



Hello Melissa,

UC ANR's new website platform is finally here! We are now moving into the clean-up phase and getting access to our sites. We have until March 21 to clean websites before they go live to the public. In this special edition of *Rooted in Marketing*, we will share how-to documents, resources, and additional training and support opportunities. We know this is a significant change; Drupal is not a one-to-one replacement for Site Builder. We will need to change how we do things, and we are here to help in any way we can.

Here's everything you can find in this special edition issue of *Rooted in Marketing*:

- What is IWP
- IWP training
- Homepage best practices
- Creating a simple homepage
- Events in Drupal
- Photos & graphics - best practices & resources
- UC Master Gardener extended office hours
- Upcoming & previous training

If you have any questions or need help with marketing, join our weekly office hours, ask questions the [Facebook group](#), or email us. We are here to support you.

Happy gardening! ☐ ☐ ☐

Melissa & Barbra

UC Master Gardener Program

Statewide Communications Team

What is IWP?

UC ANR's IT team is modernizing its web platform with the IWP project. Through smart content organization, IT is organizing educational content to make it easier for you and the public to find. For those curious about the technical details, IT is using Drupal as the content management system. Drupal is a modern platform for building and managing dynamic web content that many universities and businesses rely on. Please remember that Drupal is not a one-to-one replacement for Site Builder!

This upgrade will help boost engagement, while giving our website a fresh, user-friendly

makeover. Later, they'll also improve how you can find internal information. This isn't just a website facelift—IT is transforming our entire web ecosystem! It will take time, but will continue to grow. The upgraded web presence will help you better connect with the people who matter: the general public, academic researchers and educators, and community and government partners.



IWP Trainings

As we move into the clean-up phase of the IWP transition, you can access all the training from the IWP team here: <https://ucanr.edu/sites/iwptraining/index.cfm>. Explore these resources to make your website cleanup quick and effective.

The first thing to check out is the recording of the webinar on how to login and edit content. <https://ucdavis.app.box.com/s/v6dyl185fnal41ftode5jvbrm1srdn7b>

Need extra help?

- One-on-one help: calendly.com/sdampier-ucdavis
 - Email: iwp@ucanr.edu
 - Join the UC Master Gardeners IWP Office Hours (see below)
-

Home / UC Master Gardener Program

UC Master Gardener Program

View Media Edit Revisions Members Content Moderated content Group menus



Homepage best practices

As we prepare to transition from Site Builder to Drupal, many of you have questions about adapting your county's homepage to the new platform. While Drupal offers many advantages, it's important to note that the layout is different with only one column. Some familiar features, like event and blog rolls won't be available immediately on your homepage. These features may be added in future updates, but for now, we should rethink what makes an effective homepage.

Embracing simplicity: Why less can be more

The shift to Drupal is the perfect time to embrace homepage simplicity—not just because of platform limitations but because simpler websites often better serve our visitors. Research shows that websites with clear, focused homepages have:

- Higher visitor engagement
- Lower bounce rates
- Better mobile experiences
- Improved accessibility for all users

When visitors arrive at your homepage, they're typically looking for specific information—not browsing everything your program has to offer. A streamlined homepage that quickly directs them to what they need, creates a more satisfying user experience.

Essential elements for your new homepage

As we wait for the IWP migration to be completed and to finally get access to our new sites, now is a great time to begin thinking about your Drupal homepage design. Consider prioritizing these key elements:

1. **Clear program identity** - Make it immediately obvious that visitors have arrived at a UC Master Gardener Program website. Include your county name, the UC Master Gardener logo, and a brief (1-2 sentence) description of the program's mission.
2. **Primary call-to-action** - What's the single most important action you want visitors to take? Whether it's contacting your helpline, finding upcoming workshops, or accessing gardening resources, feature this prominently with a clear button or link.
3. **Seasonal gardening guidance** - Consider featuring timely gardening information that changes quarterly. This shows that your site is current and immediately provides value to visitors without requiring multiple clicks.
4. **Contact Information** - Include helpline hours, email contacts, and the office location to make it easy to reach your program.
5. **Focused navigation menu** - Limit top-level navigation to 5-7 essential categories. Consider what your website analytics show as the most-visited pages when deciding what deserves primary navigation placement.

We understand that change can be challenging, especially when familiar features aren't immediately available. However, this transition offers a valuable opportunity to create a more focused, user-friendly website that better serves your community's needs. Also, remember that the website will continue to evolve, and we will get more functionality over time.

If you have specific questions as you begin planning your homepage redesign, please contact Barbra Braaten | bbraaten@ucanr.edu



Creating a simple homepage

Our home pages may look very different than what we are used to in Site Builder. Since we can't recreate what we used to have, we wanted to give you a layout for a simple UC Master

Gardener homepage you can use while we wait for new features to be added. This layout is a suggestion; please adapt it for your county. The goal is to have a design that gets the essential information to your viewers. As Drupal evolves, we will be able to do more. We will use the fictitious County of Poppy as our example for this homepage.

[You can find the homepage how-to here.](#)

A few things to note about our homepages:

- **Naming conventions:** Please update your page names to fit the UC Master Gardeners naming convention: UC Master Gardeners of _____ County or UC Master Gardeners of _____ and _____ County. This will make finding your page in the content hub much easier.
- **Donation links:** These will be updated for your specific program after launch—don't worry! UC ANR's Development team will need some time to update them, but we have been assured that they will be updated for UC Master Gardener County programs.
- **Social media links:** To have social media links that go directly to your accounts, you will need to add social media nodes. The icons will automatically populate under the site menu. Learn how to add social media to your page here:
- **Menu:** On mobile devices, our side menus appear before our content. This means users must scroll for quite some time before reaching the actual content, which is not ideal. However, IT is aware of this and hopes to find a solution. We do not have a timeline yet, but we will keep you updated.

Remember, this is not the final version of Drupal; the platform will evolve, and new functionality will be added. At this time, we need to ensure that our community members have access to essential information. Things won't be exactly how we are used to them, and that's okay. It will get better. In the long run, this website will significantly increase our web traffic and usability.

If you have questions, please get in touch with Barbra Braaten | bbraaten@ucanr.edu



Events in Drupal

Events are the heartbeat of the UC Master Gardener Program! Whether you're hosting workshops, plant sales, fundraisers, or grand openings, getting these events on our website is crucial for success.

Why add events to the website?

- Boost attendance by reaching more people through multiple channels
- Share detailed information about your event in one centralized location
- Create shareable links for your social media and newsletters
- Keep visitors returning to your website, where they can discover all your program offers

We're here to help!

Yes, our new Drupal platform requires a few more steps, but the benefits are worth it! We've created a comprehensive guide to walk you through the process step-by-step.

[Find the complete event posting guide here.](#)

Every event you add to the website brings our community closer and highlights the amazing work of UC Master Gardeners. Your events make a difference, and sharing them helps us reach more people with valuable, research-based gardening knowledge.

Take a few minutes to learn the new system—your events (and attendees) will thank you!



Photos & Graphics - Best Practices & Resources

As we revamp our websites in the new Drupal platform, we want to set them up for success! When it comes to photos and graphics, using the right file type is important. The right file types ensure images are clear and that the website loads quickly for visitors. Think of file types as different containers for your images - each has specific uses.

Photos

For photos, we always recommend using pictures taken by staff or volunteers. The more photos you have of your local area, the better! Sometimes, we need a photo from elsewhere; here are some of our favorite places to find great images:

- Use UC Master Gardener photos first (from staff & volunteers)
- [Canva](#)
- [Pexels](#)
- [Pixabay](#)

If using a photo not taken by UC ANR staff or volunteers, we must have copyright approval for all images used. To learn more about copyright, please watch the [Volunteer Communicator Onboarding](#).

To keep photo file sizes light and easy to load, please save them as JPEG files (files ending in .jpg or .jpeg). JPEG files are perfect for photographs and keep file sizes small. A good website photo is usually between 100 KB and 1 MB. Also, edit photos before uploading, as Drupal doesn't have built-in editing tools.

Drupal has a new primary image feature available on all website pages. This image is very large, and images moving over from Site Builder will look highly pixelated (appearing blurry or blocky when enlarged). Use the Canva Template we created below when creating primary images for webpages.

Website primary image template: https://www.canva.com/design/DAGdsGva5-l/m5naCNTSOiDNGne65WjjXA/view?utm_content=DAGdsGva5-l&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink&mode=preview

Graphics

The UC Master Gardener Program logo is the primary graphic on the website. Confirm that you are using the most current version by downloading a new set of logos from the [UC ANR Strategic Communications Toolkit](#). (Even if you think you have the current version, please download a new set to make sure!) If you need a logo that includes your county name please reach out to Barbra Braaten.

Graphics should be uploaded to the website as an SVG or PNG (files ending in .svg or .png). SVG files keep images sharp at any size, while PNG files preserve transparent backgrounds. A transparent background allows the image to blend seamlessly with any color behind it, rather than having a white box around your logo.

Attribution

When using photos and graphics on a website, it's a best practice to give attribution (credit) to the original creator. If the photo is going in the body of the website, you can add a caption that says: *Photo by Photographer Name*. Or you can add the attribution as a watermark on the actual image as we have on the header for this story.

Accessibility Reminder

Drupal requires you to include alt text when you upload an image, which helps make images more accessible. Alt text is a brief description of what's in the image that helps people using screen readers understand the content. For example, "UC Master Gardener logo" or "Volunteers planting native species in community garden."

If you have any questions or need help using Canva, please get in touch with Barbra Braaten | bbraaten@ucanr.edu



UC Master Gardener Extended Office Hours

We know that change can be difficult and that new technology can be confusing. To help UC Master Gardeners navigate this transition a bit more efficiently, we are extending our office hours during the IWP clean-up from March 11 -21. Feel free to come anytime during office hours to ask questions and get help navigating the new website.

Expanded UC Master Gardener IWP Office Hours March 11 - 21 Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday, 11 am - 2 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ucanr.zoom.us/j/94197406576?pwd=DVS1uISHgtonzSLAarPS8WnxR2TAic.1>

Meeting ID: 941 9740 6576

Passcode: 142017

If you have questions and can't make it to the office hours, please contact Barbra Braaten | bbraaten@ucanr.edu

Upcoming Marketing Training & Events:

Office Hours: UC Master Gardener Communications

Every Tuesday, 11 am -12 pm

Zoom link:

<https://ucanr.zoom.us/j/94197406576?pwd=DVS1uSHgtonzslAarPS8WnxR2TAic.1>

Previous Recordings

Volunteer Communicator Orientation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XutHQatDGmg> (Oct. 2024)

Newsletter Best Practices

<https://youtu.be/9uEOFPC2WvU> (Jul. 2024)

Social Media Accessibility Guidelines

<https://youtu.be/d1XAnZCcHyU> (Aug. 2024)

Rooted in Marketing Past Issues:

February (general tips) <https://conta.cc/42IUaxQ>

March (general tips) <https://conta.cc/3UzVpaH>

April (media training, sharing social media posts & more) <https://conta.cc/42ZToqH>

May (UC ANR Giving Day tips) <https://conta.cc/3JsyrvB>

June (newsletters) <https://conta.cc/3yJIUS9>

July (accessibility) <https://conta.cc/3VFiZ4M>

August (content strategy) <https://conta.cc/3LPxzIC>

September (video) <https://conta.cc/47daWl6>

October (graphic design) <https://conta.cc/3N5WXnT>

November (Giving Tuesday) <https://conta.cc/4fkVPsw>

December (year-end) <https://conta.cc/3Z1X9tN>

January (starting the New Year) <https://conta.cc/49RlfNe>

February (sharing impact) <https://conta.cc/4jG922o>

March (Spotlighting Volunteers & IWP) <https://conta.cc/41zu1wz>

Private Facebook Group for UC Master Gardener Communicators

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Thanks for reading this month's issue! To submit questions, topic suggestions, or feedback, email Statewide Communications Specialist Barbra Braaten at bbraaten@ucanr.edu.

Our Mission

"To extend research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices to the residents of California."



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