

July 17, 2019



What's Better Than Sharing What You Love?  
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UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County

What if you could help someone less fortunate, while doing what you love? That's the whole premise of the Plant a Row for the Hungry project, an international effort that encourages gardeners to plant extra fruits and veggies, so they can donate their excess produce to local food banks and non-profits serving the needy. But even if you didn't know about the project when you were planting, you might still have a surplus; lots of gardeners do. For twelve years, your local Master Gardeners have maintained a website to make it easy for you to participate.

On our Plant a Row website, <http://par-edc.org/>, which can also be linked from our Master Gardener website, <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/>, you'll find the locations and times that various agencies throughout the West Slope accept donations. No matter where you live, you can find a program convenient to you that would be delighted to receive your donation. We've also included guidelines for how and what to donate, to simplify things for you.

Since the Sherwood Demonstration Garden first opened in 2015, we have donated hundreds, if not thousands, of pounds of produce locally. Research shows that the nutritional value of locally grown produce is often higher than that from grocery stores because it is fresher.

For the first time this year, we want to track how much is donated, so we are asking people to report their donations on our website and there will be a \$50.00 Front Yard Nursery gift card for the person who donates the most. We have set a goal of donating 1000 pounds on the West Slope, in addition to what is donated from the Sherwood Demonstration Garden. If it's not easy for you to weigh your donations, just give it your best guess. With your help, we can have the most productive year ever for Plant a Row. Just go on our website and enter your name, email address, what you donated, and the weight. Here's the link <http://ucanr.edu/par-edc-donations>. And we're not worried someone will cheat, because who can you trust if you can't trust good-hearted gardeners who are sharing their bounty?

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You might choose to donate to a project that is particularly meaningful for you. In addition to the Food Bank of El Dorado County and local food closets, such as SHARE, there are organizations listed like the Upper Room, which provides dinner 365 days a year. There are also projects like Progress House, which has several treatment houses on the West Slope and whose mission is “to provide the highest level of quality and comprehensive services to individuals and communities affected by addiction.”

The national Plant a Row project shares this background information: “According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1 in 8 households in the United States experiences hunger or the risk of hunger. Many frequently skip meals or eat too little, sometimes going without food for an entire day. Approximately 33 million people, including 13 million children, have substandard diets or must resort to seeking emergency food because they cannot always afford the food they need. The demand for hunger assistance has increased by 70% in recent years, and research shows that hundreds of hungry children and adults are turned away from food banks each year because of lack of resources.”

On behalf of the less fortunate in our community, Master Gardeners of El Dorado County, thanks you for your support.

On Saturday, July 20, from 9:00 to 12:00, join the El Dorado County Master Gardeners to hear a talk by Pam Lane on the topic of “Noxious and Invasive Weeds.” Learn about highly aggressive non-native plants which have been introduced into El Dorado County. The lecture will be held at Government Center Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville.

For more information on the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County, see our website at <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu>. Master Gardeners are available to answer home gardening questions Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to noon, by calling (530) 621-5512, or send us an email using the Ask a Master Gardener option on our website. Walk-ins are welcome at our office, located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. We also encourage you to visit us at the Sherwood Demonstration Garden, located at 6699 Campus Drive in Placerville, behind Folsom Lake College, El Dorado Center. See [http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Demonstration\\_Garden](http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Demonstration_Garden) for more information and days and hours of operation, or call us to schedule a tour. To sign up for notices and newsletters, see [http://ucanr.edu/master\\_gardener\\_e-news](http://ucanr.edu/master_gardener_e-news). Master Gardeners are also on Facebook and Instagram; we hope you enjoy our postings and will share them with your friends.