



Hello Melissa,

July is here and summer is in full swing! Whether you're dodging sprinklers while checking on your tomatoes or scrambling to keep your community events from melting in the heat, we know you're juggling a lot right now. Take a few minutes to flip through this month's newsletter – we've got some good stuff in here that should make your job a little easier.

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

- August content inspirations
- Accessible Graphic Design
- Canva Tips & Tricks
- Local Successes and Celebrations
- One-Sheet Webinar
- Upcoming & previous training

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

Happy gardening! ☐

**Melissa & Barbra**

UC Master Gardener Program

*Statewide Communications Team*

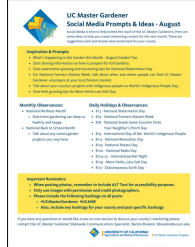
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## Content Inspiration - August

Here is your Content Inspiration and Content Calendar for August. The Content Calendar is set up for posting three times a week to social media using the buckets: education, inspiration, and promotion. As always, both of these documents are just suggestions! Please add or change the topic as needed. If you have questions, please email Barbra Braaten at [bbraaten@ucanr.edu](mailto:bbraaten@ucanr.edu)

### August Social Media Inspiration

Find inspiration for your August social media content, including National Wellness Month, Back to School,



- [Download the August Inspiration Guide](#)
- [Download the August Content Calendar](#)



## Accessible Graphic Design

Good graphic design does more than look nice—it helps you connect with people and share your message clearly. When you think about accessibility from the start, more people can engage with what you're sharing, and you often end up with cleaner, more effective materials.

### Know Your Goal and Your People

Before you start designing, think about what you want to happen and who you're trying to reach. Your audience might include older adults who need larger text, parents reading on their phones, or people who experience the world differently than you do. Keeping both your goal and your real audience in mind helps you make better design choices.

### Give Your Design Room to Breathe

White space—those empty areas around your text and images—gives people's eyes a place to rest. This is especially helpful for anyone who gets overwhelmed by busy layouts. When you resist the urge to fill every inch of space, your important information actually stands out more.

### Colors That Work for Everyone

About 1 in 12 men and 1 in 200 women see colors differently than you might expect. Dark text on light backgrounds (or light text on dark backgrounds) works well for most people. Try the free [WebAIM](#) contrast checker online or the [Canva](#) accessibility checker to test your color combinations. Also, don't rely only on color to get your point across—if you're using red text to show something important, add bold font or an icon too.

### Choosing Fonts That Are Easy to Read

Simple, clean fonts like Myriad Pro or Arial (UCANR Brand fonts) are easier for most people to read. Keep your text at least 12 points. Skip all-caps text except for headlines, and give your lines some breathing room—cramped text is tough on everyone's eyes.

## Write Like You're Talking to a Friend

Write clearly and skip jargon when you can. Break up long paragraphs with headings and bullet points to make information easier to scan. If you serve a diverse community, consider adding key information in multiple languages or using clear icons alongside text.

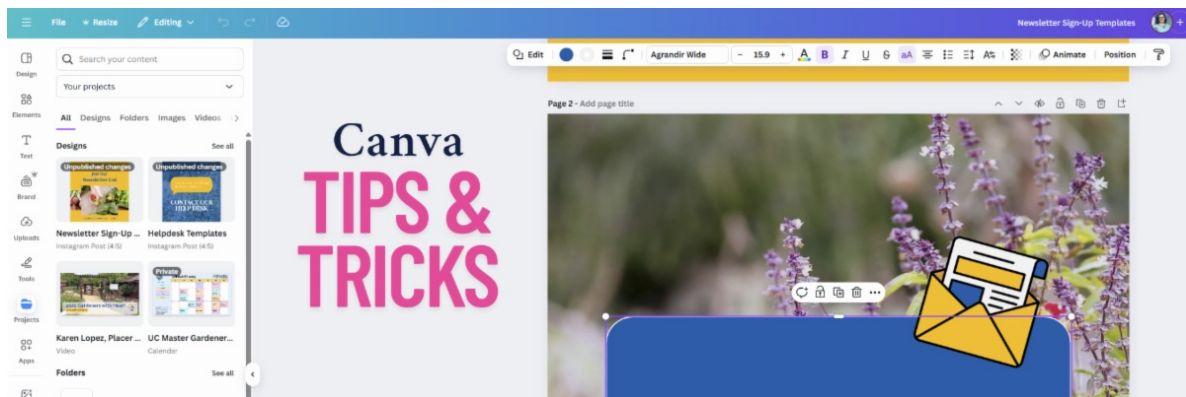
## Digital Design Tips

Use headings to organize your content and make sure buttons and links clearly explain what they do. "Register for the workshop" is better than "Click here." Test your designs at different zoom levels since many people need to magnify content, and make clickable elements big enough to tap easily.

## Keep Your Look Consistent

Using the [UC Master Gardener branding guidelines](#) isn't just about following rules—it's about making your job easier and your materials more effective. When you stick to the program's colors, logos, and fonts, you're building familiarity with your audience. People start to recognize your materials at a glance, which builds trust over time. Plus, consistency makes your program look more professional, and that professional appearance encourages people to engage with what you're sharing. Think of it as building a relationship with your community—when people know what to expect from you, they're more likely to take action.

If you have questions or want to learn more about any of these topics please contact Barbra Braaten | [bbraaten@ucanr.edu](mailto:bbraaten@ucanr.edu)



## Canva Tips & Tricks

When you're juggling a million things and need to get a social media post up quickly, Canva can be your best friend—or your biggest frustration. The good news? A few simple tricks can help you create graphics that look professional and work well on both Facebook and Instagram, even when you're short on time.

### Start with the Right Size

For posts that work on both platforms, choose "Instagram Post" which is now 4:5 ratio (1080 x 1350 pixels). This vertical format works well on Instagram and looks great on Facebook too. While square posts still work, the 4:5 format gives you more space and follows current Instagram best practices.

### Make the Most of UC Master Gardener Templates

We've created [templates specifically for you](#), so use them! Please note that the way to use these templates has changed. Please follow these steps to use our designs:

1. Click on the image below to open the template
2. The link will open the file in view-only mode
3. Once it opens in your free Canva account, go to File and click Make a Copy
4. You'll now have an editable version that you can customize with your own information

Here's how to get the most out of them:

- Change the text, keep the layout. The spacing and design elements are already figured

- out for you
- Swap photos easily. Drag your new photo from your uploads directly onto the existing image to replace it
- Stick to the fonts already chosen. They're picked to be readable and on-brand
- Keep the UC Master Gardener logo where it is. It's positioned to work well with the overall design

### Keep Text Minimal on Your Graphic

Your graphic should grab attention, but don't try to fit everything into the image. Here's the smart approach:

- Put just the main headline or key message on the graphic. Think "Spring Garden Workshop", not a paragraph of details
- Save the details for your post caption. That's where you can include times, dates, registration info, and descriptions
- Use high-contrast colors. White text on dark backgrounds, dark text on light backgrounds
- Add a colored shape behind the text if needed. This ensures readability over busy photos

### Avoid the "Everything But the Kitchen Sink" Look

When you're in a hurry, it's tempting to add more elements, but less is usually more:

- Stick to 2-3 colors max. Use the colors from your template
- Limit yourself to 2 fonts. One for headlines, one for body text
- Leave some breathing room. Don't fill every corner with something
- Focus on one main message. What's the most important thing people should know?

### Quick Photo Fixes That Make a Big Difference

Your photos don't have to be perfect, but these quick adjustments help:

- Use Canva's "Enhance" feature. One click often improves color and brightness
- Stay away from AI photos
- Crop to focus on what matters. Click and drag the corners to zoom in on the important part

### Speed Up Your Workflow

- Duplicate successful posts. Found a layout that works? Click the three dots and "Make a copy," then just change the text and photo
- Save the colors you use often. Click the "+" next to colors to save UC Master Gardener brand colors for quick access
- Keep a folder of good photos. Upload several photos at once so they're ready when you need them

### Your Time-Saving Routine

1. Start with a UC Master Gardener template or duplicate a previous post
2. Swap in your new photo and text
3. Quick check: Can I read everything? Is the main message clear?
4. Post to both Facebook and Instagram

Remember, done is better than perfect. Your community wants to hear from you, and a simple, clear graphic posted consistently beats a perfect design that never gets shared. These tips will help you create posts that look professional without eating up your whole day.

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## New Canva Templates

Fresh off the design table – we've got two brand new [Canva template sets](#) ready for you! One set has 4 designs to show off your county Help Desk, and the other has 4 designs to get people excited about signing up for your newsletter. These join our growing collection of templates created just for you. Whether you're a Canva newbie or a design pro, these are here to make your life easier – use them, love them, or keep rocking the graphics you already have. Just remember to give your followers regular reminders about your newsletter and help desk (if your county has them) since we all need those gentle nudges!

We've created a wide variety of templates for you in Canva. Canva is a free, web-based graphic design program that allows you to access your designs from anywhere.

Due to changes in Canva's template system, please follow these steps to use our designs:

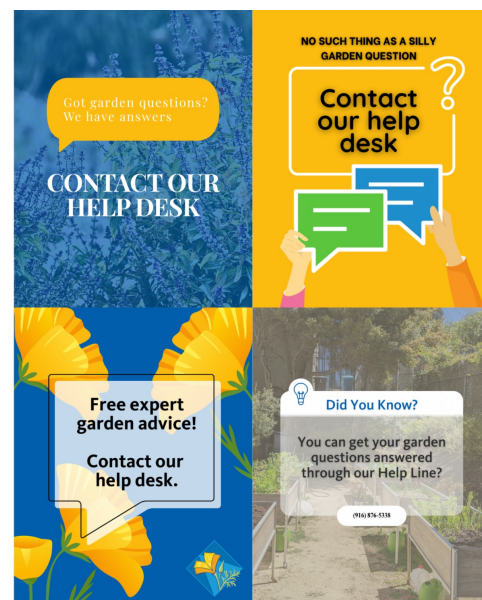
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If you have questions about using Canva or run into issues with the templates, please contact Barbra Braaten | [bbraaten@ucanr.edu](mailto:bbraaten@ucanr.edu)



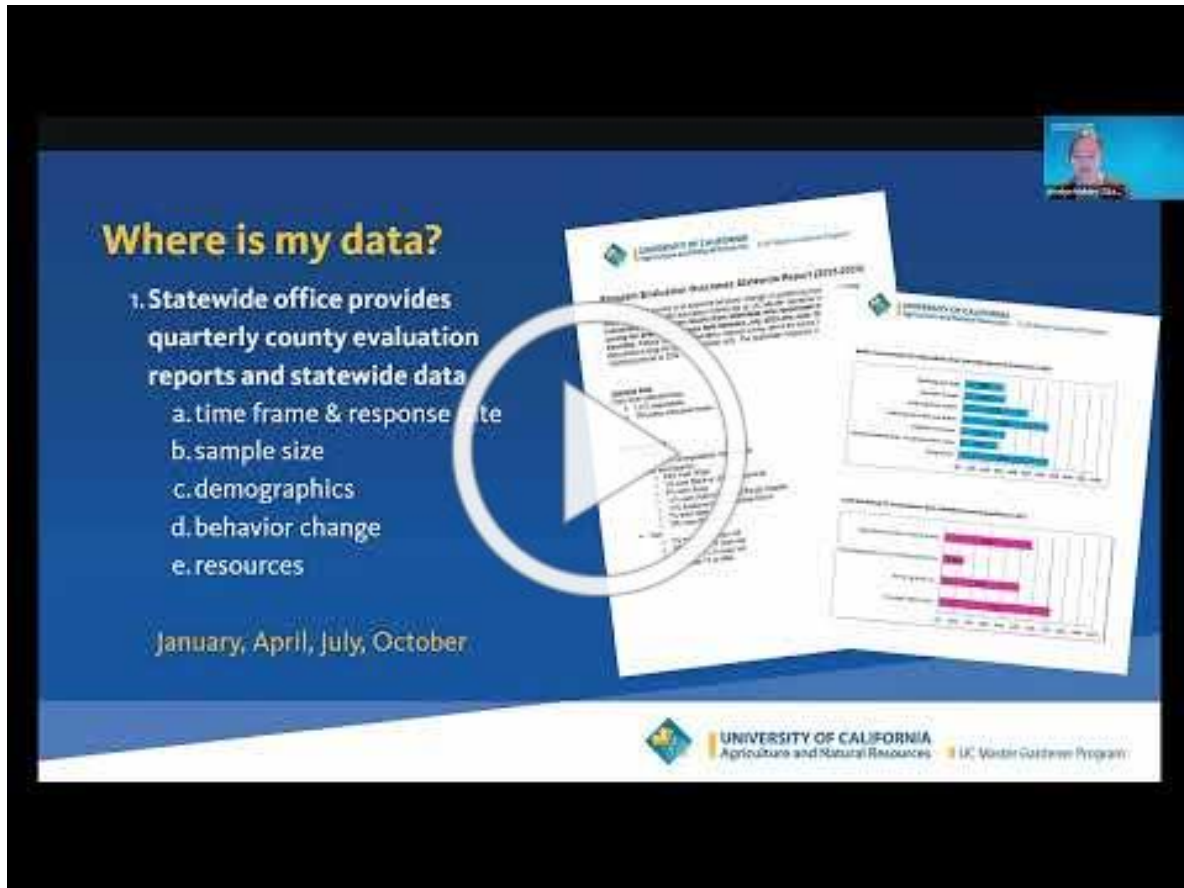
## Newsletter Sign-Up Templates

Don't forget to promote your newsletter on social media! Your followers might not know you have one, and regular reminders help new people discover this valuable resource. [Get access to the](#)



## Help Desk Templates

Make sure to promote your help desk on social media too! Many people don't realize they can get personalized gardening advice from local experts, so regular posts help spread the word about this free



## Resources: From Spreadsheet to Spotlight in One Sheet

Thank you to everyone who joined our From Spreadsheet to Spotlight in One Sheet Webinar last week! If you missed the webinar or need a refresher, [watch the recording on YouTube](#).

Learn how to take evaluation data and turn it into a one-sheet that you can share with all your stakeholders. Along the way, get a demo of how to use Canva, including tips, tricks, and a shout-out to Barbra's favorite Canva tool, "Position". Stay tuned to the end of the video to get info on how Canva has changed how we access templates.

If you have any questions or issues accessing Canva templates, please contact Barbra Braaten | [bbraaten@ucanr.edu](mailto: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=DVS1uISHgtonzsLAarPS8WnxR2TAic.1>

### Previous Recordings

#### From Spreadsheet to Spotlight in One Sheet

<https://youtu.be/Apx1WFCO60A> (June 2025)

### National Volunteer Appreciation Month

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQxIxS1c5jg> (April 2025)

### **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:** <https://link.ucanr.edu/rooted>

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### **Private Facebook Group for UC Master Gardener Communicators**

**Join**

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### **Subscribe to get the monthly issues of "Rooted in Marketing"**

**Subscribe**

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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](mailto: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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