



University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener Volunteer

Position Description

Purpose: To provide public education with research-based information from University of Minnesota Extension, or appropriate Cooperative Extension institutions, on best practices in consumer horticulture and environmental stewardship.

Nature and Scope: U of M Extension Master Gardener volunteers expand the ability of Extension faculty and staff to provide public value and meet the needs of Minnesota citizens in the areas of consumer horticulture and environmental stewardship.

Trained U of M Extension Master Gardener interns and certified Master Gardener volunteers provide educational programs, interpret Extension recommendations for consumers, and give advice and answers to questions on a broad range of gardening and landscape topics (including plant culture, plant pathology, entomology, soils, environmentally sound best practices, etc.) This is accomplished through formal and informal activities that include plant clinics, telephone or personal contacts, classes, written materials, demonstration gardens, public meetings, etc. U of M Extension Master Gardeners may provide educational programs to adult or youth audiences through Extension partnerships with schools, institutions, or other organizations (e.g. Conservation Districts, city parks departments, etc.) Master Gardener volunteers may also serve in program leadership roles at local, regional and state levels as assigned or as elected according to program by-laws.

Requirements:

- Must participate fully in and complete core course training; fulfill annual continuing education requirement predetermined by county Extension master gardener program (minimum 5 hrs. annually to remain a certified MG).
- Annually complete a county-specific number of public education volunteer service hours within a predetermined timeframe (minimum 50 hr. intern year/25 hr each year after to remain certified MG.)
- Follow University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener policies and procedures, including responsibility for reporting and responding to reasonable requests for volunteer service.
- Follow University of Minnesota Board of Regents and Master Gardener codes of conduct.

- Follow policies and procedures established by the county/local Master Gardener program.
- Follow University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener policies pertaining to use of research-based information and making recommendations, especially related to use of pesticides and other pest control measures.
- Be able to communicate effectively with the public by phone, personal contact, group presentation and/or through written language.
- Exhibit an interest in or have knowledge of gardening or other horticulture related area.
- Be able to work with adults and/or youth, and be willing to share horticulture knowledge with others.

Supervision: Based on the Extension staffing arrangement, the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener volunteer is supervised by and accountable to county, regional or state Extension staff in charge of the county program.

Benefits:

- Gain knowledge and skills in horticulture science and gardening; continue to stimulate a love of gardening.
- Experience personal satisfaction from helping others and contributing public benefit to the community.
- Receive encouragement and recognition.
- Increase leadership, organizational, decision making and problem-solving skills.
- Gain experience and skills transferable to new employment and volunteer opportunities.
- Establish friendships with fellow garden enthusiasts and develop useful contacts through networking.

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The University of Minnesota Extension Service is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status or sexual orientation.