



Michigan Master Gardener Volunteer Program

The Michigan Master Gardener Volunteer Program is a horticulture education and volunteer leader training program offered by Michigan State University Extension (MSUE). It provides home gardening information to Michigan citizens through a network of trained volunteers. An interest in plants, a personal commitment to volunteerism and an enthusiasm for sharing knowledge with others are the only prerequisites.

Participants attend classes in their county learning basic horticulture principles and environmentally sound gardening practices. They then provide volunteer leadership and service to their community through a variety of horticulture-related activities.

History

The Program originated at Washington State University in 1972. It has grown to over 600 programs in forty-six states, the District of Columbia and several Canadian provinces. MSU Extension created and held its first Master Gardener Volunteer Program in 1978. Today, more than 23,000 residents from more than 72 Michigan counties have earned and enjoy the "Master Gardener Volunteer" designation.

Mission

The Master Gardener Volunteer Program serves two major and equal functions:

- To provide instruction in basic horticulture science to motivated and active gardeners through an adult educational program offered through Michigan State University Extension.
- To provide MSU Extension with trained gardeners who will educate others in the community through horticulture-related volunteer activities.

Educational Requirement

The educational component of the Master Gardener Volunteer Program provides an overview of major horticulture subjects in a

classroom setting. Master Gardener Volunteer trainees attend a series of classes, cover a minimum of 12 topics and work from an 800-page Master Gardener Volunteer manual.

Topics covered in the twelve basic class sessions are:

- Introduction & Volunteerism
- Plant Science
- Soils for Plant Growth
- Flower Gardening
- Woody Ornamentals
- Turf / Lawn Care
- Vegetable Culture
- Small Fruit Culture
- Tree Fruit Culture
- Plant Health Care
- Indoor Plants
- Household Pests

Volunteer Commitment

The volunteer component of the Master Gardener Volunteer Program takes the Master Gardener trainee out into the community to educate others through a variety of horticulture-related activities. These activities may range from designing an elementary school garden with children, to creating a horticulture therapy program at a senior center, or helping a neighborhood beautification team with site and plan selection.

Upon completion of the educational component and 40 hours of volunteer service, the Master Gardener trainee will receive his or her Master Gardener Volunteer certification.

MSU Extension

For details on the Michigan Master Gardener Volunteer Program in your area, contact your local county MSU Extension office. **The county listing is available on to our web site at:** <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener> .