OSU EXTENSION |
LINCOLN COUNTY MASTER GARDENER™ ASSOCIATION
PLANT CLINIC
(Includes ECCO Instructions)

Welcome to the Lincoln County Master Gardener Plant Clinic!

The most important things to remember are to be friendly and approachable to the clients and to each other and to HAVE FUN! This is meant to be an enjoyable learning experience for Master Gardeners, students and the clients. You need references to back up your response regardless of whether or not you know the answers to questions you're working on. That is why we use the team approach – we have people with a wide variety of knowledge and experience to answer client's questions. This includes our fellow Master Gardener and OSU Extension experts.

<mark>New information may have been added to these instructions since you last saw them.
Information that has been added in the last 6 months or so is highlighted in yellow!</mark>
<mark>Last updated: 10/24/2025 - LRKing</mark>

Access Information:
> Hours of operation: Tuesday & Thursday 9-Noon
> Phone number: 541-574-6534 ex: 57414
> Address: 1211 SE Bay Blvd, Newport OR, 97365
> Email: lincolnmg@oregonstate.edu
> Website: www.orcoastmga.org
> <mark>Plant Clinic SignUp (April - October 2025):</mark>
> > <mark>https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44ADA929A0F8C34-55666340-2025#/</mark>
> <mark>Plant Clinic Adopt-A-Week SignUp (November 2026 - March 2026):</mark>
> > <mark>https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44ADA929A0F8C34-59041525-adoptaweek#/</mark>

Upon arrival:
1. Put on your identification badge to let people, both MGs and clients know who you are and that you are approachable.
2. Check the phone for messages. Without picking up the handset, use the commands: "Menu – Features – Messages – Message Center – Connect" to listen to messages. This will automatically use the speakerphone feature so everyone can be involved in the intake. Take notes of all information provided by clients for entering into ECCO. Use of the Client Intake Form is optional for taking the notes. Press DELETE (press 7 for delete) message from the phone. This ensures that whoever follows you will not have to listen to old messages and try to determine if they have been transferred to a Client Contact Sheet. **Voice mail messages will also be transcribed into the inbox of the MG email where they will need to be archived by right clicking the email and moving to the archive box for the current year.**
3. Check the Client Contact Sheets in the folders for open cases and cases that are waiting for response from clients. Make sure there is not duplication of client questions from what you took from voice mail and open the Client Intake Worksheet.
4. Sign on to the computer. Turn on the computer, monitor and mouse.
> LOGIN: lincolnmg@oregonstate.edu
> PASSWORD: <mark>Winter2026!</mark>   (The ! is part of the password)
5. Check MG email inbox for messages by clicking the small outlook icon (blue with envelope) at the bottom of the screen and create a new Client Contact Sheet for new questions.

IF WORKING REMOTELY: access email from home by going to https://outlook.office.com/
> LOGIN: lincolnmg@oregonstate.edu
> PASSWORD: Winter2026!

6. Remember all voice mails will be transcribed into the inbox. Archive all messages once you have created client contact sheets, in the file marked "ARCHIVE."
7. Sign into ECCO
> Website: https://mgplantclinic.oregonstate.edu
> Password: Each MG and student has their unique password to enter
8. Check ECCO and cross reference with all created client contact sheets or your notes from the voice mail to ensure that all clients have been entered into ECCO, inquiries have been started and that there is no duplication. You can see what questions have been entered into ECCO and what the status of the question is (open, pending, etc) by clicking on the 'Questions' tab at the top of the screen when you log in. *Client contact sheets are optional.*
9. Check the refrigerator and freezer compartment to see if there are any samples. Make sure they are labeled, and entered into ECCO. *Client contact sheets are optional.* If the case is closed, dispose of the sample.
10. If a client has not responded to a request for information for 1 week, send a reminder text or email or make a reminder phone call. If it has been two weeks without a response move the In ECCO indicate that the client has not responded for two weeks and move the case to pending status. You can always reopen the case if the client makes contact in the future.
11. Plan out order of research and responses; the oldest questions need to be addressed first

RESEARCH:
1. Two references are required for each question. These should be obtained from a ".gov or .edu" source to ensure validity of the response/research, from a Master Gardener library book or from a known local expert. Don't use "google searches" as references. To navigate to a ".gov or .edu" site type the subject then type +site: .edu and/or site: .gov
> Example for maples: maples + site: .gov and/or site: .edu
2. Popular books in the Plant Clinic Library include:
   a. 3 PNW's – Insect, Diseases and Weeds (also online)
   b. Sustainable Gardening Handbook (Class materials)
   c. OSU Publication Binder
   d. OSU Trees to Know in Oregon
   e. OSU Shrubs to Know in Oregon
   f. Benton-Linn Counties Plant Problem Scenarios Binder
   g. Sunset Western Garden Book

   Websites:
   h. OSU Publication Catalog – https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/topic/gardening
   i. OSU Master Gardeners – https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg
   j. OSU Woody Plant ID – https://landscapeplants.oregonstate.edu/woody-plant-identification
   k. Washington State University Extension gardening – https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/gardening

       l.   UC Davis Integrated Pest Management – http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu

      m. Solve Pest Problems- https://solvepestproblems.info/

3. .org websites for general information

    a. Lincoln County Soil and Water Conservation District - www.lincolnswcd.org

    b. Portland ECO – Trust Plant Native – www.plantnative.org/index.html

4. Questions about the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly: If any questions come in about the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly, please forward them directly to Stormi Dykes (stormi.dykes@oregonstate.edu) if you don't feel comfortable answering them.

5. Mushroom Identification: Master Gardeners are not allowed to identify mushrooms. Jon Sommer, the VP of the Lincoln County Mycological Society, has volunteered to answer any mushroom ID questions that come into our office. You can put clients who come in with mushroom ID questions in touch with him: jon@jsorealty.net cell = 303-947-3638. He notes that "it is fine to text or email me photos. Pleases note that it is MUCH more useful if photos include more than just a Mushroom cap from the top. Ideally there should be at least 3 photos: from the top, from the side, upside down. Also I MUST know where it was growing (in a Spruce Forest, on your lawn, etc."

ECCO (acronym for Extension Client Contact Online)

1. ECCO is a researchable database and client contact resource which is secure and only accessible by Master Gardeners and OSU Staff.

2. Reminder

    a. Site: https://mgplantclinic.oregonstate.edu

    b. *Password: Individual for each MG and student*

    c. There is a copy of the ECCO user manual (complete with screenshots) linked on the desktop of each plant clinic computer

3. HOW TO ADD A CLIENT

    a. First determine if the client is in ECCO. Type name in the home screen. If the client has been previously entered into ECCO a dropdown list will contain their name. If it appears, select the name.

    b. If the client's name does not appear go to Create a New Client link and complete the fields as much as possible. All fields with a red * MUST be completed in order to save the data.

    c. Save newly entered client data.

4. ADD A QUESTION

    a. Select Add a Client Question.

    b. Under Basic Question be as succinct as possible. This field will be used by other MGs to research this topic and your response in the database.

    c. Under Plant Text type common name of the plant, not the cultivar. A pre-populated list will appear if the plant is in the system. If not type the common name under "other".

    d. Topic. Select appropriate value.

    e. Keyword. Write short, simple words separated by a comma such as "pruning, plum"

f. Description – write a full, detailed description of the problem/question. This will be used in the email response to the clients, so a readable, full description is necessary.

g. Add Image – One PDF file or an unlimited number of photos may be uploaded. To upload a photo right click the image and select "Save as Picture". If you cannot find the photo folder, select "desktop" on the left-hand side and save it there. Go back to ECCO and select "Choose Files: Navigate to the photo in the photo folder or desktop and double click on the image to upload it. Repeat for all photos sent in email that you want in ECCO.

h. Alternative Text -this is a description of the image so that screen reader technology can provide a description of the image. These words will appear with each individual image. You may include a photo title.

5. PLANT DIAGNOSIS PROBLEM

a. This section is only used when there is a plant problem to diagnose, not for general gardening or plant ID questions.

b. Click on the + sign under plant problem diagnosis section

c. Use the drop-down menu, check boxes and text boxes as appropriate. Leave it blank if you do not have the answer. Consider involving the client over the phone in completing this section to ensure the most comprehensive and accurate answer.

6. RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Research and Follow Up-This section is used to communicate the status of a question to other MGs. It will not be seen by the client. Describe what has been done to date and what needs to be done if you do not have time to complete the question's research or client response. This is very important for the people following you in the Plant Clinic, in order to be able to efficiently research and respond. For each entry in this field, include the date and your initials like this:
    2/27/25 LRK left phone message for client to supply email
    4/4/25 LRK entered into ECCO, but did not have time to research.

b. Your Response – The information included in this section is communicated verbatim to the client if you are responding in an email via ECCO. This will be the body of the email so include recommendations and websites you want the client to have. This section must be completed in order to save your work in ECCO. If you do not have a response when filling out ECCO initially an appropriate placeholder is, "Thank you for contacting the Master Gardener Plant Clinic with your question."

7.REFERENCES

c. Select category

d. Select reference type

e. Complete boxes that appear depending on the reference type selected. Web page sites need to be preceded by http

f. Remember that links and resources that you include in the 'Resources' section of ECCo don't automatically get included in the email you send to the ECCo client. If you want your ECCo client to be able to access the resources you used for your

research, you need to copy the URLs into the 'response' section of ECCo in addition to putting them in the 'resources' section.

7. QUESTIONS STATUS
    a. Open – use for client questions which require further research or response to client
    b. Pending – Use for client questions where research is complete, and the client has been responded to. These questions will ultimately be reviewed by the coordinator for inclusion in the statewide database. <u>All Master Gardeners must complete research and respond to the client</u> before a question moves to "Pending".
        i. Some clients provide only a phone number, not an email address.
            1. You can check whether this is the case for the client who's question you're responding to by clicking on their name; this will show you all of the contact information we have for them.
            2. If this is the case for the client you're answering a question for, call them to share the response to their question with them as we will not be able to send them an email from the ECCo system.
            3. You do not need to draft an email response to the client in the 'Your Response' section if this is the case.

8. SAVE
    a. ==Save your data as OPEN or PENDING. Only four people are currently authorized to CLOSE (answered & archived): Mary Jane Bonelitz, Stormi Dykes, Bill Hutmacher, Larry King and Evie Smith.==
    b. ALL ITEMS WITH A RED * MUST BE COMPLETE PRIOR TO "SAVE" OR THE DOCUMENT WILL NOT BE SAVED AND YOU WILL RECEIVE AN ERROR CODE ON THE SCREEN. Your data is not lost, you need to review and determine what item has not been completed that has a red *. Complete this item and then save document,

9. SENDING AN EMAIL
    a. ==Only five people are currently authorized to Send an Email: Mary Jane Bonelitz, Stormi Dykes, Bill Hutmacher, Larry King and Evie Smith. They are also authorized to let others Send an Email if they've reviewed and approved it first.==
    b. On the Details Page, which appears after the data was saved, click on the green Send an Email button.
    c. Automatically formatted questions will appear using the information you have entered in ECCO. You may edit parts of this before the email is sent.

PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING EMAIL TEMPLATE ==(suggested, but not mandatory)==:

Hi _(name)_,

Thank you for your question about __(summary of question)__.
We think __(summary of response)__.

If you would like more in depth information please feel free to review these resources:

(list web addresses for relevant publications)

If you have any additional questions please feel free to reach out again.

Thank you,

Basic Guidelines of Plant Clinic:

1. Have fun educating yourself, each other and the public
2. If a client visits the Plant Clinic during office hours, _everyone_ should stop what they are doing and give their attention to the client, unless you are talking with another client in person or on the phone.
3. All recommendations are to be research based. If it's not researchable, don't use it.
4. Listen to the client and determine exactly what they want answered. Do not assume.
5. **DO NOT**:
   a. Make recommendations on commercial operations, refer questions to the program coordinator. If you aren't sure, ask the client.
   b. Answer any kind of medical questions including questions about insect bites or medicinal properties of plants. Refer the client to their medical provider.
   c. Answer questions about marijuana plants or growing marijuana. Neither OSU Extension nor MG volunteers may comment on this subject
   d. Respond to questions about mushrooms (see referral in Research Section, above)
   e. Accept live insects regardless of the container they are in.
   f. Accept "scat" for identification.
   g. Comment on compost tea as a disease suppressant. Compost tea can only be recommended as an equivalent to compost, an inorganic fertilizer, as a source of plant nutrition and its effect on plant growth
   h. Accept a plant If the client has had negative physical reactions to it. If they suspect that it is a toxic/noxious weed, they cannot bring a specimen into the OSU Extension office and we (Staff or Volunteer) will not handle it. We can fill out an intake sheet and they can take pictures of it themselves & submit to the Plant Clinic for research. We can further suggest that they contact the Oregon Department of Agriculture Noxious Weed Control Program 503-986-4621 or call 1-866-INVADER.

6. Pesticides and Herbicides. We recommend the "least toxic" approach to removing pests and weeds. As such, pesticides and herbicides are our last choice for recommendations.

"The OSU Extension Service promotes a least-toxic approach to pest and weed control, aimed at safe and effective management. If you do choose to use a pesticide or herbicide, be sure it is registered for use in Oregon and labeled for the specific situation at hand. Always follow both the product label instructions and OSU's science-based recommendations carefully."

Herbicide Recommendations must be based on the listing in the Pacific NW Handbooks (Weeds, Insect and Disease) ONLY. Always advise clients to use "Ready to use" pesticides and not concentrates that require mixing. If the client still wants to use a concentrate, tell them you are NOT authorized to help with the math for application of concentration materials. If a client asks about disposal of pesticides refer them to a local waste disposal company.

End of Shift

1. If you do not have time, you do not need to answer every question or respond to every client. That is why the clinic has more volunteers scheduled. It is your responsibility to leave detailed documentation of work you have done, conclusions you have reached and client contacts that have been made so the oncoming volunteers can follow up and complete the question.
2. Make sure all client questions in voice mail and email have been transferred and entered in ECCO. Both voice mail and email inbox should be empty at the end of your shift
3. Save all data in ECCO and log out.
4. Record time on OSU Volunteer Reporting System website accessed either at
   www.orcoastmga.org
   OR
   http://mgvrs.extension.oregonstate.edu/authentication/log_in.php
5. Shut off computers, monitors, mouse and keyboard
6. Take completed Client Intake Worksheets to Celia at the front desk for shredding.
7. Leave the room straightened up and lights out and close the door!