

Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario

Inside MGOI

Welcome to the July edition of *Inside MGOI*, the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc. (MGOI) newsletter.

This Newsletter aims to be the voice for Master Gardeners—a venue for providing updates, insights and the inside scoop from MGOI Board & Committee members, Directors, and the 28 Master Gardener groups throughout Ontario. *Inside MGOI* features member milestones, group projects and activities, short member profiles, upcoming events such as webinars/conferences—anything about the functioning and happenings of our groups and our members. Please feel free to submit pictures—they are most welcome! Contributions to future editions of *Inside MGOI* may be sent at any time to the Newsletter Editor, Isabel Belanger, newsletter@mgoi.ca.

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Master Gardeners

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- Upcoming Events / ROM Promo
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MGOI

- Board Vacancy: VP

INSIDE MGOI

July 2025

Newsletter of the
Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.

Editor: Isabel Belanger, Halton

Milestones

Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

Media Star

Mary Reid

MG Mary Reid really shone in late June. *The Globe and Mail* ran an extensive feature on her and her business, Green Thumb Nursery, and as if that weren't enough, on June 24th she filled in for Paul Zammit on the CBC gardening program.



Mary (photo by Steve Reid)



Simcoe County Master Gardeners

10 Year Anniversary

Pat Cook



Pat, right, receiving her 10 year pin from coordinator Gail Cocker on June 17th



Pat, right (in the green sweater) with fellow group member Marianne (left, pink sweater), during a group visit to Pat's garden on July 17th

New Master Gardener in Training

Kendall Vanderlip

Kendall is pursuing her coursework through Guelph University.

by Kendall Vanderlip

"Growing up in Paris Ontario and spending all my free time helping on my grandparents' farm, gardening wasn't something to discover but has always been a part of my life. Living at my parent's, anytime I could find a space in the neighbourhood where someone would let me make a garden, one would be made. Now residing in Innisfil, I love to grow my own food when I can, but focus primarily on native plantings and creating landscapes and habitats for birds, bugs, and bats that people can also coexist in."



Kendall at her home in Innisfil



London-Middlesex Master Gardeners

40 Year Anniversary

Eva Norman-Vestergaard



Coordinator Sandra Elfman, left with Eva

Eva is a founding member of the London Middlesex Master Gardener's group. She started in 1985 as part of the pilot group with OMAFRA (Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs) to educate the community on best gardening practices. Eva has contributed thousands of volunteer hours since she joined the group, and has shared her wealth of gardening knowledge with the community and with our Master Gardener group helping newer members learn from her experiences. She has been a very active member in all aspects of our group, from working at Seedy Saturday, Western Fair, and many many advice tables over the years.

Congratulations Eva on 40 years of volunteerism!

Master Gardener Status Achieved

Cathy Lynch

We are very happy to congratulate Cathy for completing coursework as part of the master gardener training!



Board Vacancy—VP / MGOI Webinars / MGOI Members FB Private Discussion Group

Board Vacancy—Vice President (VP)

MGOI is looking for 1 or 2 VPs to support the President.

The Position

- Supports and works closely with the President
- Monitors the progress of the organization's goals and objectives
- Reviews information submitted in Annual Reviews and in the Annual Report to recognize achievements, share best practices, and identify potential areas of concern
- Assists Directors in resolving potential areas of concern, potentially bringing them to the attention of the Board of Directors
- Works with the Director of Membership and others to fill vacant Board positions
- Assumes the duties of the President in her absence; succeeds the President

Access to Past MGOI Webinars

All MGOI Webinars have been recorded. Links are on the MGOI website: <https://mgoi.ca/>. Members' login is on the far right. Your Coordinator can provide you with the password.

The MGOI Members Facebook (FB) Private Discussion Group

This is a private group—'A discussion page for registered members of the Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc., Canada. To join, you must be an active member of the Master Gardeners of Ontario and belong to a local MG group.'



Master Gardeners Out & About

Projects & Events

Thunder Bay & District Master Gardeners

Name: June Meeting and Potluck

Details: Sylvia Goodheart and her husband Chris graciously opened their home for the Thunder Bay & District Master Gardeners June meeting and potluck dinner. Their home is situated in Kaministiquia, approximately 25 km from Thunder Bay. The weather turned out to be perfect.

It is always wonderful to get together to share gardening issues and successes. Spouses were also welcome to enjoy the potluck party.



left to right: Andrea Steinhäusser, Lynda Bobinski, Rosemary McNabb, Aili Dampier, Lynda Lahtenmaa, Sylvia Goodheart

Name: Gardening Advice at Canadian Tire Greenhouse

Details: Thunder Bay & District Master Gardeners were on location June 14th and 15th at the Canadian Tire greenhouse on Arthur Street in Thunder Bay to answer gardening questions and give advice.

This is great opportunity to interact with the public and provide helpful planting tips and plant suggestions. Everyone is always appreciative.



left to right: MGs Andrea Steinhäusser & Lynda Lahtenmaa

Tri-County Master Gardeners

by MG Leslye Glover

Name: Master Gardener Native Plant Sale—A Huge Success!

Details: The Tri-County Master Gardeners (Huron, Oxford, Perth) held their annual sale of native trees, shrubs and perennials on Saturday, June 14th in Stratford. Thanks to widespread support from native plant enthusiasts, all stock was sold quite quickly.

Master Gardeners promote planting native species to add to the biodiversity of the area, support pollinators, provide food and habitat for birds and small mammals and to mitigate the effects of climate change. We also supply gardening advice of all kinds. We are pleased to work with other organizations with similar goals and appreciate their backing.

TCMGs are already making plans for next June's sale, and we promise to supply high quality native plants in greater quantities. We are sorry that some customers were disappointed to find their favourite plants were sold out. The Tri-County Master Gardeners are hoping to have a native plant pop-up sale in the fall. Our Facebook page will have details.



TCMG members pose for a photo at their native plant sale in June





Shoppers and plants at TCMGs native plant sale

Niagara Master Gardeners

Name: NOTL Garden Tour

Details: Niagara MGs took part in a garden tour hosted by the Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) Horticultural Society on July 12. We were on hand at the home of fellow MG Betty Knight to share garden stories and answer questions. Below, Betty describes some of the work that went into the informative displays in her garden.

by Betty Knight

It was easy to say yes to the NOTL Horticultural Society Garden Tour because they were receptive to the idea of using my garden as a teaching garden. With a passion for talking about native plants and invasive species, I welcomed the opportunity to discuss those topics with attendees.

The town of Niagara-on-the-Lake was settled over 250 years ago. Settlers brought with them English home favourites, such as English ivy, periwinkle and lily-of-the-valley to name a few. All of these can be found flourishing still around the old homesteads. Flash forward to today, when we realize how problematic they are to our native flora and fauna.

Information and posters from the Ontario Invasive Species Council and the Joy of Native Plants Ottawa were put up around the property to educate attendees on what invasive species look like, why they were / are invasive, and how to get rid of them. A few diseases and pests were also touched upon.



Pathway lined information about native plants from Joy of Native Plants Ottawa

Over 60 plants were identified in the garden with Canadian flags on the native ones. Butterfly stickers (hey, I was a schoolteacher) adorned plant markers that were attractive to butterflies. There were smiles on many faces at the plant tag that read, "Dill planted for the Black Swallowtail butterfly."

Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

Name: Monthly Update from MGOC

Details:

- **Two New Fact Sheets:** MGOC has created 2 new fact sheets, available on the MGOC website. Kudos to the fact sheet team.
 - The [red lily beetle](#) fact sheet includes information on biocontrols to help keep them in check.
 - The other fact sheet concerns [slugs](#). Did you know slugs can lay up to 500 eggs a year in batches of 10-50?
- **City Participation:** MGOC is helping the City of Ottawa develop a tree species list for the region, including unacceptable invasive trees and rare/endangered trees, as well as information on supporting tree root structure, sustainability and much more.
- **Nature Nocturne:** MGOC offered an array of engaging short presentations at the Canadian Museum of Nature's popular Nature Nocturne series, which typically attracts 2,000 plus people. The July 18 event, 8 p.m. to midnight, offered music, dancing, socializing and explorations of the natural world.
- **Advice Clinics Continue:** Clinics were held at the Barrhaven Market, Carp Farmers' Market, Elgin Street Market, Cumberland Farmers' Market, Westboro Market, Manotick Watson's Mill Farmers' Market and the Lansdowne – Ottawa Farmers' Market.



Likewise, the colony of carpenter bees was highlighted with information on why they were a positive force in the garden.



Log pile provides a home for native bees and other critters

I built a small log pile for the tour early in the spring to showcase how simple it was to build a refuge for small animals and to support insects, decomposers and pollinators. Wild violets were planted in front of it for access to an early pollen-rich meal. During the tour there was a toad on the pile, the feather of a small bird and the violets had clearly been well munched.

A representative from Niagara Bee was there to talk about native bees and a number of MGs were on hand to answer gardening questions and talk about native gardening.



Niagara MGs, from left to right, Betty Knight, Mary-Lyn Hopper, Brenda Sawchuk, Karen Epp, Michele Young, Eva Weber and Barb Johnston at the garden tour event



An important public service reminder

Grand Erie Master Gardeners

Name: Strategic Planning Meeting

Details: Grand Erie MGs held a strategic planning meeting on July 3rd. A smaller group will get together at a later date to review feedback from this meeting.

London Middlesex Master Gardeners

contributed by Nancy Abra

Name: London Middlesex Celebrating 40 Years

Details: London Middlesex Master Gardeners celebrated their 40th anniversary this summer with a special festivity on Sunday, June 22nd at the Civic Garden Centre, London, ON. To mark this milestone, invited guests representing MGOI, the City of London, Growing Chefs, Seeds of Diversity along with reps from a few area horticultural groups, other supporters and past London Middlesex members came to celebrate with our membership. We were honoured to have MGOI President Anne Craig from Peterborough come.

The afternoon consisted of a brief agenda of congratulations from the invited delegation, sharing stories, renewing old friendships and viewing archival documents of London Middlesex MGs, as well as enjoying light refreshments.

The Master Gardener program in Ontario started in 1985 through the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to provide horticultural information to the public.



London Middlesex, along with three other groups, formed the pilot for this program. And London Middlesex is the oldest MG group in Ontario and still growing strong!

Speakers at the event included coordinator Sandra Elfman, MGOI president Anne Craig, Councilor Skylar Franke, Greg Sandle, Andrew Fleet, Nancy Abra, and Julie Dorssers.



From left to right, back row: Nancy Abra, Anne Craig, Greg Sandle, Andrew Fleet, Skylar Franke; front row: Frances Thorne, Julie Dorssers, and Sandra Elfman

Name: June Member Field Trip

Details: For the June meeting, our group traveled to Crunican Orchard for a tour of the trees.



Lanark County Master Gardeners

Name: Garden Tour, July 14th

Details: Our group had a wonderful garden tour of the amazing Van Berlo Gardens, hosted by Mary Ann Van Berlo. We had last visited 5 years ago and much had changed in that time. Plants had filled out and new plants added. Mary Ann has added many varieties of trees and shrubs to her 2.4 acre garden along the St. Lawrence River. She even had the newly introduced Kelly Noel Daylily for us to admire in person (*Hemerocallis* 'Kelly Noel', Mussar 2025, named for former MGOI Communications Director Kelly Noel).



Following our inspirational tour, we motored on to Brockville for a delicious lunch. If you are ever lucky enough to be in southeastern Ontario, especially in July, make plans to visit the Van Berlo Garden (by appointment).



Mary Ann's front garden where pollinators abound

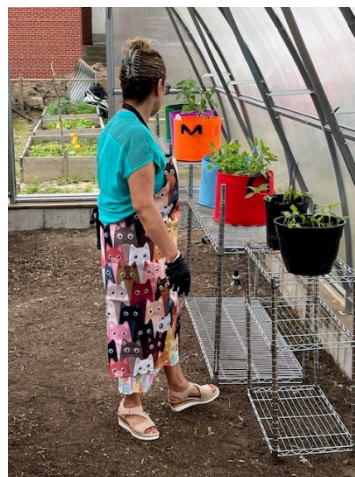
Name: July Farmers' Markets

Details: This month, we hosted 5 Farmers' Markets across Lanark County, not bad for a small group of only 15 Master Gardeners. Many people come to the markets on purpose to meet with us and ask questions. We often find that our visitors have heard one of us give a presentation and come by to ask further questions or tell us how they are implementing our suggestions. This is the beauty of being in a small group.





*Members—Front row left to right: Jordan Scott- Richer, Ankaret Dean, Kevin Long
Back Row: Gerda Franssen, Victor Wark, Helen Halpenny, Dale Odorizzi, Kathleen Lang*



San Lorenzo Community Centre



Toronto Master Gardeners

Name: Health and Wellness in the Community: the Benefits of Gardening

Details: So many organizations have newly created Wellness Groups to improve health and morale. Recently, the Toronto Master Gardeners have met employees from Mt. Sinai Hospital, Intuit Software Company, Waterworks Food Hall and a local architectural firm to introduce the benefits of gardening. The latest was the San Lorenzo Community Centre who received a grant to purchase a small greenhouse. We helped them set it up.

It was especially fun as instructions were translated from English to Spanish. Truly, the love of growing your own vegetables transcends any language!



*San Lorenzo Community Centre—TMG
Tena van Andel (with hat)*

Name: Gardening at Ground Level: Members' Open House

Details: TMGs Dorothy and Patrick Smyth (you may already know their wonderful gardening videos, available on the [Toronto Master Gardeners YouTube channel](#)) and Maria Radford opened their gardens to our members.

Here are Dorothy and Patrick's reflections of the day. Some photos from Maria's garden follow.

Even on a scorching hot day in June, we were delighted to welcome a small group of Master Gardeners into our inner-city garden. The turnout—just seven MGs—was modest, but the conversations were rich and affirming.

We talked not about textbook ideal gardens, but real ones—shaped by shade, fences, tree roots, microclimates, and the constraints of city living. We spoke openly about what works, what doesn't, and the quiet compromises that so many of us make to keep our gardens resilient, especially in the face of climate change.

More and more, we're noticing a creeping rigidity in gardening circles, a kind of dogma around what a "good" or "right" garden should be. But in small, personal gatherings like this one, there's space



for nuance—for sharing the complexities and trade-offs that come with urban gardening.

These garden visits are a chance to see how fellow MGs navigate real-world challenges with creativity and care. We'd love to see more of them.

As for photos—we didn't take any. People arrived at different times, and it felt more like a relaxed open door than a formal group event. Still, the spirit of the day was clear: connection, conversation, and a shared commitment to practical, adaptive, thoughtful gardening.

Let's keep it going. *Dorothy & Patrick*



TMG Maria Radford's Garden

Photo credits: Maria Radford



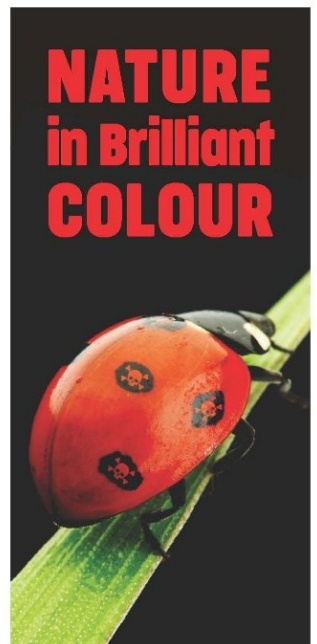
UPCOMING EVENTS

Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), Toronto

Name: Promo Code

Details: The ROM has shared a promo code with *Inside MGOI* readers to save on tickets to [Nature in Brilliant Colour](#), on view until August 17th, 2025. Visit the ROM and help them share this transformative exhibition that encourages us to marvel at the power of colour in the natural world.

The promo code **MUSEUM15** is also valid on tickets to the exhibitions: [Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away](#); and [Saints, Sinners, Lovers, and Fools: 300 years of Flemish Masterworks](#).



EXHIBITION ON NOW
Dec 14, 2024 – Aug 17, 2025

ROM



Halton Region Master Gardeners

Name: Garden Journeys Open Days—a free open garden event featuring gardens supporting biodiversity and the environment.

Details: Visit private gardens across the greater City of Hamilton and meet their gardeners. Learn about the joys and challenges of creating gardens that support the ecosystem.



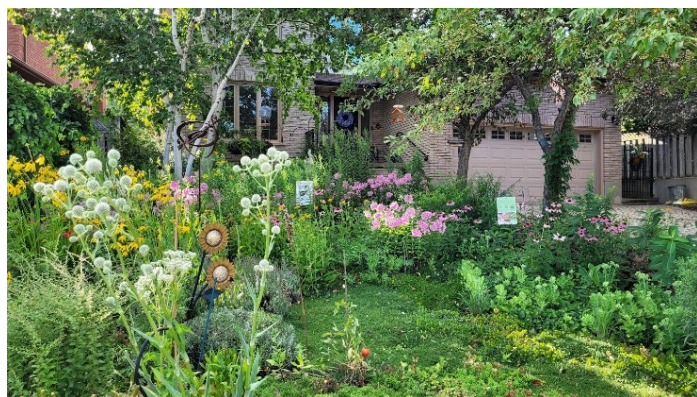
Poster Design: Janet Hughes-Mackey

As well as a few public gardens, open gardens feature private sidewalk “showcases” that can be viewed at any time from the street without the gardener being present. No need to sign up, just download the list of addresses and opening times, available in late July.

Dates & Time: August 8, 9, 10 and August 15, 16, 17. Gardens will be open at various times during these two weekends.

Tickets: No tickets, free to attend

Locations: Check our webpage for more details as well as addresses and times (available late July): <https://haltonmastergardeners.com/garden-journeys-open-days/>



MG Claudette Sims' Front Garden
Photo: Claudette Sims

1000 Islands Master Gardeners

Name: Converted Front Yard Garden Tour

Date & Time: Aug. 9 (rain date Aug. 10), 10:00-4:00

Location: Kingston and Area

Details: Coordinated by Master Gardeners Nancy Shepherd and Joyce Hostyn, 1000 Islands Master Gardener volunteers will facilitate tours of residential front yards that have been converted from turf grass to gardens.

Grand Erie Master Gardeners

Name: Tiptoe into Bloom: A Fresh Flower Design Workshop

Date & Time: Sunday, August 24th from 1-3:30 p.m.

Place: The gardens of MGIt Erin Casey, owner of The Garlic Shed in Norfolk County. Address: 1908 Hwy 24 S, Simcoe

Registration & Cost: Register by August 21st at <https://granderiemg.org/events> Cost: \$38.

Details: Participants will learn how to harvest and care for fresh-cut flowers, the foundation of floral design and composition, tips for colour pairing, texture and bouquet styling. They will leave with their own custom arrangement after picking flowers in a 1 acre garden.



Etobicoke Master Gardeners

Name: 2025 Annual Fall Plant Sale

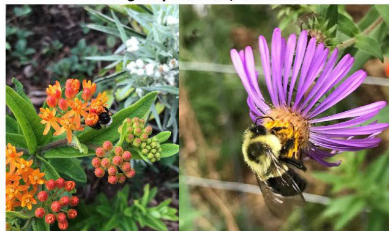
Date & Time:

September 13,
8:30 a.m. to 12:30
p.m.

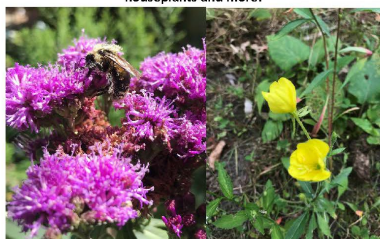


Etobicoke Master Gardeners

2025 Annual FALL Plant Sale – Saturday, Sept 13, 2025
8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
6 Kingsway Crescent, Etobicoke



Free Advice Clinic, native plants for native pollinators,
houseplants and more!



www.etobicokemastergardeners.ca

Place: 6 Kingsway
Crescent,
Etobicoke

Details: Free
advice clinic,
native plants for
native pollinators,
house plants and
more!

Name: EMG Talk Series at the Humber Arboretum

Dates & Topics:

- September 20th – **Exploring Trees & Shrubs;**
Presentation followed by a Tour of the Woodlot
- October 4th – **Supporting Biodiversity: The Power of
Wetlands and Ravines**

Time & Place: 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 205 Humber
College Boulevard, Toronto

Details: Free Sessions. In person. Indoor presentation
followed by an outdoor tour. Wear your walking shoes and
dress for the weather to take the learning outside and
enjoy the gardens and woodland.



<https://humber.ca/arboretum/learn/adult-programs/etobicoke-master-gardeners.html>

Toronto Master Gardeners

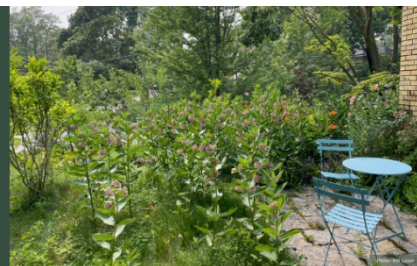
Technical Update

Changing Cities, One Garden at a Time

Changing Cities, One Garden at a Time

Technical Update
Saturday, November 8, 2025
8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Toronto Botanical Garden

SAVE THE DATE



Date, Time & Place: Saturday, November 8 from 8:30
a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Toronto Botanical Garden

Cost:

\$65 for Toronto Master Gardeners

\$75 for other Master Gardeners

\$85 for members of the public

Includes a continental breakfast and boxed lunch

Details: We are excited to announce that the Toronto
Master Gardeners will be hosting our first in-person
Technical Update since 2020! Join us at Toronto Botanical
Garden to explore how gardeners can support
biodiversity in city gardens. The event will include a panel
discussion, breakout sessions, and keynote speaker. The
complete program and speakers list is now available on
the TMG website:

<https://www.torontomastergardeners.ca/technical-update/>.

This will be a great opportunity to cross pollinate ideas
and share inspiration with other Master Gardeners. We
look forward to seeing you!

Lanark County Master Gardeners with Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

Technical Update:

The Wonderful World of Trees

Date: October 4, 2025

Location: Ottawa

Cost: TBD

Registration Information / Further Details: Coming
Soon! Save the Date!



Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Oak Wilt Disease

Reminder – Do Not Prune Oak Trees (*Quercus* spp.) from April 1st until December: winter pruning when the tree is dormant needs to be the new norm.

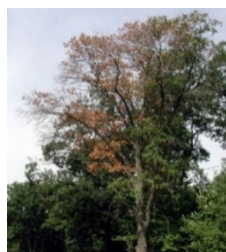
Oak Wilt (*Bretziella fagacearum*) is a fungal disease that can kill oak trees within one year. Red oaks are particularly susceptible. The pathogen that causes oak wilt (*Bretziella fagacearum*) is present in the Ontario environment, and prevention is key to defend against oak wilt. All ages and sizes of oak trees are susceptible:

<https://onnurserycrops.wordpress.com/2024/04/02/reminder-no-pruning-oaks-from-now-until-november/#more-6673>.

Pathways by which oak wilt can spread include:

- **root grafting**—the fungus will travel through the interconnected roots of infected and healthy trees growing in close proximity;
- **insects**—sap and bark beetles will carry spores of the fungus from an infected tree to a healthy one; and
- **human-assisted spread**—**moving** things such as firewood and **pruning** during high-risk periods.

How You Can Help: Please share this message with the public and our MG members.



Oak wilt disease in an oak tree.
Photo credit: Joseph O'Brien, USDA
Forest Service, Bugwood.org
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/oak_wilt_diagnosing_and_preventing

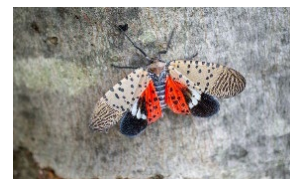
The Ontario government has posted in depth information on their website and advises 'not to prune or wound oaks between April 1 and November 30, when the **sap beetles** that spread the disease are active'.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/oak-wilt#:~:text=Oak%20wilt%20is%20an%20introduced,Falls%20area%20of%20Southern%20Ontario>.



CFIA – Spotted Lanternfly

Canada is preparing for the potential arrival of the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF), present in the United States and getting closer to the Canadian border. The SLF would be devastating for Canada's wine, fruit, nursery and forest industries.



SLF – CFIA

"Spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) is an invasive planthopper that threatens Ontario's agricultural sector."

The Ontario government has more information about identifying and preventing the spread here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/spotted-lanternfly-prevention-practices-producers>.

The CFIA has spokespeople available for interviews, people who are experts in plant health imports and exports. CFIA experts are also willing to write and submit a piece if that is of interest. Please contact us if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Media Relations, Canadian Food Inspection Agency / Government of Canada: cfia.media.acia@inspection.gc.ca
Tel: 613-773-6600



CFIA Digital Toolkit

The CFIA is looking for help and expertise to engage Canadians on how we can successfully keep Canada's natural landscape, bountiful plants, and beautiful gardens healthy and protected against the threat of invasive species.

The CFIA has developed a user-friendly [digital toolkit](#) full of outreach materials in both English and French, including posters, social media messaging and images, and more! Please use these and share freely.

This toolkit includes extensive material on invasive species. Feel free to bug us if you have any questions or would like to discuss opportunities to work together! Please contact Maria Kubacki at the following coordinates:



Maria Kubacki, Manager / Gestionnaire

Marketing and partnerships / Marketing et partenariats
Communications and Public Affairs Branch / Direction
générale des communications et affaires publiques
Canadian Food Inspection Agency / Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments
Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada
343-542-3856 / Maria.kubacki@inspection.gc.ca



CFIA Seeds Alert

Canadians are urged to connect with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) before sending seeds abroad.

As Canada's plant health regulator, the CFIA plays an important role in making sure seeds from Canada meet internationally agreed upon regulations. There have been notifications of non-compliance from foreign countries about seeds exported from Canada without proper phytosanitary (plant health) certification.

Seeds can potentially be invasive in some countries or spread plant diseases or other pests. Not meeting requirements has consequences such as the destination country destroying the seeds and issuing Canada a notice of non-compliance. All seeds, including those in small packets for gardeners, must comply with the import requirements of the destination country.

Please share this information with the Canadian public to increase awareness of the important steps to take when shipping or exporting seeds to protect international plant resources, our economy and the environment.

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