



Season 1 Episode 6 – Alabama Master Gardener Program

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Speaker 1

From the ground up, a podcast of the Alabama Extension Home Ground team, educating you about home landscapes, gardens, and home facets.

Brian Brown

Thank you for joining us today on the podcast. My name is Brian Brown, and today we have three special guests with us. Uh, we have the Master Gardeners of North Alabama and some of the founders of that program. We have Mary Lou McNabb. We have Eloisa Stokes and Jean Lee, all of who are part of the Master Gardeners of North Alabama. So welcome ladies. Thank you.

Mary Lou McNabb

Thank you.

Brian Brown

Mary Lou, let me ask you first, you were part of the first class here in North Alabama. What brought you to Alabama? Just tell us your story of how you got here and how it progressed into what it is today.

Mary Lou McNabb

Okay. I was a master gardener in New York State where the COR courses were taught at Cornell. And we drove to Cornell every week and had our courses there. And we established a little botanical garden on the extensions, uh, property in Binghamton, New York. So I could see that master gardeners were important volunteers for any botanical garden. So when I came back to Huntsville area in 1980, I saw that there were some people organizing a botanical garden for Huntsville. And I realized that this group is going to need a bunch of volunteers for any size of a botanical garden. And so I went to the county agent, Mr. Gary Murray, and I said, Gary, you are not going to have any peace from me until you get the Master Gardener program organized. The botanical garden is gonna need lots of volunteers, trained volunteers that know about horticulture, and that's the way you train people.

And so after a few weeks, he summoned Dr. Kala bill from a and m and Dr. Govin Sharma. And we met at the extension office with my notebook of courses that I had used in, in New York State. Of course, those courses were not appropriate for this climate. So we used the subject matter of each one of the weekly courses and arranged to have the bulletins that were from Alabama to use as our, uh, information packages. And so in the spring of 1981, we had the first class of master gardeners in Alabama. And I guess I should tell Eloise here was in that class in 1981. And I had to take the class again to be certified in Alabama. 'cause even if I had gardened in the South, I had not had a master gardener class in Alabama. So she and I, and several, well, about 25 or 30 others, I think

Eloisa Stokes

There were almost 40

Mary Lou McNabb

Others were in the first class.

Brian Brown

Yeah. So tell me about the, the first class you had.

Eloisa Stokes

Well, for me, I moved to Alabama in 1979. I had two small children. I didn't tell anybody I could do anything <laugh>. So I read in the paper that they were gonna have this free class for gardening. Well, I had done Cub Scouts and boy scouts and church groups and lots of other things. And that's what you had to do. You had to be some sort of a volunteer. So I sent my application in and lo and behold, I got to go. I think it started in February, which is very cold. It was at a and m. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I had been gardening since I was a small child. My

parents loved to garden. And so I had done all that. But knowing the rules, so, so to speak, of how things grow and how they mature and how you can guide trees, for instance, with pruning and all that was, was just wonderful to me. I had grown up in the Washington DC area, which is the same area, but they have more snow and, and, uh, cold weather. But I, I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was just wonderful.

Brian Brown

What were some of the things that happened during that time that you, some new things you learned? Did you learn anything that first go round,

Eloisa Stokes

Or? I'm sure I did. Gosh, it's been a long time now. <laugh>,

Brian Brown

That's been about all a little over 40 years

Eloisa Stokes

Now. Yes. We celebrated the 40th year last year. Yeah. With Extension.

Brian Brown

Awesome. You know, y'all have really brought the program up and it's really grown a lot since y'all, how many people were in the first class?

Eloisa Stokes

She says about 25. I was thinking more than that, but Okay.

Brian Brown

Yeah,

Eloisa Stokes

That's a, and of course we were the first ones in Alabama. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, then it went from here to Florence and Birmingham and eventually of the, all the 67 counties are covered now. But, um, they don't all have associations, but they all have master gardeners in them.

Mary Lou McNabb

I, I believe we have a 13, uh, active, uh, groups in Alabama. Unless somebody else is organized. One that I don't know about

Eloisa Stokes

<laugh>. Oh, there're a lot more than 13 now.

Brian Brown

Yeah, I think so. I think so. Okay. So Jean, tell me about how you became part of this program. Well,

Jean Lee

Um, as a child, I gardened with my grandmother and always loved gardening. And I had a 31 year career with NASA here in Huntsville, a native of Alabama. And, um, always knew what I wanted to do. When I retired, I loved the botanical garden, was just outside the gates, a Redstone arsenal. So at my retirement party, I said, if you're looking for me, this is where you can find me. And at that time, the, the class was being offered, a friend of mine had taken it. So I took the class in 1995. Gary Murray, that year, the class had normally been 30 or so, he decided to try a larger group of 60. Well, wow. It, it had its issues with a group that large, but the outcome of that is a large number of those people that were in that class are still active today. That's true. Wow. And I've made lifelong friends with Master Gardeners. Um, it's a great program. When I retired, I, um, started going to a number of organizations and I weeded them down that used the word weeded, um, to, uh, master Gardeners is where I'm happy.

Brian Brown

One of the things, um, some of our listeners may not know is the extensions connection with the Master Gardener Program. Uh, any of you want to elaborate on what that connection is and is that something that really you think may attract people to the program?

Eloisa Stokes

I, I appreciate the, the research that Extension is always doing all across the south. And, and yes, we use Alabama extension, but we also use the other extensions because we're all in the same growing area. And once you realize that you can, you can get a lot of information. Extension is always correct. They're not pushing things, they're not pushing companies. So the information is always the right information that you need as a gardener. Our purpose for Master Gardeners, and it's the way extension set it up, is that we are really a teaching organization. We're not at, you can't call, you can call us, but and say, come weed my garden. That's not our purpose. Our purpose is to show you which are the weeds and which ones you need to just leave. The purpose is which bugs are good bugs, don't spray them all. That.

That's, that's what we've learned from, uh, from extension. We have an, uh, our own agent and she's very a available, um, if we have a real question, I used to answer phones here, and I remember a man called one time

and he had a hundred walnut trees, and we had had a hurricane come through and the walnuts had been pretty badly damaged. And Extension doesn't allow us to work with that kind of situation. But if you have one walnut tree, we can probably tell you what to do with it. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. But at that, then, then, then the agents get into, into the big jobs, the big things, the, the pastures, the, the, the cows, the, all those big things that we don't

Jean Lee

Yeah, I think, I think that partnership, that coordination between a and m University, Auburn University, the land grants and Botanical Garden, and this Master gardener program teaching the curriculum, you get the best of the best teaching. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. And one of the things that we've been taught in working the helpline desk that we do is that our responses are research-based responses. You know, you can go to these online groups and then they'll tell you, your grandmother put 10 cans in the bottom of a container or something. So those wives tells we do not pass on that kind of information. What we are taught to tell the public is it's research based information. And I think that's very important.

Brian Brown

Yes, absolutely.

Mary Lou McNabb

Well, uh, people that have been gardening a long time don't know about new cultivars of vegetables, flowers, trees and such. And so we try to keep them up to date on new improved cultivars of all of these plants. And that improves their gardening expertise. And perhaps they are happier with the later cultivars because they produce more, maybe they're more insect resistant and such. And we also teach them about, um, using them for, uh, economic reasons. Especially we urge people to grow vegetable gardens and then they can get their fresh vegetables right out of the garden. And often I would go to the garden and say, Hmm, what are we having for supper? What's ready today? Okay. For instance, people never knew about broccoli. I never ate broccoli before. And my mother cooked a variety of foods, but she was from the South and we ate black-eyed pea and okra to a fair well, but we learned about broccoli. And so I've been going, growing broccoli in five or six different cultivars over the years to find out the latest cultivars and what improvements there are.

Brian Brown

So y'all have been involved with the program for many years now. So what are some of the highlights you would say? Or is there any project that you worked on that just really stands out in your minds?

Eloisa Stokes

I've lived through the whole Huntsville Botanical Garden. It is probably the biggest, most incredible project we have. I mean, we, it is not an a master gardener project, but a lot of master gardeners over the years have worked in, uh, started and worked with the, with the botanical garden children's gardens. We've been very

active with several children's gardens in, in the Madison County area. And I'm sure master gardeners all over the state are working in children's gardens. If you get a child to start growing things, they're gonna do it all their lives. It's, it's a miracle. You put that little seed in the ground and it actually comes up. And even that little seed has a flower in it, no matter what. You're growing vegetables or fruit, I mean, uh, flowers, it's still gonna have a flower in it. And that's an, that's a miracle. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>,

Mary Lou McNabb

Do you have one? Well, I think we can introduce children to eating vegetables that they always looked upon as something nearly poison and they would refuse to eat 'em. 'cause children are picky eaters when they're little. And by seeing the seed planted and the plant growing in the garden and knowing that they tended that plant, they're more adventurous in trying new, healthier eating by eating the things that they grew in their garden. <laugh>.

Jean Lee

Well, I agree with Eloisa that one of the main projects here has been the botanical garden. And we've been a great source of volunteers for them. They're immediately have trained, uh, trained the volunteers. But personally, one of my, over the years, one of my favorite projects was the Garden Angel Program, which we had here with our local association. And Jim Call, who was one of those guys that had a lot of vision, um, came up with the idea one day and developed the layout of a four by eight garden that you could put in an elderly person's backyard. And he, even two tomato plants, two, um, okra, a cucumber pepper. And so I did that for a lady, miss Bessie, out in the new market area, and she and I became very close friends. And, and we planted that where an old barn had been.

And I said it was like Jack and the Beanstalk because of where it was located, it grew just, and what, what the objective was, was for that person to have fresh vegetables. But what we did not know was that it produced enough that she was able, there were two young couples that lived on each side of her. She was able to give them vegetables. And that was such rewarding. She's obviously a person who had given all of her life. And so we took that program to international and it won, uh, awards at the International Master of Gardner conferences. And Miss Bessie, um, was on video and on the local news. Um, and the relationship that she and I had, she's passed away now, was a long lasting one.

Brian Brown

I think one of the things that, um, a lot of that, uh, really a common theme throughout Master Garden is, and I've only been doing it a couple of years, but, uh, the camaraderie, you mentioned that I think that's one of the, um, the most fun aspects of master gardening. You know, you, you make lifelong friends, and I'm sure you, you the ladies have all made lifelong friends through this. So,

Eloisa Stokes

And we are lifelong friends. Yes. <laugh>.

Brian Brown

Absolutely. So,

Mary Lou McNabb

May I speak about when we first organized about the state organization, we, um, had, uh, four people. Bill Carpenter was president, he was from down south. Uh, Beverly Littleton from Huntsville was vice president. Patty Schuler was, um, secretary. She was from the Huntsville area, and I was treasurer. Okay. We would meet about every two months in Birmingham and try to get the program started in other parts of the state. So it really pleases me that, oh, we were in important doing important work then in getting other chapters, uh, organized in the state. And the reason we may na named it Master Gardeners of North Alabama is because some of our members came from Decatur, some came from Arab, some came from other outlying districts of Huntsville, and they did not have an organization there. And so we wanted to welcome all of them. Besides if we said Madison County Master Gardeners, there's probably enough medicine counties in the rest of the United States <laugh> that we would be confused with them.

Brian Brown

Yeah. We, we get a lot of, uh, phone calls for other Madison counties in the country. So that it is interesting that you, uh, there was some forethought into naming the Master Gardeners of North Alabama. So I totally get that

Eloisa Stokes

All those counties have their own master garden association now, which is really exciting.

Brian Brown

Yeah.

Mary Lou McNabb

May I make one more comment about the whole United States? My daughter lives in Texas and I investigated the Master Garden Program in Texas two weeks, for heaven's sake. Well, you can't go much in most parts of Texas. I know. 'cause I tried to grow things there when I was a child.

Eloisa Stokes

One of my projects has also been with the, um, with the, um, uh, senior center here, which is, uh, has an adult daycare. And we have done a lot with that over the years. I don't think we're doing that anymore. But we were

very active for about 15 years doing gardening things with handicapped adults as well as keeping up their garden. It was, I I thought it was wonderful. I really enjoyed doing it.

Brian Brown

So another thing that y'all do is you answered questions, I think you may have referred to that earlier, uh, about answering questions from the public. So what are some of the most interesting things you've gotten? Questions? Or is there anything that really stands out over the years? Uh, 'cause I know I get 'em personally, I get tons of questions, so,

Jean Lee

Yeah. Oh, the first one that pops in my mind is mimosa trees. And we live, we that live here. No, but I remember working the help desk one day and this lady had just moved here and she'd seen a mimosa tree and she wanted to know how to grow it and where could you buy them? <laugh>. And I'm going, no lady, you don't wanna buy

Eloisa Stokes

<laugh>,

Jean Lee

You don't want them, but it is, and how to keep it blooming. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, but it, when it blooms, it is pretty mm-hmm. <affirmative>. But it's terribly invasive. Uh, poor structure. It's not a tree that you want to have. But I remember that call because she was so excited. <laugh>,

Eloisa Stokes

I think my favorite one was the lady who called one time, she lived on a farm and, and they had a, an alley into the house and she had planted Bradford pears before we knew that Bradford pears were as difficult as they are, and they were doing just fine. But this spring they weren't blooming. The leaves were tiny. So she and I talked for a long time, turned out her husband had pasture there. He had sprayed the pasture. The trees did not like the, the spray. So, but it took a lot, about a half an hour to figure out that that's what the problem was. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, <laugh>,

Brian Brown

Do you have any

Mary Lou McNabb

Okay. Brambles. Somebody had planted brambles. They ordered 20 plants of brambles and they stuck them in the ground vertically, and they didn't grow. So I went over to their house and looked at 'em and said, gee, whizz,

you planted them upside down <laugh>. And I wonder, besides, you're supposed to plant them horizontal in the ground and they'll grow from each joint. So anyway, people just didn't have any idea what up

Eloisa Stokes

Went. I went with a Habitat house one time and I asked, I said to them, the homeowner was actually helping us, and one of the teenagers was going to plant these flowers out in the front of the house. And I just set them in place and I said, here, just put them right here. When I came back, she had planted them in the, in the pot.

Brian Brown

<laugh>. <laugh>. So what other, uh, what's something that you would share, uh, for our listeners, gardening advice? Um, I know, uh, you know, there's tons of knowledge in this room right now. So what's one thing you would say is probably the, the key thing that someone might want to know about? Gardening. Don't

Eloisa Stokes

Kill everything. <laugh>

Brian Brown

<laugh>.

Eloisa Stokes

Uh, I had a friend recently who, who had a man come to her house, he wanted to spray her lawn for, for weeds and things. And she said, no. And he said, well, what's wrong? And, and she said, I like my bees. I like my birds. I like my flowers. I like my, I don't want you to put anything on my garden that will kill any of those things. And we really need to get away from the quote lawn, the perfect lawn and let some of these things grow if we want the rest of the world to stay in fairly good shape.

Brian Brown

What about y'all? Do y'all have anything?

Mary Lou McNabb

I'm thinking about this <laugh>.

Brian Brown

Like I said, there's a, there's a world of information out there. Do you have anything? Yes. Um,

Jean Lee

I just, having recently moved from a shade garden to now I'm in a sun garden, even with my years of experience, it's still a trial and error. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. And I'm in my second year. I keep a garden journal. That is one thing that I would recommend any gardener do. Uh, you think you're gonna remember it all, but you won't. And years ago, and we haven't done a reprint, we did a garden journal. It was a loose leaf binder. We made it, it, it didn't necessarily, we didn't focus on beauty, we focused on function. Uh, it had places for labels and all those Ks, uh, graph, graph paper where you could draw. Um, I think it's trial and error and just see what works in your area. But I think this, um, managed pest control and Auburn is pushing that sustainable gardening, what you control your chemicals. I mean, we're all seeing climate change. And I think with Auburn and their future curriculum for master gardeners, we're gonna see more and more of that go into our programs of sustainable gardening. Uh, managing it so that you use less chemicals and protect the pollinators. We're now looking at doing pollinator gardens in a number of areas. So I think we're, we're going, our mindset is changing. It's coming a little slowly, but I think that we're headed in the right direction.

Mary Lou McNabb

Okay. Well, you go to the library and you see all of these books that are beautiful. The pictures are fantastic, but they're either published for England or the Northeast or someplace that the climate is extremely different from ours. And looking at those beautiful pictures, you think, oh, I'm gonna do that. You cannot do that in Alabama. You've got to have the information that the Master Garner program provide for the climate in which you live.

Eloisa Stokes

I came to Alabama as a a, a New Englander who had moved to the north, to the Washington d c area. And one of my dear friends said to me, well, you're in Alabama now. The good news is everything grows in Alabama. <laugh>, the bad news is everything grows in Alabama. <laugh> <laugh>.

Brian Brown

That's very true. There's a lot of things, uh, you just assumed they didn't. Yeah. And, and you know, whether we have a lot of transplants that have moved into, especially North Alabama recently, and, um, I think a lot of people are yearning to know about gardening. And they're really, honestly, since the pandemic, there has been a huge resurgence in, in wanting to grow your own things or even landscaping their yard. So people had a lot of time during the pandemic to do that. So what do you think about the past two or three years since we had Covid come through? What has been your observations about, you know, the resurgence in gardening?

Mary Lou McNabb

I think the price of produce and the grocery stores, especially when all the fields were flooded out in California, all the spring vegetables, especially lettuce and such. But I've been growing lettuce in my garden every year so I could go out and pick my own salads and, um, anyway, I think that people with the economy being what it is,

will become more involved in producing as much food as their own, uh, land can produce. And another thing is, do they realize all those tomatoes were picked green and once they were ripened with the, um, gas that they do 'em, and then they are dipped in food grade paraffin to make 'em last forever? Goodness sakes. Do you want to eat those <laugh>?

I lived in California next to a, a strawberry field. Some Japanese people had. And if you watch any videos of the strawberries out in California, which also suffered a lot of damage, you will see. But I saw them firsthand. The pickers wore plastic gloves. The containers were sprayed with a, uh, something to, um, prevent the, uh, mold from forming on the strawberries. And they are sent miles and miles to us. And after all, even if they're tall, told you they are organic. But especially from products like grapes that are from Mexico and other countries, uh, heaven's sakes, we don't know what happened to them before they arrived at the grocery store. So that makes you more interested in growing your own.

Brian Brown

One of extension's new programs that we started in 2020 is the Grow More Give More Campaign. There was a lot of people that have been donating their vegetables through this, through this campaign. What has been your experience with this program?

Mary Lou McNabb

Well, all of our, uh, demonstration vegetables were taken to, um, a senior center and people could pick them up there. So we were giving away, uh, thousands of pounds of vegetables. And

Eloisa Stokes

That's, and we've been doing

Mary Lou McNabb

That promoting Better Health.

Eloisa Stokes

Yeah. We've been doing that for probably 20 years.

Brian Brown

Yeah. So even before Grow More Gilmore became a program.

Mary Lou McNabb

Yes.

Eloisa Stokes

Uh, I think it's a wonderful idea though. There's so many people who are home bound that can't have, don't have access to good homegrown vegetables, and I just bought strawberries from locally. And the difference between strawberries that come in from anywhere Florida or California or wherever else they might come, it's just a difference. They're just much better.

Jean Lee

Yes, we have, we've been doing that before the demonstration of Vegetable Garden and like, as Mary Lou said, raising thousands of pounds of vegetables that are taken to these elderly people.

Eloisa Stokes

Sometimes through Casa, sometimes. And

Jean Lee

Casa is also a garden. It's a community. Uh, well it's an organization that helps, um, elderly and home bound people. Uh, and they grow a huge garden that's adjacent to the botanical garden here. And they do the same thing. Those are, uh, volunteers, uh, maintain the garden, harvest the garden, and then volunteers also carry the vegetables to the door, uh, of the person. But I saw something a couple of days ago that I was really intrigued by, because here in Huntsville we're having an explosion of development in houses. And one idea that has come is new developers are looking at in their tracks of houses between the tracks of houses to have strips for community gardens. And I thought, what a clever idea. Yeah. And then it would be almost to your backyard that you would have a section and, and thinking ahead of how, as Melu said, not having so many chemicals in your products, you're consuming, uh, that I thought that was a wonderful idea. Yeah. And hopefully in the future we'll see more of that.

Brian Brown

Yeah, that's, that's really interesting. I have not, I've not heard that before. So what would you tell someone that's interested in the Master Gardener program? Like how would you recruit them <laugh>? What would you tell 'em to come?

Eloisa Stokes

Well, if you want a really good friend and if you wanna know more about your garden, anybody's garden, um, you have to become a master gardener. It's just a wonderful program.

Mary Lou McNabb

Well, when we first began, um, some of the nurseries, uh, donated money so that we didn't have to charge people for their bulletins. And, uh, that was an great advantage at that time. But I think one of our greatest problems is getting people to do their volunteer hours and remain active. And we need to think of some way to promote that part of the program because so many have taken the classes and even paid a hundred or \$150 for them, but they suddenly disappear after that. I guess they feel they paid for it, and so they aren't obligated. But I don't know how we can solve that problem.

Jean Lee

Well, I, I, the way I would recruit someone is to say, you know, do you love gardening and do you love volunteering? I think those are the first two criteria that they really need to meet. And that, do you want to continue to learn? Because it's the, it's CEUs till till you die because you, you don't learn it all in the 12 week class. And, uh, you make lifelong friends and master gardeners are positive. We take any plant and we're convinced that we can make it grow <laugh> <laugh>. And, and I think you will always see in master Gardeners, you will see people with smiles on their faces. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> and people that are thinking positive. That's, that's options. 'cause they believe that they can make it grow.

Brian Brown

Yeah. I, I have a, a lecture that I do occasionally that, that was one of my points is your master gardeners and you, you see the clearance rack at your box store. If you want to try it, that's fine. But <laugh>

Jean Lee

I did do that. Yeah. I've done it. Rehabbing plants. I have a hibiscus that I put on Facebook that I bought on Lowe's dead rack last year. I brought it back to life. It bloom profusely. I put it in my garage, I've got it back out. I paid a dollar <laugh> for that plant and it has brought me so much joy two years now and beauty and it is continuing to do that.

Brian Brown

It was worth all 100 pennies of that. That's right.

Jean Lee

<laugh>.

Mary Lou McNabb

I think I am the sick plant nursery people that are given a plant and maybe they've over watered it. That's one of the major problems. You know, the plant looks a little wilted. Maybe it's the heat, maybe it gets too much sun. So they water it, they are drowning that plant. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. But, uh, people are always bringing me

some sick plant that they were given and they think I can perform a miracle on it because I have a greenhouse <laugh>. Well, some I've been able to, but not all. Some were too far gone from over watering. <laugh>

Brian Brown

<laugh>. Yeah. That happens a lot. And you know, I think a lot of people don't realize that too, watering too much should give you the same effects as not enough. So, um,

Eloisa Stokes

I'm, I've also used in the last four years, the extension Zoom classes. I have learned a lot from them. Um, I've done some of the tree, the tree ones Bow broad back. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, Dr. Broad back has, I have found them to be excellent. They're bringing people from all over the country. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> to Alabama through Zoom <laugh>. Yeah. Which is interesting.

Brian Brown

Yeah. It's, uh, I think, you know, obviously Covid forced us into teaching classes that way, but I think it's kind of a more common now. I mean, I think people have accepted that as the way that we're gonna do things from now on. And you know, like you said, I mean he's, he's down in mobile area, but he can teach worldwide

Eloisa Stokes

And it is worldwide. It's amazing. I've seen people come from New Zealand and all over to Alabama, you know.

Brian Brown

Yeah. So, you know, you do get, and it doesn't have that personal feel when you're doing it in person, but you also can have the best teachers available from anywhere in the world. So, you know, there's some, there's some good that can come

Eloisa Stokes

Out of that. Yeah. I really appreciated that.

Mary Lou McNabb

Yeah. Let me speak about the United States and Master Gardeners. Well, they had the first International Master Gardner conference in October, 1987 in Washington DC My husband and I attended the first three, they called him international because at that time Canada had established a master gardener program. And so I have received at that time a letter from President Ronald Reagan <laugh> and giving congratulations to the master gardeners on their volunteerism and their contr, contribu contribu. Anyway, contributions to the community. And then we also have a letter from the mayor of Washington DC and we have a certificate of attending the

international one in October, 1987. We also went to one, two years later in Detroit and another one, another two years later in Spokane. So, uh, we really got to get, uh, uh, an idea of what was going on in other parts of the country.

Brian Brown

Alright. So is there anything else y'all want to add?

Mary Lou McNabb

I think that the extension department in Alabama is doing a great service by providing other courses besides master gardeners. I know that Robert and I owned a few acres of woodland. So we took the tree course and learned a lot about how you should take care of care of your forest to make it more, uh, friendly, productive, and such as that. But they're teaching courses in ho Home Economics, how to serve healthy meals, how to do food preservation, whether canning or freezing. And I think those are great contributions to society, especially at this time of inflation.

Brian Brown

Yeah. So we do have a lot of programs out there, and if you are interested in any of our programs through extension, contact your local extension office. We have one in every county. And contact your local agent, uh, your local extension agent can help you. If you're interested in, have any questions about horticulture or home pest or your garden, uh, contact your agent and we'll, we'll find you the answer if we don't know it. Uh, ladies, thank you for being with me today. I hope you've enjoyed as much as I have and, uh, again, contact your local extension office if you have any more questions.

Mary Lou McNabb

Thank you so much.

Eloisa Stokes

And thank you very much.

Brian Brown

From the ground up is a production of the Alabama Cooper Extension System.