

MMGA/SWCD ANNUAL TREE SALE

PROCEDURE

Date October 2007

Overview: This annual event is a joint venture between the Michiana Master Gardener Association (MMGA) and the Elkhart County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD). The objective is to provide members of the community with a variety of good quality bare root starter trees and shrubs. To make it economical for the owner of smaller properties to purchase the trees and shrubs, they are bundled in small quantities. While benefiting the community the MMGA and SWCD expect to make a reasonable profit from their volunteer efforts in putting on this sale. MMGA has agreed to provide the labor and up front financing, SWCD will furnish the administrative functions of making brochures and tracking and handling sales receipts. A separate agreement has been approved that allocates 60% of the profit to MMGA with the balance going to SWCD.

Requirements: The MMGA and SWCD shall each provide a representative to act as Co-Chairs of the tree sale committee. The Co-Chairs should expect to serve at least one year and be willing to train a replacement prior to their intended departure from the committee. Additional at large members may be selected to provide assistance in conducting the routine business of the committee. The Co-Chairs shall carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the following sections: Duties and Responsibilities - Yearly Time Line, and Reporting. The planning and activities of the committee shall be done to meet the time line set forth below with the MMGA Co-Chair arranging for the necessary manpower.

Duties & Responsibilities - Yearly Time Line/Planner:

August

- MMGA Co-Chair orders trees from nurseries as early in August as possible.
- MMGA Co-Chair informs SWCD of the tree species ordered so they can start working on sales brochure & pricing.
- First meeting should be held in August to present a rough draft of the brochure. Finalize form/pricing. O.K. brochure. Prior to the meeting the MMGA co-chair usually e-mails the committee members and gives them the dates and times of the meetings for the entire year. These would be the dates that were set up at the May wrap-up meeting.

September

- Meeting to fold brochures and assign distribution locations to members of committee. Members leave meeting with brochures to stock sites and extras to replenish as needed at their assigned locations.

December

- December 1st deadline for early bird ordering.

January

- Meeting to assess our progress. Do we need more brochures printed? Decide whether we need to lessen our order or order more trees. This is dependent on how our advance sales are coming in. At the MMGA meeting in January, pass around a sign-up sheet for volunteers. Get e-mail addresses too as this is a fast way to communicate with all the volunteers.

March

- Final deadline for ordering trees. Confirm any changes in our orders.
- Proof of Insurance has to be sent to fair office and the MMGA treasurer takes care of this before the sale.

April

- Pick-up trees day before our prep days begin. We can leave trees parked in trailers at our homes or on the fairground property with permission from the fair office.
- Two days of prep for our sale. (Thursday & Friday before sale day) We separate/sort the trees by species the first day and the second day is spent picking orders for the customers. We wrap trees in heavy paper along with wet sphagnum moss to keep them moist. SWCD Co-Chair likes to give all committee members/volunteers a quick training on procedures to follow for smooth traffic flow of orders.
- Sale day coincides with Earth Day when possible. Customers come early to pick-up their orders and we're usually torn down and facility cleaned up around 2:00 p.m. We have display table set-up with Purdue publications. A Master Gardener may be giving a tree-planting demo and pictures of the tree/shrubs that have been purchased are on display. This gives the customer an idea of what their seedlings will look like as they mature. All supplies and equipment used for the sale are stored in loft of Ag Hall.
- As soon as the sale is over the MMGA Co-Chair reserves the Sheep/Swine Bldg for the next year and our deposit just rides from year to year.

May

- Wrap-up meeting is held to go over what worked/didn't work at the sale. There's always room for improvement and we have made changes every year to get the sale running smoothly. We also pick out trees for the next year's sale and decide on meeting dates. A financial report is given by SWCD.
- After the wrap-up meeting the MMGA Co-Chair calls the Extension Office to book the conference/kitchen room for the next year's meetings.
- A \$50 tree license has to be purchased each year from the State of IN.

Reporting: The board liaison is expected to make regular progress reports to the MMGA Board, these may be in the form of a short written report sent to the Association President for inclusion in the board meeting agenda. However, the liaison should give a full and timely accounting of any perceived or actual problems.

A copy of the SWCD financial report shall be presented to the MMGA Board no later than the month following the wrap-up meeting.

An annual budget of estimated expenses and receipts shall be presented for Board review at it's September meeting.