

Situation

- The number of requests received by one County Extension Office in New Mexico increased by 1,740% in April 2020, compared with April 2019.
- Extension personnel nationwide responded quickly and efficiently by adapting to virtual platforms.
- The Ready, Set, GROW! Team responded by creating this interdisciplinary gardening webinar series to meet the public needs in New Mexico.

Team Goals

- **Develop educational programs** for local needs, such as gardening in the high desert, water conservation, creating and enhancing pollinator and beneficial insect habitats, alternative pest management, at-home food production, and environmentally sound gardening practices
- **Generate new web-based horticultural content** for NMSU Cooperative Extension to meet growing demand
- **Increase awareness** and use of a broad range of interdisciplinary programs and resources within NMSU Cooperative Extension and beyond

Ready Set GROW! Gardening Webinars

New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service

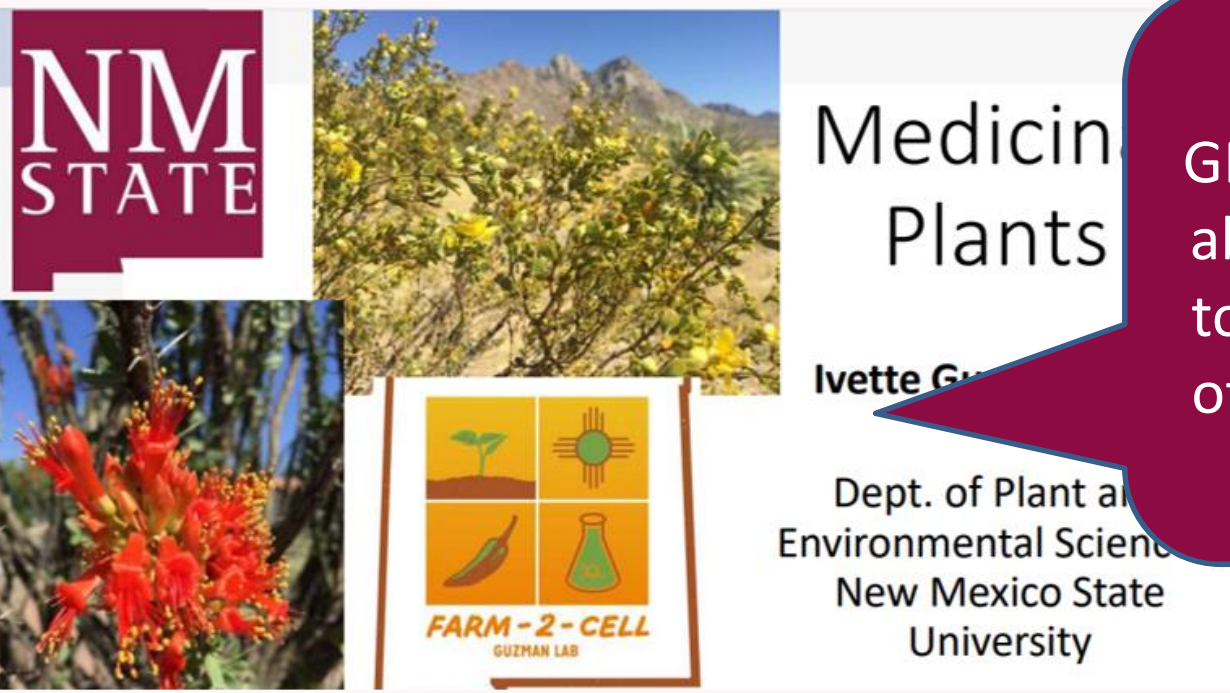
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The Ready, Set, GROW! Team believes that gardening should be as accessible as possible to anyone willing to learn and practice sustainable horticulture and supports the NMSU College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences mission as it improves the lives of New Mexicans through research, teaching, and Extension Service.

Participant Feedback

Ready, Set, GROW! turned the pandemic shutdowns into something very beneficial to many more people than they could have possibly reached otherwise!
- D. H., Valencia County

I have even become a hobby beekeeper in order to increase the pollinators in my garden so I avoid pesticides and herbicides. – Anon.



This program team expands awareness and use of NMSU's Extension services through their skillful online programming.
- C. W., Albuquerque

The Ready, Set, GROW! Team went above and beyond to meet the needs of the community. – Anon.

The entertaining sessions have taught me better practices specific to the New Mexico climate.
- E. A., Los Lunas

Methods

- The Ready, Set, GROW! Program is delivered via ZOOM Meetings, streamed through Facebook Live, and recording links.
- Team members maintain a dedicated webpage, created with help from the Innovative Media Research and Extension Department



Evaluation Feedback Word Cloud

Outcomes

- 18 Webinars between March 16, 2021 and March 15, 2022, with **over 2,000 registered participants** and **over 10,000 viewers** on Zoom, YouTube, and FB Live.
- **Direct contacts increased by 3,150% per class**, from an average of 20 participants for in-person classes before the pandemic to 650 per Ready, Set, GROW! webinar
- **90% of participants** reported they would change current or implement a recommended gardening practice based on information learned from a class.
- Of 418 evaluations completed by participants, **99.5% reported** they would recommend the series to others.

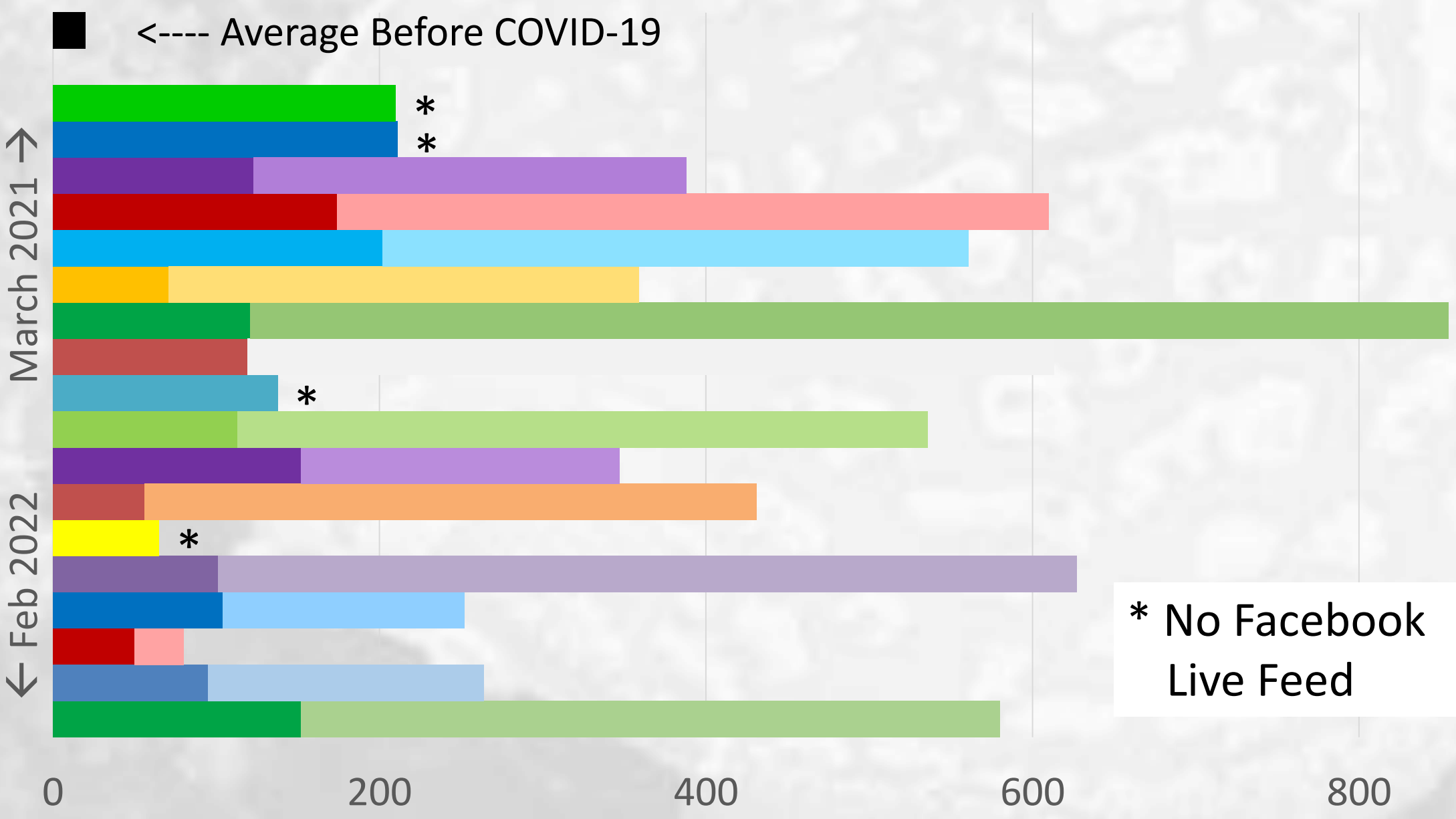
<https://desertblooms.nmsu.edu/ready-set-grow.html>

Team Members



- Emily Bruton**, Socorro County
Program Director, Extension Agent
- Suzanne DeVos-Cole**, Mora County Program
Director, Extension Agriculture Agent
- John Garlisch**, Bernalillo County Director,
Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent
- Lynda Garvin**, State Extension Master Gardener
Manager
- Sara Moran**, Bernalillo County
Horticulture Agent
- Amanda Skidmore**, former Extension IPM
Specialist (not pictured here)
- Marisa Thompson**, Extension Urban
Horticulture Specialist

Participation



Participation rates per class shown before COVID-19 (black, average), ZOOM participation only (bold), and additional Facebook Live viewers (pastel) for webinars between March 16, 2021 and Feb. 16, 2022.

