anything bothers them.

You know, it's, they're very hardy, but they, if you are going to grow them, you do need to divide them.

Otherwise, you're going to get a black fungus going on black spots.

No, they'll need to be divided at least every year or no more.

You'll have to divide them after the second year for sure.

So is there a certain planting time once your people, you know, after just after Thanksgiving or about there, when they've done blooming, they can go ahead and plant them straight on the ground?

They can, as long as the ground's not frozen, you can go ahead and plant them in the ground.

But if it's late in the winter, you'll probably want to cover them with a little bit of straw, just for mulch, just to protect that root system a little bit.

But you're going to have to make sure they get watered.

Like even now, a lot of people think during the winter time, they don't have to worry about watering.

But if we're not getting rain, you will have to water.

Those roots are still alive.

They're still growing underneath the surface.

So they will have to be watered if you're not getting it at least once a week.

Right, right.

Randy, one thing I see is also for people that go and buy them now, or even in September, for decoration, they gotta remember you've got to water them in that pot too, especially now.

You're right, Shaun, and they do.

And the best thing about that, to keep them for a long period of time in that pot, is to make sure they stay moist, not wet and saturated, but moist.

And I tell people, if they're gonna, if they're still in a pot, and they're gonna go and water them, pull them out, usually they're in a, maybe a full wrap or something, pull them out of that full wrap, keep it in that pot, but, you know, put that pot in a saucer, you know, a drain dish, water it, let it run through, and then empty that dish.

Do not let them sit in that dish.

If you do, don't let them sit in there more than 15 minutes.

They're gonna soak up what they need.

If you let them in there longer than that, you know, you're gonna get root rot, you're gonna get phytopherb developing, and then you're gonna have sections of your mum dying at the top.

So that's one good thing.

Water evenly, keep them moist, but don't let them, don't saturate it, don't let them sit in water.

Yeah, you know, out here in the country, we see a lot of people put them in places where they really don't have running water.

Oh, you're right.

You know, so they're going to haul water too.

You're right.

They use them a lot for decorations, you know, a couple of hay bales, and they have their mums on the mailbox.

You will have to water.

If you let them wilt, you're going to lose your blooming power.

Those plants are not going to look as well, and they're not going to last as long either.

So they do need to be checked upon every day, at least if they're in a container.

Sounds good.

That is a good point.

I'm glad Shaun brought that up.

So a couple of other plants we'll move on from the mums.

You know, one that I have got here in the office that have been given to me is a Christmas cactus.



And I think that's one that I can usually take care of pretty well.

So tell us a little bit about Christmas cactus.

Right.

So our Thanksgiving slice Christmas cactus, it depends on when they're blooming.

That's how it gets its name.

But they're really pretty easy.

And the bad thing about it, people think they're a cactus and they like to be on the dry side.

That is not the case.

And actually, they grow in the rain forest, tropical climates up into trees.

So that's where they really grow.

So treat them more or less like an orchid.

And a lot of people can't believe that because they're saying, you know, cactus are pretty easy to grow.

You neglect them.

That's not the case with these.

They need to be kept or evenly moist.

They need to be potted in a container potting mix, not like a sand mixture.

Because if you give a sand mixture for this Christmas cactus, water is going to drain through.

They're not going to get enough in there to keep them hydrated.

So again, they're out there.

I saw them at the box chain stores.

They're budding out and they're looking good.

So a lot of people are buying them.

But if you do get them, put them in bright light inside your house.

Keep them away from dry air vents because I don't want them aborting their flower buds.

And then more or less check the watering.

Same thing applies.

Water them in a dish, then empty that dish.

Don't let them sit in that water.

And I've had some for 20 something years, and they're still blooming.

The critical thing is to get them to bloom the next year.

So what I do is I take all of mine that I have inside, I take them outside when there's a danger of frost, put them underneath the porch, covered porch, underneath the tree.

And that way you just go out and water them that way.

And then when you bring them inside, I'm getting ready to bring mine all inside in about a couple of , well before frost.

And then you'll notice tiny flower buds are going to be sitting on them.

And so it's really easy, bring them back into that direct light of your house, keep it away from those heat vents, and then they should bloom really well through there.

So they're really kind of easy to grow as long as you don't let them dry out.

So what's the size on some of those?

Like how big do they get if you have them for a while?

Oh gosh.

Well, you know, they're really easy to root.

So it depends on how many plants you have in a pot.

So most of the ones you buy at the Box Change Store are gonna be in a four inch pot.

It might be two or three.

You can look and see your plants in it.

But you know, I have some in a 12 inch or 14 inch pot.

There might be six.

So, you know, some of mine might be three foot across, but again, they're 15 to 20 years of age, but they make a stunning display.

You know, there's over 200 and something blooms on them.

So they are really pretty.

The only thing you have to caution about it, when they get larger and you're moving around, those bracts break off easy.

So you have to be careful when you're moving them because, you know, if they're heavy with bud or they're, they're going to snap off.

So that's one bad thing about it when you get them too large or let them get too large.

It's moving around.

Usually you're going to have them in a stationary position if you have large ones like that.

Most of the time they keep it in the six to eight inch spot and that's as big as they want them to get.

So once you bring them in after frost, I mean, when do you expect them to bloom?

Okay, you're going to bring them in before frost, Shaun.

So I was looking at mine yesterday and I'm Little Rock, we're probably going to get that frost in another two weeks, probably maybe a week and a half, and I'm getting ready to move mine in.

So I'm moving them in and I'm putting them in that direct light just so it, but you could probably even see it now, there'll be tiny buds forming on those bracts.

Right now, if you look close enough, some are even far enough, they might be showing a little

bit of color.

So you will see them and they'll start blooming probably three to four weeks after you bring them in.

Okay.

Yep and then they'll last, depending on how big the plan is, I get some for that start right before Thanksgiving and go on until Christmas.

Are there different varieties or colorations?

Oh, good gosh, yes, Brad.

There are, the breeders have went crazy.

Get purple, white, pink, red, orange, salmon.

There's even a light yellow with a purple center.

I mean, the breeders have went crazy with them.

So, there are many colors available on the market.

Cool.

So, you can find them anywhere.

And they're it.

Like I said, they're one of the easiest houseplants I have.

You mentioned you have some in the office.

I was looking around to see if I could find them in the office, but no, I took them.

I took them they're underneath our porch right now.

I need to bring them back in.

Yeah. Yeah.

What about poinsettias?

I know that you know that's a big thing around Christmas time.

We used to actually sell poinsettias as a fundraiser for a little while for some of our 4-H programs.

So tell us a little bit about selection and care and kind of the time frame on those as well.

Okay.

Poinsettias.

You're right.

They're used a lot for fundraisers and by 4-Hers.

We did that also.

And now when I was getting my internship at Westwood at Fayetteville, we grew like three houses of poinsettias.

So we actually got the cuttings in from California, plugged them in July and August and grew them out.

So poinsettias, I'm surprised, if I probably go to Home Depot or Lowe, they might already be out there.

They usually start, well, I know they start like a couple of weeks before Thanksgiving.

So I tell people if they're going to go get one, you want it fresh off the truck.

Because when they bring them into those box chain stores, they're not checking for water, they're not checking, they're crowding them out.

And with poinsettias themselves, the colorful petals on them is not the flower, that's actually the leaf bracts.

So most people think it's the flowers or petals, but it's not the case.

The flowers are those little yellow centers on it.

So you need to be taking care of those leaf bracts because that's what's going to give you your color.

So when they bruise easy, I don't know if you know, you know, usually if I'm buying a poinsettia, I want to buy it with the sleeve, you know, that plastic sleeve.

Because when I'm hauling at home, it never fails without a sleeve, it's going to turn over, it's going to break off easy, because it's a euphorbia, they snap off really easy.

And you lose half your plant.

So I want to transport mine with the sleeve.

And that sleeve more or less holds it all in shape.

And then when I get to the destination, I put place it where I'm going to, I take the sleeve off and do that.

But the critical thing about poinsettias, they are tropical.

So if you plant on letting these on your porch at winter time, they're not going to last long.

We get a lot of people that, that will not, they hate cold weather.

They really like between 65 and 70 in the home, do not put them by a heating vent.

You can dry them out quickly.

And another thing most people do with poinsettias when they do get them home, they tend to overwater them.

No, if you overwater poinsettias, it starts dropping leaves like crazy.

And when I say leaves, you're losing those colorful bracts.

And then that thing's uglier than an ugly poinsettia without its colorful leaf bracts.

But again, same thing applies.

If you're gonna water them, water them in a dish, empty that dish, and then put it back into its foil or basket or whatever you're doing for display, do that.

And they will last a long time.

I mean, even a poinsettia loses all of its leaf bracts, it will hold on.

You know, a lot of people try, winter them over and they grow them as a houseplant after that.

And mine usually retain that color till Easter time.

But you know, we usually try to get them off the Easter table before Easter gets there because it doesn't, you know, it's a Christmas poinsettia.

So again, they can last for a very long time.

Many colors, I don't know if you noticed there's bi-colors.

We all know there's a red, but there's even orange.

There's a purple plum pudding.

There's a desert rose.

I mean, they have went crazy with the coloration and the leaf bract forms on these.

I mean, it's amazing what you can get.

You can also get different you know sizes.

You get the little net hags that are really short, all the way to the ones that we use at churches and stuff during the holiday season.

They're about 36 or 40 inches tall.

You can get those big bract ones too.

So it's amazing.

I mean, they go crazy with them.

What's the best place to buy, you think, or you have some recommendations for?

One, some people that may want some of these colors that, you know, find some that are not the traditional red ones or something like that.

Is there a better place or a better certain place we should tell people to look for those at?

Right.

So usually, you know, I can't think of here, I mean, I'm talking for Little Rock.

I can't think of anybody that actually raises the different varieties here other than like red or the big sellers.

But Reynolds might, you know, Reynolds might in Hot Springs, you might know more of that, Brad, than I do.

I don't.

If they raise a crop of poinsettias, but you know, when I was at Westwood, you know, they do them in Fayetteville.

And so they would grow different varieties.

I mean, probably seven or eight.

We were doing that when I was internship.

They might even be up to 12 different varieties, but they can go and look at the different ones.

And most of the time, you could probably look online at the different varieties and call and say, hey, you see one you like, do you all have to carry this?

Because again, there's even the Marble Brack ones that will have a coloration marbled in its swirls.

Amazing the different types they have.

And it's the number one selling thing at Christmas time at Poinsettia so.

Now, I'm not a fan of the orange.

There are orange varieties out there, but a lot of people do like orange Poinsettias.

Yeah.

This doesn't seem very Christmassy orange.

It's just a bit red.

Or Halloween.



That's right. That's right. That's right.

Or maybe Thanksgiving, but I don't know.

Right. Right.

You know, I went to Walmart.

I was in Walmart a couple days ago, and they already have their Christmas stuff out.

Like, I mean, full-fledged Christmas display.

And we're three weeks away from Halloween yet.

So they're in full-fledged Christmas spirit out there already.

You're right.

And that will be the segment of those Poinsettias.

They'll have them shipped probably two weeks before Thanksgiving.

So they'll be coming on the market.

And as I tell people, they're going to shop at the box change stores.

They need to ask them, when are you getting a fresh delivery?

Because that's going to be the best time to go get one, because you know it's fresh.

It's not been sitting on the shelf for a while.

Right.

Right.

For sure.

Well, because you're growing it for that colorful bract, that leaf bract.

One question I have that comes up that is hard to answer.

I will admit upfront, but what about toxicity or problem with house pets with any of these plants?

Okay.

You know.

That's a good, you know, Poinsettia has got a bad rap.

They said they were toxic.

They're not.

Now, I'm not going to say they're not going to make you upset if you eat them, but they're not poisonous.

You know, there are euphorbia that at Milky Sap.

So if your pets do eat them, yeah, they're probably going to throw it up.

Or if your kids eat them, yeah, they're probably going to throw up.

But as we know, majority of plants that we have, there's poison plants out there.

I mean, even, you know, there's majority of plants mainly if you eat them.

But again, with the Poinsettia, no.

Again, you might have an upset stomach, but you know, pets, you know, they'll might chew on a while, but once they throw up, they stop. Cat do it too.

So hopefully you're not letting your toddlers graze on them.

No.

Shaun and I are past the toddler stage, but we've been there.

Or your grandkids, y'all.

Not quite there yet.

Things happen.

Okay.

Yeah.

You would be surprised.

Things can happen.

You're right.

You're right.

So, but for sure.

But they do.

And again, the major thing when you're getting it, they snap so easy.

I don't know if you've ever been around them, but if you jostle them around and you break a bract, you just lost that part of the plan, you know, as far as display.

So you have to be kind of careful with them when you're handling.

Right.

For sure.

I remember when we would get our orders in for 4-H program, we had to be super careful with them because they do snap off very easily.

So did y'all get sleaze to handle those in first?

Yes. Yeah. Yeah.

That's the way to go.

For sure.

For sure.

You know, the next thing on my list is talk about a little bit about live Christmas trees.

I think the majority of people these days you know probably have a fake Christmas tree or artificial tree.

But there's still a variety of people that enjoy having live Christmas trees.

I know when my kids were young, Shaun, you may have done the same.

We used to go out in the woods and select our own Christmas tree.

We cut down a cedar tree and bring it in the house.

The kids really enjoyed that.

My grandparents had a Christmas tree farm there in East End in Saline County for 20 years while I was growing up.

So I but I wanted to just talk with you, Randy, just a little bit about for those that still have those live trees, about selecting a live tree, but also about how to care for those trees once you've got them in the house.

Because it is a real fire danger to have those in there, and what should people do, and how should people handle that if they choose to have a live tree?

Okay.

Now, Brad, when you say live tree, are you saying I cut live tree or I cut tree?

Yes, I cut tree.

Okay.

Because they do them both ways now.

Oh, really?

Yeah.

Because a lot of people want to plant their tree afterwards.

Got you.

But usually here where we are located, you know, the Christmas tree varieties they do will not survive here.

You know, they'll probably do a spruce, but a spruce, unless it's planted in a good, protected spot,

we're not promoting people.

We used to have Leland Cypress once, but it's got that fungus is so bad anymore that it just won't.

Yes.

And you're right, that Cypress Leland was used as a Christmas tree, but that Ceridium canker, once it gets up to where it's screening age, that's anchor tackles it and dies.

So again, we'd really, and also with a live one that you're going to plant, you really can't bring that in the house till like two or three days before Christmas.

Oh wow.

As unlike that as indoor temperatures, you're warm in there and it likes it outside where it's cooler.

So it's really kind of hard on it when they do that.

But usually we don't have a lot of those, we're all planning those ones, you know, they're going to plant it later here.

But as far as fresh cut, yes.

So there, you know, a lot of those are cut months advance and they're shipped here.

So unless you are at the fortune, you know, I didn't know your family had a Christmas tree farm.

Yep Reader's Christmas tree farm there in East End.

Oh, cool.

So y'all would probably have a day that people come out and cut trees.

It was more than a day.

They were open from Thanksgiving all the way to Christmas.

Oh, cool.

So they could come in and select one and do it.

Yes. Yep

So nothing would be better if you're going to do a live cut Christmas tree to get a fresh tree.

Correct.

Because it's already, you know, it's going to retain its needles longer.

But majority of people are either at Walmart or the Box chain stores.

And those trees that I mentioned are cut months in advance.

And what happens is, you know, when you cut anything, they're stabbing it, well, it calluses over the bottom end.

So the first thing you want to do is, when you're looking for those fresh cut Christmas trees, you're going to look for the freshest one.

So you're going to pick that tree out.

And with me, I tap it to see how many needles are going to fall off of it.

And if it's going to retain a lot of those needles, that's the one I'm going to pick.

But I'm going to look at the shape and size of it too.

But once I get it home, I'm going to do a fresh cut on that stump, on the bottom of that stump at least two inches up.

And then I'm going to stick it immediately in the water and let it hydrate.

And it will suck up some water to hydrate because that's going to guarantee you a longer period of time, especially you're going to put this tree up three weeks before Christmas on a live cut Christmas tree.

And usually when you're picking out one of those Christmas trees, you're going to pick out one with a thicker needle because it seems to retain that needle longer than what the thinner needle.

So again, especially if carpet or you think, well, you don't want to be backing up those.

So it's really wise to do that.

But look for those nice green color.

Don't look for a gray green or, you know, one starting to brown out.

Otherwise, it's not going to last long and you're going to end up with a Charlie Brown Christmas tree before Christmas.

So look for that and make sure you do that fresh cut on those to soak up that water.

Right.

We used to have a machine there.

It was called, we called it a shaker.

It was a, you know, really unique name for that machine.

But it would put it on there and shake all the needles out of it, you know, so that people wouldn't have needles on the floor when they left with their Christmas trees.

So what varieties Brad, did y'all grow there?

It was mainly Leland Cypress, a little bit of white pine, but a Virginia pine early on. Oh that's common.

Did y'all do that blue, gray glacier juniper?

They had a few of those, but it's been a while.

You know, it's probably been 15 years since they have had one, but they went out of business.

But yeah, mainly Leland Cypress and Virginia pine was their main two that they grew.

But you're right, if they go to a farm like that, visit it.

Yeah, those are going to be the better ones.

They're going to last long, because they're going to be a fresh cut tree versus one that's you're buying at those blockchain stores.

Because like I said, they're cut a month in advance and shipped on a trailer up there.

So.

I think that's really important.

I never thought about the making you a fresh cut so it can start getting water.

Yeah, but that's on anything, Shaun.

You know, usually you're doing cut flowers.

You go out and do flowers in the field, you need to do a fresh cut and you bring them in just so they can suck up that water and keep them hydrated.

But yep.

Well, Randy, we appreciate you joining us today on the Around the Homestead Podcast.

You will be invited back because there is a lot of plants out there that me and Shaun may not be experts on, but we know that if we have a question about plants, you're the man to do that for us.

So you want to give a plug about the Master Gardener Program, maybe for those that are listening, that maybe you're wondering what Master Gardener's are.

Certainly Around the Homestead, the Master Gardener's skill set would be useful Around the Homestead, growing things.

So tell us a little bit about the Master Gardener Program in Arkansas.

Okay, well, I'm very fortunate, especially, you know, this year we're going to have 338 signed up for training for Master Gardener's.

So we have a lot of them going through, and with our Master Gardener training, it's 40 hours of curriculum, horticultural curriculum.

You don't have to know anything about plants.

You just need to, you know, we'll do the training there.

But more or less, you know, it's a volunteer organization.

And once you become a Master Gardener, we want you to be well, you know, working with us.

You're helping us as far as extension concerns, and we want to retain you as a volunteer for that.

And you know, you get involved with your group.



I know.

Now, Brad, you have a group.

Yes.

Now, Shaun, you don't have a group, correct?

Is yours going to another county?

Yes.

We go to Polk County most of the time.

Oh, okay.

I was just up at Polk County two weeks ago for recruiting.

We do a recruiting seminar, and they're recruiting people to train.

So we did that before we closed down training the other day for the training last day to sign up.

So again, if you are interested in the program and you want to know more about horticulture, it's a great program to be in.

But again, we're looking for those volunteers are going to be working with our groups.

Contact your county extension agent and they'll let you know like when the next training is coming up, what's going to be offered.

So again, hopefully get involved.

And we do, around the state, a lot of them let people who are interested come and work with them on work days and stuff, or get to know the program.

The Master Gardener has put on many horticultural exercises across the state.

They're doing wonderful things.

So if you want to know more about it, and in your county, they're offering something like that, go ahead and attend it.

I think you'll enjoy it.

Right.

Hey, Randy, one more thing is, of course, we're doing this podcast, I guess technically worldwide, a lot of other states have the same program.

Oh, yeah.

I just came from national meeting three weeks ago, four weeks ago.

Yeah, every state has a program.

And we also have international too.

It's big.

It's huge.

You know, and there's so there's tons of learning opportunities.

It just doesn't stop at the training, the initial training part.

There's tons of learning opportunities for you to continue to learn as a as a master gardener as well.

Right, Brad, and your mom's a master gardener.

Yeah, my mom's a master gardener for sure.

Yeah.

And we have we have a pretty good group here in Grant County, but they do a lot of volunteer work for us.

And I certainly appreciate their their efforts around here.

They help us out a lot and it's a great program.

I know there's online training possible as well.

There's in-person training.

So there's a variety of ways that you could get trained.

But, you know, it is a it is a volunteer based program at its core, really.

So right.

And they need to remain active.

There's certain requirements that you do to remain active Master Gardener.

So yeah, reach out to your county extension office if you're interested in.

They'll give you the information.

If they don't know everything, they'll probably contact me and I'll probably give you something.

You know, you're welcome to call me about it too.

But we ask you to go to your extension office because they will be the ones handling your your program.

You know, because every well, I say we have 75 counties.

We have it in 60, 64 counties.

So, 64 of them have Master Gardener Programs.

So, but yeah, it's a great, it's a great, I mean, opportunity for you to meet and work with other people that are interested in plants.

Right.

And doing good for the community.

And like you mentioned, a lot of our Master Gardeners work with youth gardening programs.

And I think you all do that.

Yeah, they help a lot with our school garden.

And they're instrumental in that.

They do a lot of educational programs for us as well for their 4-H programs.

And then they have various projects for beautification projects around the county that they work with as well.

Right, because every county will have sanctioned projects that they work on to get those hours that are required.

Right, right.

Sure.

Yeah.

Well, again, thanks for joining us today on the Around the Homestead Podcast.

We enjoyed having you.

We'll be calling you again in the near future, I'm sure, to join us again.

But until next time on the Around the Homestead Podcast, stay cool out there and we'll see you around the homestead.

We hope you have enjoyed this episode of Around the Homestead Podcast.

To learn more about today's topic, be sure to visit our website at [UAEX.UADA.EDU](http://UAEX.UADA.EDU).

Be sure to join us next time on Around the Homestead Podcast