**Statewide MG Plant Sale Meeting**

**February 2, 2021 Via Zoom**

In attendance were 22 representatives from counties including: King, Kitsap, Benton/Franklin, Chelan/Douglas, Clallam, Island, Jefferson, Kittitas, Mason, Pierce, Spokane, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston, Whatcom, Yakima counties

Hosts: Gary Scheider, King Co, Ann Haines, Kitsap County (note taker)

**Discussion of novel things you are doing**

Kitsap: After exploring a myriad of alternatives and running through their logistics it was decided the risks and benefits to finances, volunteers and community were not worth it so will not do a spring online or in person sale. Will be growing and donating veggie/tomato starts to food banks and may do limited MG only sales in summer from their private storage sites.

Pierce: In spring will be doing tomato only online sale. Late summer/fall public sale on WSU campus or church. Sale would include garden crafts and “garden shed” sale (donated, used tools). The tool sale made $6k in previous years. Will also buy plants from local growers to resell.

Thurston: Will repeat last years personal shopper days ($15k last year). Also 2 sales, 3-5 consecutive days, 3-5 hours with 45 minute appointments. One in May and one in early Sept for fall bloomers. No veggie sale, no online sales. Checks only. They also promote Foundation memberships of $10 each.

Spokane: Partnership with commercial nursery (big box store) where they take end of season leftovers, repot and spruce up. Planning an in person spring sale by appointment only. Rented a 5000 sq ft greenhouse. Will have 8 shoppers and 2 MG’s per shopping period. Normally they have 2000 shoppers/5 hours with limited price points and cashiers are slammed. This year they are doing barcodes with a scanner with Square and an Ipad. The barcodes translate the price to Square. Checks or credit cards. No veggies as they are grown by MG’s in their homes which makes logistics difficult. Last year due to no sale they set up a swap between MG’s.

Jefferson: Doing May 8th sale with veggies and perennials. Online orders with Square. Also looking at calendar and holiday plant sale for fall winter.

Whatcom: Doing online with veggies, dahlia tubers, sedum baskets, bonsai and day lilies. Drive thru pickup with tents. For perennials they do unstaffed sales at demo gardens. Plants are placed on tables at demo gardens with a secure cashbox. They are considering a fall event.

King: Online store with 5000 veggies. Two pickup sites, Bellevue demo garden and a high school greenhouse (new partner). No perennials as they find it hard to interest folks in MG divided perennials online and the logistics were proving difficult. They are paring up with 3-7 outside specialty plant vendors for their online store. Income will be shared as specified in a contract.

Kittitas: Doing online veggies

Skagit: no online sale for veggies and tomatoes due to logistics of consistency MG grown plants, filing orders, moving plants etc. They will be selling through a MG owned commercial nursery (like last year). They are using Zoom to educate growers, growers can show their plants and get advice. Sumer will do MG only perennial sale. They have filled out the WSU COVID Protocol form.

Mason: have added position of protocol manager(s) to oversee COVID protocols. Checks people in and out, ensures sign ins, masks, etc. In charge of the paperwork and adherence to rules.

Chelan/Douglas: They have a Manger of the Day in their greenhouse to deal with COVID protocols.

WSU COVID Protocols: We should be following WSU rules. Check in with your county coordinator for the latest. There is a new 1.5 page form to fill out for all events that involve volunteers. Do this at least 10 days prior to event. Earlier better. Contact your county coordinator to get form and work with them to complete it.

Calendar: Clallam does one and sells all activities. Last year even without activities they sold out. They print the dates of their activities on the calendar. Do more as outreach than fundraising. Snohomish also does calendar with their events listed. In past has done cookbook. Island Co looked into cookbook but was told WSU/Food Safety now needs to sign off on it.

Crafts/garden art: Pierce has a dedicated group of MG crafters that make items for their sales. King is going to include birdhouses made by MG’s. and has included burlap bags and gloves in past. Island has successfully sold garden art at their sales. Kitsap has tried garden art, used garden magazines and used pots (none successful) as well as gloves and row cover (successful). Kittitas asked about regulations on what we sell and grow – check with your county coordinator on this.

**Discussion of places you are stuck**

Chelan/Douglas: - Using Square for pickup times.

Suggestions:

King – schedule pickup time before they start shopping or use signup genius

Kittitas – they use square and did manually

Kitsap – make time slot an item in store that they “buy” first

Jefferson – they assigned pickup times

Other store tips:

King – add a donation button and a button to donate boxes

King and Chean/Douglas- ask permission of your seed supplier for using their photos.

Benton/Franklin: How to get plant descriptions and photos into Square

Suggestions:

Chelan/Douglas – import or copy from Excel

Thurston and Kitsap – Gardenware program Cost ~$350 plus printable plant labels. Company in Oregon.

Kitsap – will see about sharing their excel spreadsheet of plants with group.

Pierce – will see about sharing their list of heirloom tomatoes with the group.

***Good luck everyone!***