

This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

watersmartinnovations.com





THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER

*using social marketing to
motivate homeowners to
remove turfgrass*

RESOURCE
central

CONSERVATION MADE EASY

OVERVIEW

- **Relevant background information**
 - Resource Central
 - Garden In A Box
 - Social Marketing
- **Utilizing social marketing**
 - Focus groups, surveys, demo gardens, how-to-videos, storytelling, targeted emails
- **Lessons learned and challenges faced**





BACKGROUND INFORMATION

RESOURCE
central

CONSERVATION MADE EASY

RESOURCE CENTRAL

putting conservation into action

An innovative nonprofit, with over 40 years of experience, our programs make it easy to conserve natural resources. Dedicated to helping people...

Conserve
Energy



Reduce
Waste



Save
Water



GARDEN IN A BOX

beautiful landscapes made easy



- Water conservation via landscape change
- Pro-designed xeric garden kits
- DIY kits include:
 - 15 to 30 starter plants
 - Plant and care guide
 - 1-3 plant by number maps
- Size: 60 to 100 sq. ft.
- Cost: \$109.00 to \$159.00



"We love our garden and it's looking fantastic! We get compliments from neighbors all the time, and love staring out at what used to be a boring patch of grass. Garden In A Box made it easier to imagine tearing out that grass and replacing it - we didn't have to do the work of figuring out how many plants to buy, what it would cost, what to get, and where to plant them. We look forward to scrapping the rest of the grass next year!"

– 2018 Garden In A Box Customer



2018 GARDEN IN A BOX: GARDEN INFO SHEET

MORNING SUNRISE

Designed by Julie Hauser of Indigo Landscape Design



1 **Black-Eyed Susan**
Latin Name: *Rudbeckia fulgida* 'Goldsturm'
Mature Height: 12-42"

Mature Spread: 12-18"
Hardy To: 8,000'
Water: Medium
Exposure: Sun
Flower Color: Bronze-Yellow
Flower Season: Summer
Attracts: Butterflies
Description: Throughout the summer, this cheerful flower features a bold, central disc surrounded by bright, yellow ray florets above stiff, hairy stems. Its self-seeding tendency, be sure to deadhead diligently. **Care:** Deadhead to encourage blooming and to minimize self-seeding. Cut back to the ground in late winter. Plants can be propagated by division. *Rudbeckia* plants that become taller or bushier than desired can be cut back to about 6" to generate fresh growth.

2 **Blanket Flower**
Latin Name: *Gaillardia aristata*
Mature Height: 18-24"

Mature Spread: 18-24"
Hardy To: 8,500'
Water: Low
Exposure: Full Sun
Flower Color: Yellow, Yellow/Bronze, or Yellow/Red
Flower Season: Mid-Summer
Attracts: Butterflies, Bees
Description: It boasts large daisies with reddish-brown/orange centers circled by ray flowers of yellow/bronze. **Care:** Appreciates a bit of pampering the 1st season, and then takes off on its own. Deadhead occasionally to keep the flowers coming. Divide every 2-3 yrs. in early spring to keep clumps thriving. Avoid planting in rich, moist soils. Only needs supplemental moisture during extended hot and dry conditions, once established.

3 **Blue Queen Salvia**
Latin Name: *Salvia x sylvestris* 'Blue Queen'
Mature Height: 18-24"

Mature Spread: 12-18"
Hardy To: 8,500'
Water: Low
Exposure: Sun
Flower Color: Purplish-Blue
Flower Season: Early to Late Summer
Attracts: Butterflies, Hummingbirds, Bees
Resistant To: Rabbits, Deer
Description: Gray-green foliage supports tall stalks of delicate, violet flowers that add contrast and dimension to any garden. **Care:** Not fussy about soil, this flower flourishes with direct sunlight and low water. Deadhead to encourage repeat flowering in the same season. Pinch out growing tip when plants are 6" tall to encourage bushy growth. Divide every three to four years.

4 **English Lavender**
Latin Name: *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Munstead'
Mature Height: 12-18"

Mature Spread: 12-18"
Hardy To: 8,500'
Water: Low
Exposure: Full Sun
Flower Color: Lavender-Blue
Flower Season: Early to Late Spring
Attracts: Butterflies
Resistant To: Rabbits, Deer
Description: Scented, lavender-blue flowers on tight spikes thrust above evergreen, aromatic gray foliage, creating a compact clump well suited for perennial borders. **Care:** Prune lightly in the early spring, no more than 4". Shear annually for a tidy and neat appearance and to encourage new growth. Can leave the plants untrimmed for fall and winter. Plant in well-drained soil to avoid root problems.

9 **Prostrate Speedwell**
Latin Name: *Veronica prostrata*
Mature Height: 4-8"
Mature Spread: 6-12"

Hardy To: 8,000'
Water: Low
Exposure: Full to Part Sun
Flower Color: Blue
Flower Season: Late Spring
Description: A tight mound of trailing stems clothed by dark green, wedge-shaped leaves blanketed by dense clusters of small, light blue, star-shaped flowers. **Care:** Prostrate Speedwell prefers morning sun and afternoon shade if possible. If it begins to wilt, just add some water and it will quickly revive the plant. Remove spent flowers and spikes for a rebloom in early fall. After the first killing frost, cut stems down to an inch or two. Divide overgrown plants in spring or fall.

10 **White Coneflower**
Latin Name: *Echinacea purpurea* 'White Swan'
Mature Height: 24-30"

Mature Spread: 18-24"
Hardy To: 7,000'
Water: Low
Exposure: Full Sun
Flower Color: White
Flower Season: Mid to Late Summer
Attracts: Butterflies, Small Birds and Bees
Description: Large, daisy-like flowers with white rays are held atop deep green leaves. **Care:** Cut back stems to promote more flowering, and cut off the dead and faded flowers to prolong the blooming season and prevent excessive self-seeding. Division is seldom necessary for the Coneflower, and it is not recommended. To add an attractive touch to your winter landscape, leave the rayless seed-heads through the fall and winter.

11 **Yarrow**
Latin Name: *Achillea Millefolium* 'Colorado'
Mature Height: 18-24"

Mature Spread: 2-3'
Hardy To: 9,000'
Water: Low
Exposure: Full Sun
Flower Color: Pastel Mix
Flower Season: Early to Late Summer
Attracts: Butterflies
Description: A spreading clump of finely cut foliage produces leafy stalks topped by clusters of flowers that range in color from red to pink, yellow, cream and white. **Care:** Deadhead often to promote blooming. Yarrow has a tendency to spread, so be sure to divide clumps in fall or early spring every 3-5 years. Snip off spent heads at the end of the season to prevent self-seeding. Leave the basal foliage, which will remain attractive throughout the winter.

5 **Fringed Sage**
Latin Name: *Artemisia frigida*
Mature Height: 6-15"

Mature Spread: 18-24"
Hardy To: 9,000'
Water: Very Low
Exposure: Full to Part Sun
Flower Color: Yellow
Flower Season: Late Summer
Resistant To: Deer
Description: Fringed Sage is a strongly aromatic plant. It is covered with an abundance of hairs that give it a grey-green appearance, and it will grow into a shiny pillow that remains all winter long. This silver-leafed native is an understated favorite of many. It is drought-tolerant, can grow in cold and dry climates, and is a good soil stabilizer and ground cover. **Care:** Cut off the foamy flower stems after blooming, or even while blooming, to keep it tidy and living much longer.

6 **Husker Red Penstemon**
Latin Name: *Penstemon digitalis*
Mature Height: 2-3'

Mature Spread: 18-24"
Hardy To: 8,000'
Water: Low
Exposure: Full Sun to Part Shade, Adaptable
Flower Color: Creamy White
Flower Season: Late Spring to Early Summer
Attracts: Bees, Hummingbirds, Butterflies
Resistant To: Deer
Description: A mound of striking reddish-green foliage with stalks that carry white flowers. **Care:** Prune after the first bloom. Husker Red appreciates well-drained soil to avoid root rot and enough sun to keep its stems from flopping. Divide every 3 to 4 years to manage overgrown clumps and keep the plant vigorous. Plants can be staked if necessary.

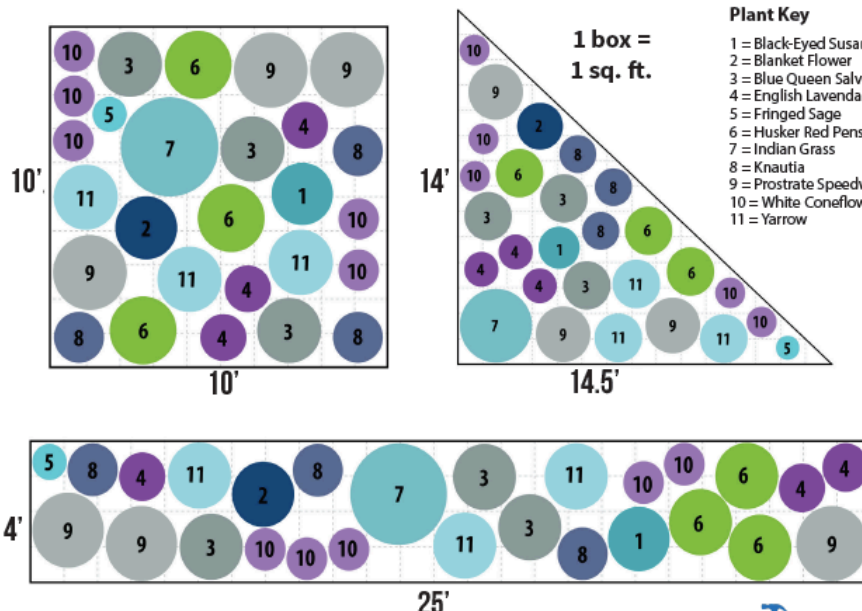
7 **Indian Grass**
Latin Name: *Sorghastrum nutans*
Mature Height: 3-5'

Mature Spread: 3-4'
Hardy To: 7,000'
Water: Low
Exposure: Sun
Flower Color: Tan
Flower Season: Late Summer to Fall
Description: Beautiful, blue-green foliage turns to hues of orange in the fall and winter. The array of colors and variety of textures this native grass provides creates interest in the garden no matter the season! **Care:** The Yellow Indian Grass is easily grown in average, dry to medium, well-drained soils in full sun. It is tolerant of many soil types including clay, and does well in poor, dry, infertile soils. Cut back to the ground in late winter to early spring just before new growth emerges.

8 **Knautia**
Latin Name: *Knautia macedonica*
Mature Height: 18-24"

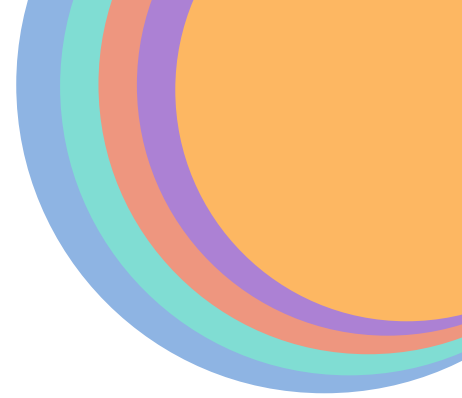
Mature Spread: 18-24"
Hardy To: 6,000'
Water: Low
Exposure: Full Sun
Flower Color: Burgundy
Flower Season: Summer
Attracts: Butterflies
Description: Knautia is a tall and clump-forming perennial with deep red pincushion flowers atop slender leaves. The plant may be short-lived, but tends to self-seed. A good companion plant because of its leggy height, it should be underplanted with lower growing perennials. **Care:** Knautia is a fast growing plant that requires little maintenance, although the flowers should be deadheaded to promote growth.

3 Plant by Number Design Options:





UTILITY PARTNERS



- **\$25 Discounts Available:** Arvada, Brighton, Castle Rock, Centennial Water, Cottonwood Water, Denver Water, Eaton, Erie, Fort Collins, Frederick, Golden, Greeley, Lafayette, Lochbuie, Longmont, Louisville, Loveland Water & Power, Lyons, Northglenn, Superior, Thornton, and Westminster.



PROGRAM IMPACT

- Xeriscape uses up to **60% less water** than traditional turf
- In 2018, Resource Central sold **5,210 gardens**
- Through 2018, an estimated cumulative lifetime savings of **135 million gallons of water**
- Through 2018, **1.8 million sq. ft.** of landscape converted to water-wise gardens



CHALLENGES + OPPORTUNITIES

- **39% of customers** removed grass and replaced it with the help of Garden In A Box
 - Roughly double the percentage captured in 2017
- **Primary reasons for purchasing:**
 1. To make my yard more attractive
 2. To use less water on my landscape
 3. To attract pollinators and other beneficial wildlife AND it seemed like an easy way to garden
- **Word of Mouth** – one of the top 3 reasons people hear about the program
 - 15% of customers hear via “word of mouth”



“Thank you for offering an affordable, easy and beautiful product for gardening. Everything was perfect from ordering and pick-up to planting. And, I'm so impressed with the quality of the plants. Less than a month in the ground and we are seeing growth and blooms. I will recommend to all my friends and neighbors.”

– 2018 Garden In A Box customer

SOCIAL MARKETING

- What is the desired behavior that you want to promote?
- Barriers and benefits
- Create a strategy
- Implement the strategy
- Evaluate the strategy





UTILIZING SOCIAL MARKETING

RESOURCE
central

CONSERVATION MADE EASY

FOCUS GROUP

- Received grant from WFF and CWCB
- DIY projects vs. pro-projects
- Community engagement
 - Sense of comradery
 - Yard signs
- Water-wise landscaping isn't the norm
- Major barrier: removing and disposing turfgrass
 - Looking into incentive/program to support removal and disposal





SURVEYS

- **Primary use for Garden In A Box:**

1. To fill in an area that did not have any landscaping
2. To replace turfgrass
3. To supplement existing Xeriscape

- **Top landscape considerations:**

1. Landscape that uses water as efficiently as possible
2. Landscape that looks attractive compared to other homes in my neighborhood
3. Landscape that serves a purpose (i.e. food production, entertaining space, etc.)

- **Sources of inspiration:**

1. Other landscapes in my neighborhood
2. Demonstration gardens



DEMO GARDENS

- **Placed in highly visible location**
 - Worked with local business to increase awareness & outreach
 - Created how-to videos
 - Signage in progress
- **Opportunity: lead to additional water conservation efforts**
 - Slow the Flow appointment
- **Challenge: working with business to the create behavior change**
 - Adjusting the watering schedule
 - Care & maintenance

EMAILS + SOCIAL MEDIA



- **Highlighted DIY projects**
 - More photos: Before, during, after photos
 - Side by side comparisons
- **Included more storytelling**
 - Homeowner with HOA rallying other community members
- **What are community members doing in your area?**
 - Join the 1,000+ Denver Water customers...
 - 4/10 people are removing turf

FINAL THOUGHTS



- **Over 50%** said only “a few” homes in their neighborhood are water-wise
 - Continue emphasizing the Colorado landscape – shift the paradigm
- “I want to do it, know that I am wasting water in a desert climate, but don't have the time or energy to do it. Please help!”
 - **Top reasons people are not removing turf:**
 - It takes too much of their time, and they have more important home improvement projects to take on and complete
- Awaiting final feedback from study (November)
 - From there, implement a program and marketing strategy



Thank you!



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