

Ed Hume: Seed of an idea takes root

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**
For the Capital Press

PUYALLUP, Wash. — Ed Hume's line of garden seeds, sold in 1,000 garden centers across six states, is a mere slice of the man's contribution to the world of gardening.

Hume, of Puyallup, Wash., has spent the bulk of his adult life talking and gardening on TV and radio, as an international guest speaker and prolific writer.

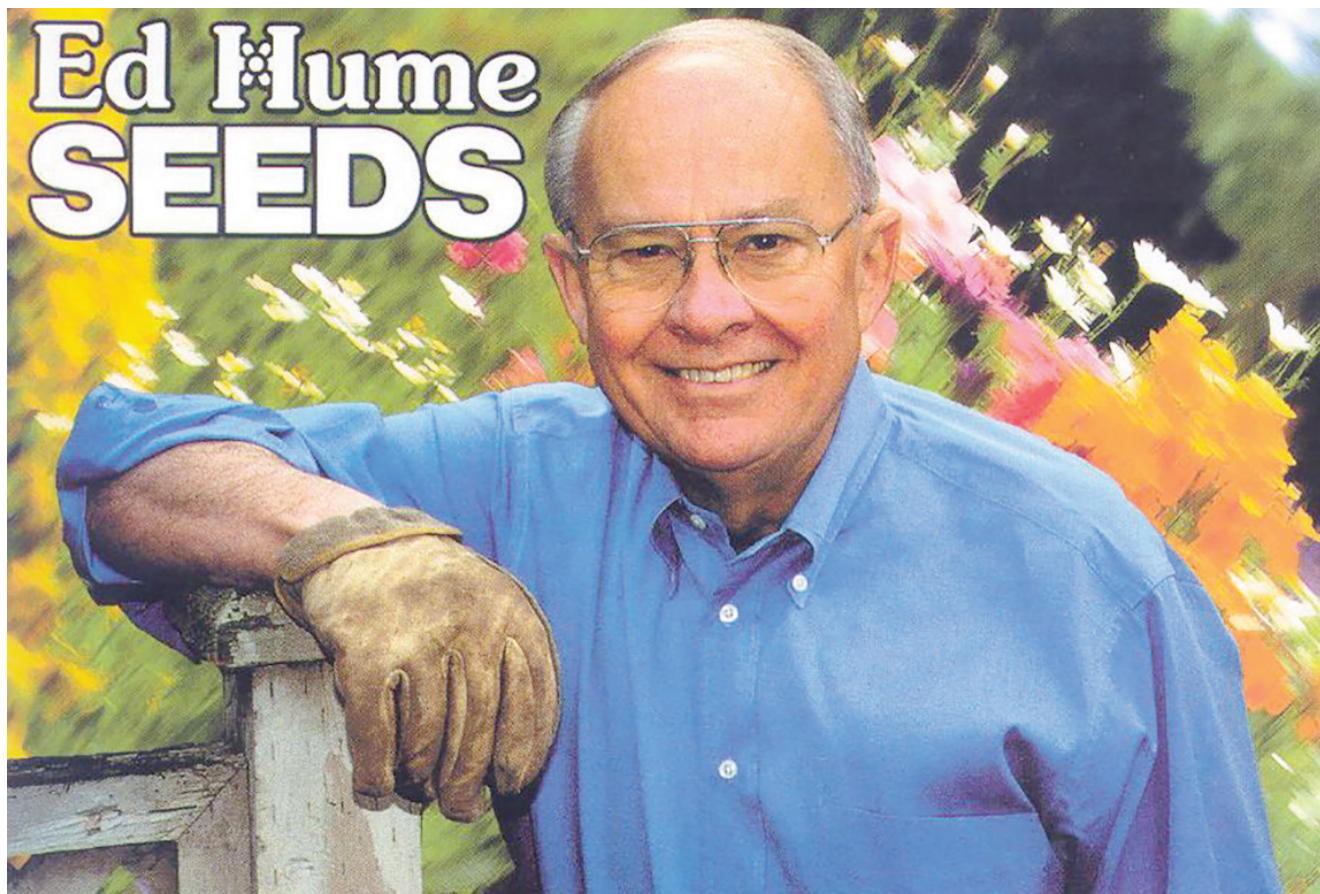
He has written columns for many newspapers, including the Seattle Times and Seattle Post-Intelligencer. His seven books include a children's book, "How to Plant a Bunch of Stuff."

For years Hume was heard weekly on the radio shows "Gardening with Ed Hume" and "Weekends Around the Northwest." Five years ago his television show, "Gardening in America," received the highest award from the Northwest chapter of the Television Academy of Arts and Sciences — an Emmy — for his 50 continuous years in the television industry.

"We are the only gardening television program that has ever received this award, because we are the only one that's lasted that long," Hume said. "We've been really fortunate; most gardening TV shows last about two to five years."

The show has aired on major U.S. television networks and on Japan's leading television station, with Hume's voice dubbed in.

It all began when Hume, fresh out of high school, was hired by one of the largest retail nurseries in Washington. He steadily rose in the ranks and was soon hired away as a store manager for another large garden center and then served as a gen-



Humeseeds.com

Ed Hume is well known for his gardening expertise and his seeds.

eral manager and designer of several new stores for another company.

"It just seemed a natural fit when I was offered radio and TV spots and newspaper columns, but it was a real challenge," Hume said. "During this time, Myrna and I got married and then we had two kids and within a period of about eight years — in 1977 — we started the

seed company.

"Of course, we started it as an income source, but the main reason was that many of the seed varieties being written about or promoted as must-haves at the time weren't readily available to the public and it was our attempt to bring those to the market," Hume said. "Our seed line is specially selected for short season

and cool climate areas, the bulk of it grown on the West Coast, many of the vegetable seeds produced right here in Oregon and Washington."

The seeds are packaged

onsite using Boston-made Ballard machines from 1885. Hume ended up purchasing the company 15 years ago and has 21 working machines, about 10 cur-

rently in use packaging the 2022 crop. Kids love to see them in action on spring tours of Hume's garden.

Though now run by the electricity generated by solar panels on the warehouse roof rather than powered by steam, these turn-of-the-century workhorses are still in use across the country.

Hume only sells fresh seeds; those not sold are donated to Third World countries.

"The charities only wanted vegetable seeds, but one year our flower seed was mistakenly included in the shipment sent to the overseas charities," Hume said. "About a year later, the head of World Concern called me.

"When the seed first came, he'd intended to call me about the mix-up but decided the flower seed had been sent to them for a purpose and set about for something to do with it," Hume said. "They sent the flower seeds to Mexico where they love color.

"They grew them and sold the cut flowers on the streets and ended up making more money than they could with vegetables."





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