



BARRON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS

**OUR MISSION
STATEMENT**

Encourage, foster, support, and promote horticulture for all Master Gardener Volunteers and residents of Barron County and to promote the UW-Extension from which we are founded.

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**Calendar of Events Summer Master Gardeners
(Open to the Public)**

Rice Lake Farmer’s Market

If you have a garden question, the Rice Lake Farmers’ Market is the place to ask. The market runs from 8:00—12:00 pm on Saturday mornings on Main Street in Rice Lake, next to the Rice Lake Chamber Office (in front of Birchwood Manufacturing). On most Saturdays, you can find a Master Gardener Volunteer there ready to answer your garden questions.

You can always call or send your question to the Barron County UW-Extension office. It is helpful to send photos with any questions you email.

Barron County Fair

Master Gardener Volunteers are on hand in the Horticulture Building at the Barron County Fair, July 18-21, ready to answer questions. Just a reminder that anyone can enter flowers, plants, and wonderful garden creations in Open Class on Wednesday, July 17th. Check out the fairbook for details. (barroncountyfair.com)

Annual Twilight Tour in the Teaching and Display Garden in Spooner

Tuesday, August 13, 4:00 to Twilight
Features guest speakers, demonstrations, displays, vegetable tastings.

Meet Me in the Garden—Cutting Flower Gardens—August 29

Learn tips and tricks of the art of flower arranging using both perennial and seasonal flowers from the garden. Tour the Flower Cutting Garden in the Spooner Agriculture Research Station Teaching and Display Garden with the North County Master Gardeners, and learn how to create eye-catching arrangements.
Contact: Sue Reinardy, 715-462-3361.

Summer Bulbs—September 5

Sue Reinardy, A Master Gardener from Hayward, will present, “Summer Bulbs.” This program will focus on the many bulbs that grow well in our gardens such as alliums, caladiums, calla lilies, cannas, dahlias, glads, lilies, irises and tuberous begonias. Barron County Government Center, 335 E. Monroe Ave., Room 2206, Barron, WI 54812. Room 110, 7:00 pm

Meet Me in the Garden—September 7

Another program with the North Country Master Gardeners at the Spooner Agriculture Research Station Teaching and Display Garden. Learn about seed saving and fall rejuvenation of the garden. Contact Sue Reinardy, 715-462-3361

Watering Your Lawn—*Doug Soldat and John Stier*

Watering a lawn properly can reduce weeds, provide a place for play or other recreation, and enhance property value. Yet applying too much water can harm your lawn, cost you money (even in Wisconsin where water is abundant and relatively cheap), and degrade the environment.

Water conservation is becoming increasingly important in urban areas where groundwater is being used faster than it is replaced



by rainfall, and where excessive irrigation may cause runoff that affects streams, rivers, and lakes.

To water or not to water?

In many cases lawn watering is unnecessary in Wisconsin. Most lawn grasses, especially Kentucky bluegrass, will survive periods of drought lasting up to two or three months. They survive by allowing their leaves to die while keeping their crowns alive, a condition called summer dormancy. The crown is the growing point from which roots and leaf shoots emerge. It is located just at or slightly below the soil surface.

The crown will survive for a long while during drought. Then, when moisture returns to the soil for a week or ten days, the crown will grow new leaves and the lawn will begin to turn green again.

It is true that long stretches of drought and excessive heat can eventually kill grass. And watering can prevent this. If grass dies, the dead areas of the lawn will need to be reseeded or covered with sod when favorable growing conditions return.

Drought-adapted lawn grasses

Kentucky Bluegrass is the most common lawn grass in Wisconsin and has a well-tuned dormancy mechanism. During a drought the leaves die and turn straw-colored but the crown can survive for two or three months.

Fine Fescues, including red fescue, Chewings fescue, and hard fescue, are grasses well-adapted to dry areas whether sunny or shaded. They are slow-growing and their leaves have less surface area than those of other grasses, and therefore they use less water because less water evaporates for them.

Tall Fescue, grass is very different from the fine fescues mentioned above. It has a deeper root system than those grasses, and this allows it to survive drought by using water deeper in the soil. While this grass is a good choice for well-drained areas, it may die if covered by ice.



In many cases lawn watering is unnecessary in Wisconsin.

Watering Your Lawn continued . . .

Overwatering can cause trouble.

While watering is sometimes necessary, over watering can cause problems. Diseases occur more frequently and cause greater damage in lawns kept too wet. Also, frequent irrigation may discourage deeper root growth, leading to an unhealthy lawn that is more susceptible to environmental stress. Finally, wet soils are more prone to compaction than dry soils, which means that excessive traffic on an irrigated lawn may degrade the soil structure and hinder root growth.

However, if you want green grass for any reason—because your host lawn parties or other outdoor events, or just like the look of a lush lawn—watering may be necessary.

Lawn Care practices that reduce the need for watering.

The following practices will help you create a healthy lawn that stays greener longer during dry conditions.

Keep the grass mowed to a height of three to four inches. The depth of the roots is directly proportional to the height of the grass, so don't cut it too short. Taller grass has a deeper root system with more access to water and therefore has a greater tolerance to drought.

Never mow grass when drought symptoms are evident. Mowing creates a wound through which water can rapidly be lost. Under normal rainfall conditions, this is not a problem. But mowing in drought conditions will cause your grass to turn brown faster than normal. The first signs of drought stress are that the grass blades turn a slightly bluish hue and fail to spring back up when pressed down. You can check for drought stress by simply walking across your lawn. If your footprints are visible for more than about 10 minutes, the grass is drought-stressed and you should avoid mowing it. Don't worry that your grass may grow too long. Drought-stressed grass stops growing on its own.

Do not fertilize more than the recommended rate, and do not fertilize at all during a drought. The nitrogen in lawn fertilizers speeds leaf growth



And the faster a lawn grows the more water it requires. Follow the guidelines published in *Lawn Fertilization*, University of Wisconsin-Extension bulletin A2302, to supply the correct levels of nutrients.

How much water is too much?

If rainfall is short and you have decided that allowing your grass to go dormant is unacceptable, you must decide how much water to apply. Wisconsin soils hold anywhere from one to three inches of plant-available water in a typical lawn root zone. If your soil is deep, and is black or dark brown, it may hold as much as three inches of water. If it is sandy, or is composed of a thin layer of topsoil over a compacted clay layer, it will hold closer to an inch.

Grasses use roughly one inch of water each week, but use more during hot, sunny periods and less during cool or cloudy weather. This means that during periods of no rain the water in the soil may be used up by the lawn in anywhere from less than one week to more than three weeks, depending on the quality of the soil and the weather conditions.

In the absence of rain it is best, in most cases, to apply about one inch of water weekly, all at one time. Applying this amount generally results in wetting the soil

to a depth of four to six inches, which includes most of the lawn's root system. Watering less than this can result in the water penetrating only shallowly into the soil, and this shallow penetration encourages roots to grow near the surface—which in turn reduces the lawn's ability to survive and stay green during a drought. Applying more than one inch at a time can be

wasteful in soils that will only hold an inch of water. It is possible that not all areas of your lawn will use water at the same rate. If this is the case you should be sure to water only areas that need watering. For example, shaded grasses use about half as much water as grasses growing in full sun. Begin watering an area of your lawn only when it shows signs of drought stress—that is, when grass leaves turn a bluish hue or fail to spring back when stepped on. If these signs are not observed, the lawn doesn't need to be watered.

Watering Your Lawn continued . . .

How to know how much water you are applying.

Do a simple test to determine how long it takes your sprinkler to apply an inch of water. Place straight-sided containers (coffee cans, tin cans, etc.) every five or ten feet along a straight line extending from the base of the sprinkler to as far as the sprinkler's water reaches. The containers can be of various sizes, so long as they all have straight sides.

Run the sprinkler for half an hour, then measure the water depth in each of the containers. Add up the various depths divide that total by the number of containers, and you will have calculated the average depth. Divide 30 (minutes) by that average depth (inches) and you will have calculated so many minutes per inch—that is to say, you will have calculated the number of minutes your sprinkler takes to apply one inch of water. This rate will vary with every sprinkler.

Set the sprinkler on the lawn where it won't spread water onto a driveway or street. Turn it on with water running at the same force as in your test. (Water flow must be consistent for the calibration to hold true.) Let it run for the time required to apply one inch. If water pools and runs off your lawn, change your method in the future: apply only one-half inch of water at one time, then wait a day or two before applying the other half inch.

When to Water.

It is generally best to water your lawn early in the morning when water is less likely to evaporate quickly. Evaporation is also slow at night, but watering at night increases the possibility of disease because the grass leaves will stay wet for many hours. (Also, municipal water systems often have less demand early in the



morning, so using water then may reduce the need for additional water towers or wells.)

If you have an in-ground irrigation system that operates on a timer, replace the timer with a “smart” controller that irrigates the lawn according to environmental conditions such as evapotranspiration rate or amount of soil moisture. These “smart” systems have become affordable and often save enough water to pay for themselves in a short time. At the very least, install an irrigation shut-off switch that disables the system during a rainstorm. Systems that run on timers without shut-off switches almost always apply too much water.

Watering New Lawns

Keep newly seeded areas moist until the lawn is established. Thoroughly water the seeded area after spreading straw mulch over the seedbed. Watering will provide moisture for seed germination and will help keep the straw from blowing away. Irrigate at least once a day for two to three weeks, or until the grass has uniformly germinated. Apply just enough water to keep the seeds and soil moist. Overwatering may cause seeds to float to the surface and die.

Timers automatic irrigation systems can be useful for ensuring that the correct amount of water is applied. Plantings in hot and dry conditions or on south-facing slopes may require more frequent irrigation.

After seeds have uniformly germinated, water the new lawn every two to three days in early morning.

For more information on establishing lawns, see UWEX Publication *Lawn Establishment and Renovation (A3434)*.

Wild Chervil

In recent years we have been seeing more and more plants from the parsley family invading ditches, gardens, pastures, and cropland. The Parsley

Family includes some wonderful edible plants like the carrot and parsnip, plus more aromatic spices found in your spice cabinet, such as anise, celery, chervil, coriander, caraway, cumin, dill, fennel and of course, parsley. But the family also includes some problem plants such as wild parsnip



(the one that can cause serious burns), and wild chervil. This plant has become quite a nuisance in Barron County.

Wild chervil (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), starts as a small rosette, but can grow up to 6 feet tall in the second year. It reminds you of Queen Anne's Lace, but flowers earlier, usually late May or early June. The flowers are creamy white. It is often confused with other species in the parsley family, but the wild chervil has small tooth-like hairs at the top of the flowering stems.

Wild chervil is a good example of why you should read labels carefully when buying "wildflower mixtures." It was probably introduced in North America in seed mixes that were designed to imitate the plants commonly found in British meadows and hedgerows. It will grow in a variety of soil types and may be found along roadsides, edges of woods, and in disturbed areas.

It is not an easy plant to get rid of, and management techniques must be used for at least four years. Pulling and cutting can be effective for individual plants. After a rain, when you can pull the plant by the root easily, especially for small plants, this can work. However, the deep taproot makes pulling difficult for more mature plants. That taproot can be several feet long. If flowers or seed heads are present, bag material and dispose of it in a landfill to avoid potential for seed spread.

If you have a large infestation, mowing can be an effective method. Mow at least three times a year after the flowering stem reaches maximum height, but before

the plant flowers. Repeated mowing is critical as one mowing can increase seed production from re-sprouting plants. Care must be taken not to mow when mature seeds are present since this will spread the seed.

A handheld propane torch can be effective for treating seedlings. But burning a large area will just allow established plants to re-sprout.

If you feel that you need to use a chemical, check labels to see if plants in this family are listed. Carefully follow the directions on the label.

For more information on wild chervil, the DNR has an excellent publication in its invasive species series of publications. Management of invasive plants in Wisconsin: Wild chervil (A3924-23) –dnr.wi.gov/topic/

Wild Chervil should not be confused with **Wild Parsnip**, which has yellow flowers and blooms later in the summer. When sap contacts skin in the presence of sunlight, it can cause severe rashes, blisters, and discoloration of the skin (phytophotodermatitis). Wear gloves, long sleeves, and long pants when handling.



2019 Master Gardener Volunteer Training This Fall

Dates: Tuesdays, September 3, 2019 through November 26th, 2019.

Time: 6:00 to 9:00 pm

Location: UWEC-Barron County Campus, Rice Lake, WI.

Cost: \$125.00 per person or \$200 for two people willing to share printed materials.

Registration must be returned to the UW-Extension-Barron County Office by August 6, 2019.

Each week a different horticulture subject will be explored. Students will watch video lectures at home, and class time will include hands-on activities and opportunities for further inquiries and knowledge. Topics include: Annuals, Perennial and Native Plants, Houseplants, Landscape Design, Fruit and Vegetables, Weeds, Wildlife, Soils, Insects, Plant Disease and Low Input Lawn Care. The final weekly schedule will be provided on the first night of training.

Participants will learn from a wide range of instructors from University of Wisconsin-UW Extension, local experts and through on-line materials. A computer with Internet capability is recommended but not required. Individuals without a connection to their internet will need to make arrangements with their local library or contact the Extension-Barron County office for other alternatives.

To successfully complete the training, you will need to attend most of the training sessions, pass a final examination, and fulfill your community service commitment. Class size is limited, so register early. Paid registration should be received by August 6, 2019.

What is the Master Gardener Volunteer Program?

From its beginning, the Wisconsin Master Gardener Volunteer program has excelled as a premier community service-learning program, connecting gardening with volunteer opportunities in our area. Volunteers are trained to aid University of Wisconsin Extension staff by helping people in the community better understand horticulture and their environment. Any adult interested in gardening can participate in the Master Gardener Volunteer training. No previous experience or training is required. Acceptance is contingent on passing a criminal background check.

Students will receive 36 hours of training. In return, students are expected to volunteer a minimum of 24 hours of their time assisting with community projects related to horticulture, gardening, or nutrition annually and stay current

by completing 10 hours of continuing education each year.

Volunteer Opportunities include:

Community Gardens
Barron County Fair
Pioneer Village Museum
Farmer's Markets
Answering Telephone inquiries
Working with Youth
Horticultural Workshops and Talks
Many Other Possibilities

For more information contact:

Becky Schley, Agricultural Educator, 715-537-6252 or becky.schley@wisc.edu or Kim Grover, Administrative Assistant, 715-537-6256 or kim.grover@wisc.edu.



Registration is on the next page . . .

Registration Form for the Fall Master Gardener Training

Pre-Registration is required
Registration deadline is August 6, 2019.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email: _____

The Master Gardener program is first and foremost a volunteer organization. You will be expected to volunteer a minimum of 24 hours of garden-related community service within a year as a requirement of this program.

_____(check) I understand and agree to this volunteer requirement.

\$125 registration fee (or \$200 for two)

Payment must accompany registration. Please make check payable to **Barron County Extension**. Enclose with above registration form, training application, behavior expectations form and background check form

For more information, call the Barron County Extension Office at (715) 537-6250.

Mail to:

Barron County Extension Office
Barron County Government Center
335 E. Monroe Avenue, Room 2206
Barron, WI 51812



Project Spotlight—Sunflowers in Schools

Each spring, Master Gardener Volunteers visit elementary schools in Barron County and distribute sunflower seeds to second and third graders. They talk with the students about plants and what they need to grow. For many children, this is their first introduction to raising a plant of their own.

In the fall, the Master Gardeners Volunteers return to the schools to see the results. Students are asked ahead of time



to bring in their biggest sunflower head on a specific day. It is measured and the child with the largest one in each schools is given a bird feeder as a prize. The discussions are always interesting as students have stories to tell about the success or failure of their project.

In the spring of 2019, 640 packets were distributed.

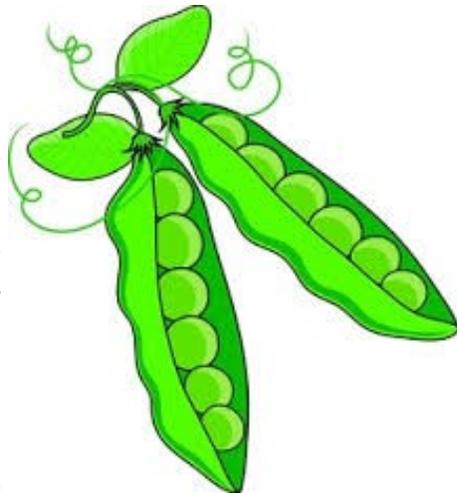
Late-Summer Planting Yields Fall Vegetables

(This information comes from Gardeners.com, a resource that uses trained horticulture experts.)

Seeds germinate fast when the soil is already nice and warm. For delicious, picture-perfect fall crops of spinach, lettuce, peas, kale and broccoli, now's the time to plant. Here are four easy steps to ensure your success.

Pull Some , Plant Some. As soon as any early season plants have passed their prime, pull them out and replant. Even little sections where a cucumber plant expired or the cilantro went to seed. Put the old plants in your compost pile, then aerate and replenish the soil by forking in some compost and organic fertilizer. Rake the surface smooth and sow something new!

Screen the Sun. For good late-summer germinations, it's important to keep the soil surface from drying out and not let soil temperatures rise over 80 degrees F. Wire hoops and shade netting are an easy solution. Fall-planted seeds should be sown twice as deep as in the spring. Natural shade from a trellis or tall plant



can also provide a good spot for seeding a second crop. When cold weather arrives keep plants warm with a floating Row Cover.

Sow the Right Crops. Plants that thrive in fall weather include: carrots, beets, broccoli, Swiss chard, kale and all kinds of salad and Asian greens. Choose disease-resistant varieties that mature quickly. All can be direct-sown into the garden, though broccoli can also be started indoors under lights or in a greenhouse. If planting a fall crop of peas, choose bush peas rather than traditional climbers.

Don't Delay. Summer-planted crops usually require an extra two weeks to mature (because days are shorter and air temperatures are cooler.) Using the days-to-maturity figure on the packet, count back from your fall frost date, then add a 14-day "fall factor." This will give you your fall planting date.

Keep Your Flowers Happy by Deadheading—by Carol Kettner

July in the garden has many rewards and challenges. There is an endless list of flowers blooming, and daily picking of a variety of vegetables. But you may also notice that some of the ornamental aspects are looking tired. While you are enjoying the bounty of summer produce, one of the ways to make your flower garden even more beautiful is by deadheading.

Deadheading is the act of removing spent blooms. Nature developed blooms to ensure that seeds are produced for the next generation of plants. Cutting off the spent flower stalks will improve the overall appearance of the plants, and for some, force it to bloom even more. One perennial that comes to mind is the daylily. The varieties referred to as “reblooming” will have a long bloom time, if you remove the blossoms as soon as they start to wither. Stella de Oro is an example of this. Other perennials that benefit from deadheading include achillea, gallardia, Echinacea, and phlox.

An “annual” plant that does well with frequent deadheading is the geranium. You can keep a pot of



geraniums looking beautiful with many blooms by removing blooms as soon as the petals start to fall. Old-fashioned petunias, coleus, and marigolds will become fuller with deadheading.

We often have some stretches of hot, dry weather in July and August, and if you are like me, you have had beautiful hanging baskets that dried out and drooped because you got busy and let it go a few days without watering. (In my yard, plants and pots that need lots of “babying” do not do well.) IF you think it looks beyond repair, don’t throw it out yet. Clip the whole thing to about 2 or 3 inches from the pot, give it some fertilizer, and allow it a few weeks to recover. More often than not, you will be surprised at how it will respond. Also remember that when you purchased the beautiful basket, it had likely been watered every day with a diluted liquid fertilizer solution. So as water runs out the bottom, the fertilizer is being diluted even more. That means you need to fertilize it regularly according to directions on the package. Just remember: too much fertilizer can be as harmful as not enough.

Project Spotlight: Barron County Historical Society’s Pioneer Village Museum

In recent years, gardens have been developed on the museum grounds to provide learning opportunities for visitors. The Barron County Master Gardener Volunteers have created several gardens that evoke nostalgic memories, highlight native plants, and demonstrate historical gardens.

The **Heritage Vegetable Garden**, located on the south side of the Hedin Log House, has changing themes. In the past it has been the site of gardens of German, Polish, and Italian immigrants; a World War II Victory Garden; and a Native American Three Sisters Garden. During Heritage Days, MG volunteers are on hand to talk about immigrant gardening experiences and to answer questions. This is also an opportunity for visitors to taste fresh garden herbs and talk about gardening. The 2019 heritage garden high-



lights what the Norwegian immigrant garden had for produce.

The **Nostalgia Garden**, located between the Toy Shoppe and the Marine Building, is reminiscent of old farm gardens with varieties of flowers such as marigolds and cleome, rhubarb, golden glow, and heirloom peonies.

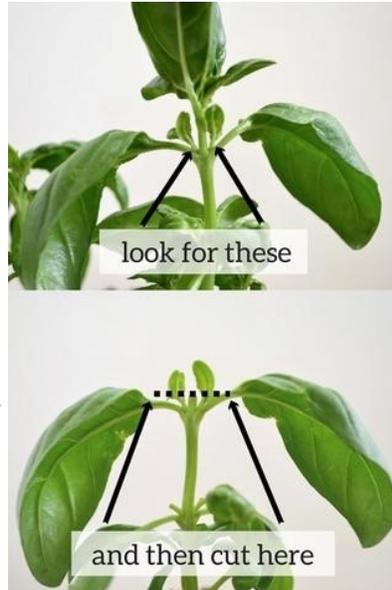
The **Rain Garden** was created in 2015 as a demonstration of how to deal with runoff from large buildings. This garden, on the east side of the South Machinery Building, is made up entirely of native plants that early settlers to the area may have seen. An all-weather booklet explains the plants, and visitors are invited to watch for pollinators throughout all the seasons. In 2019 the garden was registered as an official Monarch Waystation.

What does “pinching” mean?

(Taken from an article by Napa County Master Gardener, Denise Levine. Even though she is from California, this information also applies to us here in Barron County.)

Pinching is a technique that can shape a plant: increase production of herbs, flowers and fruits; determine the size of blooms and fruit and even keep your garden blooming longer. But pinching is not the answer for every plant. So which plants should you pinch, and how?

Pinching is a form of pruning, actually removing the new tender growth at the end of a stem. Pinch as close to leaf nodes as possible, being careful not to injure the tiny buds beneath. Each time you remove a main stem, your plant will try to grow two new stems beneath the pinch or cut. This easy technique encourages fullness and also helps keep plant size in check. It forces most plants to grow bushier and fuller rather than concentrating their energy on getting taller.



Basil, tarragon, thyme, sage, scented geraniums and marigolds respond well to pinching. Oregano and thyme do best when pinched or cut back to about half their length. Frequent pinching can keep rosemary and lavender to a manageable size during their spring growth spurt and supply you with lots of herbs for cooking. Cut back woody stems by no more than one-third. With most herbs, the more you pinch, the more you will have.

Inspect the base of the leaves where they connect to the stem and you will see new leaves forming in tiny pairs. Pinch right above that point and soon each pair of leaves will turn into a new branch. This practice keeps your plant producing leaves rather than going into flower and seed mode.

Many flowers also benefit from pinching and cutting. But it's worth knowing which do not like this treatment because it can eliminate your entire harvest for the season. Do not pinch campanula, cockscomb, delphinium, dill, stock, larkspur and most sunflowers.

Resources—Where to find answers!

Factsheets—<https://pddc.wisc.edu/>

UWEX Publications—<https://learning.store.wwex.edu>

Insect Info—<http://labs.Russell.wisc.edu/insectlab/>

General Wisconsin horticulture info—<https://hort.Uwex.edu>

Horticulture training and articles—<https://wimastergardener.org/articles>

Weed identification—<https://weedid.wisc.edu>

Wisconsin Pest Bulletin—<https://datcpservices.wisconsin.gov/pb/>



Musings about Strawberries—By Carol Kettner

Strawberry season arrived late this year. As a child growing up in Dunn County, I remember looking forward to the first taste of strawberries each June. You could not buy strawberries in the store all year round like you can now, so it was a real treat. We would eat strawberries on our cereal for breakfast, on shortcake at lunchtime, and on ice cream later in the day. Our family sold strawberries, so we spent many mornings picking them and putting them in quart-size berry boxes.

People often complain that the berries you get in grocery stores throughout the year when they are not in



season here in Wisconsin, are too hard, or don't have much flavor. When you think about how quickly fresh strawberries can get soft and start to mold, it is a miracle that we can purchase them any time of the year. These berries have been bred specifically to hold up in transportation, so they need to be more firm. Whenever you breed for a specific quality, you may lose another quality. In the case of strawberries, that quality is taste. Although they have been improving in the last few years, it still is a good reminder that the best produce is that which is grown locally and eaten in season.

Refreshing Strawberry Salad—By Carol Kettner

This salad has been in cookbooks for at least 50 years, and can be changed to meet just about anyone's preferences.

2 cups watermelon, cut into ½ inch cubes

1 quart strawberries, quartered or sliced

2 cups greens – lettuce, arugula, baby spinach, or whatever is your favorite

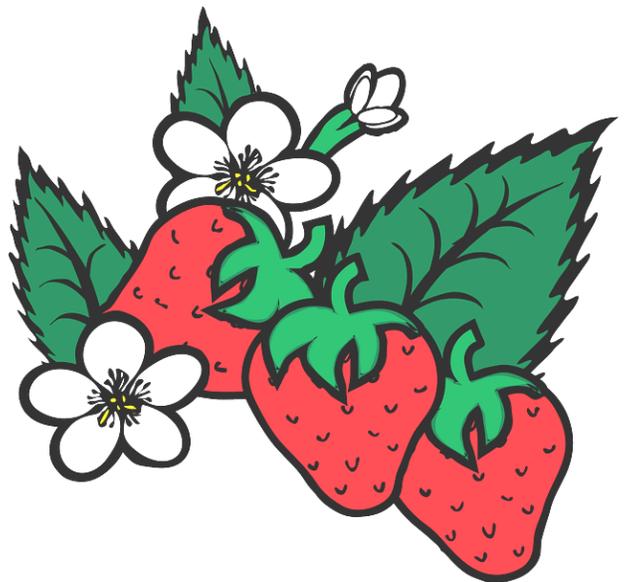
8 oz. feta cheese, cut into ¼ inch cubes

1 cup nuts – pecans, walnuts, almonds, peanuts, or whatever is your favorite

Additional ideas: chopped fresh cucumber, fresh mint, chopped chives or onion . . .

Dressing – any vinegar and oil, or balsamic vinaigrette dressing

One way to make this salad even more versatile is to put all the ingredients in separate containers and let each person make their own. That keeps everyone happy, and you don't have a soggy salad a few hours later that you end up throwing out.





Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
BARRON COUNTY



**MASTER
GARDENER
VOLUNTEER**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION

**UNIVERSITY OF
WISCONSIN - MADISON**

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Barron, WI 54812
Advisor: Becky Schley, Agricultural
Educator
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Fax: 715-537-6814

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