

Gardening with the Masters

2026 Spring Event Schedule

Saturday, March 21, 2026

8:30 - 9:00 Registration

9:00 – 9:50 Session 1 – Designing with Annuals: A New Spin on the Color Wheel

presented by Esther E. McGinnis, Extension Horticulturist and Associate Professor, North Dakota State University, Fargo

While trees, shrubs, and perennials are gardening staples, colorful annuals provide instant interest and excitement to your garden haven. This presentation uses the color wheel to help gardeners pick appealing annuals that provide enjoyment throughout the growing season.

10:00 - 10:30 Break, Classroom and Table Talks, Information Tables

10:30 - 11:20 Session 2 – Wild Blooms, Wild Wings—Gardens that Give Back

presented by Minnehaha Master Gardeners Arlene Brandt-Jenson, Donna Breed, and Mary Lerssen

As gardeners, it's up to us to provide the beneficial blooms and protective plant cover for the "little things that run the world," a concept popularized by biologist E.O. Wilson. In this Master Gardener Spotlight Session, Minnehaha Master Gardeners share their real-life experiences in reducing lawn size to conserve resources, planting for diversity to attract pollinators and wildlife, using native plants to support biodiversity, and planting perennials that provide needed habitat.

11:30 – 12:30 Lunch, Classroom and Table Talks, Information Tables

12:30 – 1:20 Session 3 – Let Go of the Blueberry Dream and Embrace Our Fruit Reality

presented by John Ball, SDSU Extension Forestry Specialist and SD DANR Forest Health Specialist

Why aren't my blueberry bushes doing well? Because they are upset that you planted them in South Dakota. In this presentation we will cover fruits better fit for our challenging climate.

1:30 – 2:00 Classroom and Table Talks, Information Tables

2:00 – 2:50 Session 4 – Debunking Common Vegetable Garden Myths

presented by Esther E. McGinnis, Extension Horticulturist and Associate Professor, North Dakota State University, Fargo

Much of our gardening knowledge we learn from word of mouth and from our phone screens. But how accurate are these gardening tips? This presentation addresses some of the popular garden myths and misconceptions that have worked their way into popular culture, and looks at what the science actually reveals about these "easy gardening hacks".

3:00 Optional Tour of Southeast Technical College Horticulture Dept & Greenhouses *with Benjamin Ringling, STC Horticulture Technology Instructor*
(meet in the commons area of the Hub to walk as a group to the Ed Wood Building)