Convert Your Front Yard to a Garden and Use Water-wise Plants
News brief from Amador County Master Gardeners

Forty million acres here in the United States are devoted to turf grass, an area almost the size of the country of Greece. We irrigate these lawns with an estimated two trillion gallons of water each year, which is three times greater than the amount of water used on the nation's cornfields. Here on the West Coast alone, 60% of our water use goes toward watering lawns. Monetary costs for keeping these residential green carpets weed and pest free are staggering with an estimated $25 billion spent annually, much of it to spread 70 million tons of fertilizers and pesticides.

Residential homeowners, however, have choices about what happens on the land we own and care for, specifically our front yards. We can ask ourselves what purpose our lawn serves and move toward a more sustainable front yard that attracts bees, butterflies and birds. Removing that front grass lawn lets us decorate with delicious edibles interspersed with vibrant drought-tolerant plants. Not only will we reduce our water consumption when we tear out thirsty grass and replace it with food, but also we'll play an important role in preventing pesticides and fertilizers from entering into water sources.

Learn how to convert your front lawn to a more sustainable oasis as Amador County Master Gardeners present information about this topic as well as drought tolerant plants and University of California Arboretum All-Stars. The Arboretum All Stars feature 100 flowers, shrubs, and trees that are low maintenance, drought tolerant, or attract beneficial wildlife. The **free** class is open to the public and is being held on Saturday, April 13th from 9am to noon at the Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson. Some plants will be available for purchase.

For questions, call the Master Gardeners at the UC Cooperative Extension Office from 10am to noon, Tuesday through Thursday, 223-6838, or email mgamador@ucdavis.edu.