



# Extension Snapshot

## Illinois River Valley Extension Horticulture Facebook Page

[www.facebook.com/ferree.horticulture](http://www.facebook.com/ferree.horticulture)

A new U of I Extension Horticulture Facebook Page extends education into the quickly growing social media realm. It provides up-to-date gardening information through current posts, links, photos, videos, event listings, and more for Facebook fans to enjoy, engage, and share with others. The Facebook Page reaches new clientele and provides horticultural education in a quicker format.

The Page, which began in March and has been viewed more than 19,000 times, currently has 155 fans with an additional 25 non-fan viewers on average each day. According to Facebook Insights data, most fans are from the Peoria area. Females comprise 8 out of 10 users with 28% being 45-54 years old and 26% over 55 years old.



The most popular posts to date include photos of garden pests. A picture of a bedbug posted on August 10<sup>th</sup> had 339 hits and an assassin bug picture on July 28<sup>th</sup> had 457 views. The plant disease photo album was viewed the most (483 times), and the insects photo album had the most feedback. Albums include current pest photos, descriptions, and control recommendations.

Interaction with fans on the Page is steadily increasing. In addition to specific questions, positive comments include: "I love your site!" "I really enjoy the pictures. Keep up the good work." and "Keep your great info coming. It is so helpful."

The Page was created by Rhonda Ferree, extension educator in horticulture. Rhonda provides

leadership and expertise in horticulture programs for both the home gardener and commercial horticulturalist with emphasis in the area of landscape horticulture. Additionally, she oversees the local Master Gardener and Master Naturalist programs and trains the volunteers. She plans to do more social media work in the future as a way to expand her horticulture program to new audiences.

For more information about horticulture programs in the Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Extension unit, please contact Rhonda Ferree, extension educator in horticulture at [ferreer@illinois.edu](mailto:ferreer@illinois.edu) or 309-543-3308.

