

[Home](#) » [Free plants and water-saving advice at Water-Wise Plant Exchange](#)[< Previous](#) [Next >](#)

SECTIONS

[> ACADEMICS](#)[> CAMPUS & COMMUNITY](#)[> RESEARCH](#)[> ALUMNI](#)[> PRESS RELEASES](#)[> FEATURED VIDEOS](#)

NEWS SOURCES

[> Fresno State Magazine](#)

Free plants and water-saving advice at Water-Wise Plant Exchange

The 5th annual Water-Wise Plant Exchange event will be held 8 a.m.- noon Saturday, May 4, at the Fresno State Horticulture Park (3150 E. Barstow Ave).

During the event, the public can pick-up free drought-resistant plants and learn how to save water with good landscaping practices. Gardeners are encouraged to bring excess plants from their own gardens to share with others.

Additional event activities include: a Master Gardener clinic; a vermiculture display with Wiggly worms; Fresno State's Water-wise "Garden in Bloom" and access to irrigation and controller experts who can help answer residents' questions concerning landscapes or vegetable gardens; Kid's Mother's Day craft project; Fresno State's Floral Laboratory displays' and the Fresno State Plant sale.

New this year, the event will feature Master Gardener workshops on vermiculture, composting and edible landscaping.

Experts in native and water-wise plants will be available to offer advice for nurturing yards and gardens that are beautiful and can thrive in San Joaquin Valley weather with a minimal amount of water.

"Many people interpret 'drought-resistant' as dry landscapes with dirt, rocks and cactus," said Nora Laikam, Water Conservation supervisor for the City of Fresno. "But every year, the public is amazed at the array of colorful and beautiful options that are not only beautiful, but conserve water and can save them money."

The City of Fresno will have a water meter displayed at the event and representatives will talk with residents about their own meters, or sign them up for free landscape consultations and water leak surveys. With residents now receiving metered water bills, the City encourages everyone to schedule a leak audit to help save them money, Laikam said.

"Landscape irrigation represents up to 70 percent of water used in a typical household – much of this water is wasted by inefficient irrigation and water-guzzling landscaping," she said. "Households can save 15-25 gallons of water per day by adjusting sprinklers so they don't water driveways, streets and sidewalks. And water-wise San Joaquin Valley-friendly trees and plants use 2/3 less water than other plants."

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The Central Valley Friendly Landscape Award Program winners will be at the event to showcase their gardens.

A collection of partners make this event possible including: City of Fresno Water Conservation, Central Valley Water Awareness Committee, Fresno State's Horticulture Unit, UC Cooperative Extension, Master Gardener Program, California Native Plant Society, Clovis Botanical Garden, Tree Fresno, Water-Wise Landscape Design, Center for Irrigation Technology at Fresno State, Irrigation Association, USDA / ARS / NALPGRU, and Central Valley Friendly Landscape Awards Program.

For more information, contact Laikam at 559.621.5305 or Calliope Correia, Fresno State Horticulture Nursery, 559.278.2952.

By [Tom Uribes](#) | May 2nd, 2013 | Categories: [PRESS RELEASES](#) | Tags: [Agriculture](#), [water](#) | Comments Off

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