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Get ready for all the plant sales. This is one of the best ways to expand your garden economically. Central Valley Garden Club's sale is April 26-27 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Club Hall 10200 Central Valley Road. Sunnyslope Garden Club's sale is May 3 at the Sunnyslope Community Hall, Clifton Road from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Long Lake Garden Club's sale is at Kitsap Bank in Port Orchard on May 11 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. East Bremerton Garden Club's sale is May 4 at Perry Avenue Mall 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Evergreen Garden Club's sale is May 11 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Pope Center by Olympic Savings in Belfair. The WSU Kitsap County Master Gardener's Plant Sale is May 17 and 18 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Kitsap County 4-H Cat Barn at the Fairgrounds.

Poulsbo Garden Club's sale is May 11 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Poulsbo Library on Lincoln Street. Additionally they'll have informational booths (Master Gardeners, Master Composters, Weed Advisors) and the following vendors: Grandma Elaine's (bee's wax lotion and creams), Sam's Woodworking (garden furniture), Ravens Nursery (hyper tufa), Raquel Stanek (mosaic creations), Jerry Listle (Kingston Worm Farm), Bernadette Cotinola (copper garden art), Janet Sandall (embroidery dollies), Robyn Krutch (garden art), Connie Gooding and Cheryl Leach of Moose Tracks (handmade cards), Denise Johnson (Spittin' Toad Jewelry), Patricia Daily (sun catchers) and Ocean Sky Farms (herb and floral soaps).

This weekend April 20 and 21 promises to deliver abundant Earth Day activities. Begin with a drive to Kingston to Stillwaters Center (across from Gordon Elementary School) from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. You'll see signs for parking with shuttles to the Center. Speakers will cover a myriad of earth-friendly topics, various groups throughout the county will have educational materials and you'll be able to chat with members of various groups such as Kitsap County Recycling, WSU County Extension Weed Advisors, Audubon and numerous stewardship resources.

Central Market in Poulsbo and Town and Country Market on Bainbridge Island will have Earth Day Displays and will sell earth-machine compost systems. Watch in this newspaper's calendar for other activities throughout the county.

Before we know it April will be past. As the days get warmer and longer and we're out in our gardens many of us start thinking about fertilizers. Many of you know my theory is "Unless it's an annual, a plant rarely needs fertilizer." Mary Robson, King County Extension Agent and one of my very favorite garden columnists, helps clarify the fertilizer dilemma. Mary says, "The goal of fertilization is intelligent replacement of plant nutrients. Remember, plants make their own food, they don't need to eat continuously like us."

Robson showed two slides in a recent talk to demonstrate the misuse of fertilizer. One slide showed fourteen foot tall cosmos fertilized with miracle grow. The cosmos had

abundant height and foliage but not one single bloom. The second slide showed cosmos growing in the garden next door. The cosmos were only three feet tall but were covered in blossoms.

Mary also explained about Osmocote-type fertilizers in her talk. Osmocote is composed of small fertilizer beads to release nutrients over a long period of time. Seventy-degree temperatures are critical for absorption of fertilizers. Osmocote-fertilizers are best used on houseplants (where temperatures are more constant) and use a liquid fertilizer on outdoor potted plants. Compost, compost tea and vermicompost are the best nourishments for our plants.

I would add one more note to Mary's very wise words. Most plants we purchase from nurseries and home and garden centers have been more than amply fertilized. They have enough fertilizer to last several years. Some plants are indeed heavy feeders though and we'll talk about them in future columns. It's always wise when selecting plants to weigh how much work and/or care they'll require before you make that purchase.