



Master Gardener Volunteer Application 2021

Thank you for your interest in the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer program!

The mission of the program is to use science-based horticulture knowledge and practices to deliver educational outreach and project-based efforts that inspire change and promote healthy people, healthy communities, and a healthy planet.

Volunteers are community members respected and valued for their expertise and community-strengthening capacity.

We need people who can help us achieve our mission and are interested in reaching out to residents in their neighborhoods.

If you want to make a difference in your community, then this program is a great fit for you.

We are looking for volunteers who:

- Are interested in gardening and horticulture
- Are curious and love to learn
- Want to share their learning and have good communication skills
- Can make a commitment to the program -- 50 volunteer hours/50+ education hours the first year. You can do it! We will be there every step along the way, providing encouragement and volunteer opportunities that fit your interests.

We welcome participants with all levels of gardening experience.

Wondering if this program is right for you? Before completing the application, read more on the Extension website (extension.umn.edu/master-gardener):

[About Master Gardeners](#) -- what guides our work and our priorities

[How to become a Master Gardener volunteer](#) -- the process, timing, course, and fee

[Master Gardener outreach and impacts](#) -- the impacts we're making across the state

We wish we could accept everyone who applies to our program, but we have a limited capacity each year. Take your time and answer all questions thoroughly.

Questions? Contact us at mgapp@umn.edu.

Thanks in advance for completing and submitting your application by **midnight, Oct. 1, 2020!** Review of applications will begin on Oct. 2. Applicants will be notified regarding their acceptance into the program by **Dec. 1.**

Name of the county program to which you are applying:

Contact information

Please provide your contact information:

Email _____

Last name _____

Street address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip code _____

Phone _____

Demographics

Data collected helps us understand how we reflect our communities and comply with state and federal reporting requirements to better serve the needs of our communities.

Gender identity

- Female
- Male
- Prefer to self-identify

Hispanic ethnicity (please check one)

- Hispanic or Latinx
- Not Hispanic or Latinx

Racial groups (check all that apply)

- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Asian
- Other

Which category below includes your age?

- 18-19
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80+

Master Gardener Program

Priorities

Volunteers promote healthy landscapes, healthy people, and a healthy planet. Their work focuses on seven program priorities, including horticulture skills, local food, climate change, nearby nature, pollinators, and plant biodiversity.

Which priorities are you most passionate about? Note your level of interest below. Your input will help us develop learning opportunities based on your interests. There is no right or wrong answer -- please be honest.

Your response will not positively or negatively affect your application.

1. Horticulture Skills -Sharing current research-based horticulture principles and practices in your community.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

2. Local Food - Promoting the use of sustainability techniques for growing local food.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

3. Climate Change - Sharing ways to create resilient landscapes that are adapted to our changing climate in your community.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

4. Clean Water - Promoting water-wise gardening and landscaping practices to conserve water and minimize polluted runoff.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

5. Pollinators - Promoting water-wise gardening and landscaping practices to conserve water and minimize polluted runoff.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

6. Plant Biodiversity - Promoting invasive species management and native species conservation and restoration in landscapes.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

7. Nearby Nature - Partnering with local community groups to create access to plants and green space for health and wellbeing.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

Engaging with your community

Working within the community is core to volunteering as a Master Gardener.

What kind of community-engagement volunteer work do you like to do? Note your level of interest below. Your input will help us plan volunteering opportunities that appeal to you. There is no right or wrong answer -- please be honest. **Your response will not positively or negatively affect your application.**

8. Supporting educational service projects - Examples: Collaborate with Habitat for Humanity, tend a food shelf garden, etc.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

9. Planning, planting, and maintaining a learning garden - Examples: Plan a pollinator garden at a library featuring learning signs, maintain a garden near senior citizen residence, etc.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

10. Provide experiences for youth - Example: Lead a schoolyard garden program.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

11. Teaching adults - Examples: Give a presentation, lead a class, etc.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

12. Answering horticulture questions - Examples: Work at a farmers' market Q & A booth, answer questions from a phone line, etc.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested

13. Supporting research and plant trials - Example: Participate in the annual seed trial project.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not interested



Experience

14. Describe your experience volunteering, helping families or a neighbor, or other ways you get involved in your community (include the dates, groups, and any leadership positions you may have held).

15. Share your experience working with different groups of people (for example, seniors, special needs, racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, veterans, youth, people with limited resources, etc.)

16. List experience you have in communicating information to others (public speaking, teaching, tutoring, writing, electronic communications, one-to-one conversations, sign language, translating from one language to another, etc.)

17. List your interest and any experience you have in gardening (including house plants, community gardening, patio gardening, tree care, water quality, citizen science, or in the horticultural field).

18. What do you do if someone tells you about a great new method they learned in the garden. How do you proceed to know if it is true or not?

19. While program activities are available throughout the year, mid-April to mid-July is the peak volunteering season. Will you be able to participate during this period? Do you see any time constraints?

20. First-year interns commit to 50 hours of community service. Once you become an active volunteer, you commit to volunteering 25 hours per year. Do you see any difficulty in making these commitments?

21. First-year interns commit to a minimum of 50 hours of education (core course (50 hours) plus 12 education hours (Hennepin only)). Once an active volunteer, we ask for 5-12 hours depending on the county program. Do you see any difficulty with that?

22. You will often need to interact with technology. This includes receiving information via email, signing-up for activities, and recording your volunteer hours. Do you anticipate any difficulty with this?

23. Are there any other life skills, training, past employment, or hobbies that you would like us to know about?



What do you think?

The following are examples of questions the public regularly asks volunteers. **Answer 1 of the 3 questions.** What do you recommend? The questions have many possible answers. Please list suggestions about the problem and describe possible solutions. Phrase the answers as you would in responding to a resident.

You are not expected to know all the answers from memory. Use resources to find the answers. Tap into the Internet, your own books, or other science-based resources to answer these questions. Please list the resources you consulted to find the answers to the question.

24. I want to start a vegetable garden. Where do vegetables grow best and is there anything else you can recommend for me to be successful?

Where did you find your answer? Site your source(s).

25. I have a couple of ash trees in my yard. How can I save them from the emerald ash borer, or what trees should I consider planting for the future?

Where did you find your answer? Site your source(s).

26. When is the best time of day to water a lawn and how frequently should it be watered?

Where did you find your answer? Site your source(s).

What community engagement ideas can you share?

Answer 1 of the 3 questions below.

27. There are opportunities for the MG program to better reach diverse audiences. As a volunteer, what are your ideas to broaden our service in your county?

28. It can be difficult for youth to interact with gardens and nature. What outreach activities would you suggest engaging with youth in your area?

29. The volunteer program supports seven priorities (see illustration below). What priority most interests you? How would you support that priority? (i.e., project, activity, campaign)?



Agreement of Understanding

I wish to become a University of Minnesota volunteer in the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener program and request acceptance into the training program. I understand that if accepted, I will become an Extension Master Gardener Intern. I will pay the \$320 Core Course fee (volunteer cost of the required 48-hour course), I will complete the required 48-hour Master Gardener Core Course (online, in-class or combination) and donate 50 hours of volunteer service through the county or local Master Gardener unit where I am accepted. I will complete the intern requirements by the end of the calendar year of my training, or a date agreed upon with the local coordinator.

I understand that to qualify, my volunteer service must be completed in activities approved by the local program or state office. Upon successful completion of these intern requirements, I will become a certified University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener. I understand that if I do not complete the required volunteer service by the designated date or choose not to continue in the program after completing the Core Course, I agree to reimburse the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener program an additional \$320, or the difference between the volunteer and non-volunteer (ProHort) rates for the training.

To maintain certification, I understand that I must contribute a minimum of 25 hours of volunteer service and 5 to 12 hours of continuing education each calendar year (required continuation education hours vary by county). I have read and agree to follow all University of Minnesota and Extension Master Gardener Program policies and guidelines, including the [University of Minnesota Board of Regents code of conduct](#) and [Extension Master Gardener standards of behavior](#).

I understand that volunteering for the University of Minnesota is a privilege and that violation of policies or misconduct could lead to termination as an Extension Master Gardener volunteer. I understand that while serving as an Extension Master Gardener I represent University of Minnesota Extension and I will do so to the best of my ability.

Also, I do hereby consent and agree that the University of Minnesota Extension and the Extension Master Gardener program may take photographs, video, or audio clips of me and may use these for educational and promotional materials or web postings. I further consent that my name and identity may be revealed therein or by descriptive text or commentary. I do hereby release to the University of Minnesota and the Extension Master Gardener program the rights to exhibit this work publicly or privately. I waive all claims to compensation for the use of photos, video, or audio clips of me.

I attest that I am at least 18 years of age, have read and understand the foregoing statement and full agreement of understanding above, including the University of Minnesota Board of Regents code of conduct and Extension Master Gardener standards of behavior, and am competent to execute this agreement.

Your signature