



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION



Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program Application

The Master Gardener Extension Volunteer (MGEV) program in Georgia is a volunteer program designed to help University of Georgia Cooperative Extension staff transfer research-based information about gardening and related subjects to the public by training home gardeners to be volunteer educators. Master Gardener Extension Volunteers are active in many Georgia counties. Through this program, Extension is able to reach out and serve more citizens with educational programming and demonstrations.

Dear Master Gardener Program Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer program! Its purpose is to assist UGA Extension by training volunteer educators to provide current horticultural information through community service and educational gardening projects using applied research and the resources of the University of Georgia.

MGEV programs are coordinated at the county level by the local Extension office. Each local program has multiple projects that reach out to the local communities, teaching about horticulture and gardening, answering garden-related questions and so forth. Volunteers for these projects do participate in at least 50 hours of training and are asked to volunteer 50 hours of service in the first year. *(After your first year, you are required to volunteer 25 hours per year to remain an active, certified Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer.)*

Extension offices plan and carry out MGEV training classes in the spring and/or fall, on an annual or biannual basis. Training and schedule format are determined by the agent/coordinator and the local office. Classes typically meet once or twice weekly. Attending training classes is extremely important, and absenteeism cannot exceed 20 percent of classes. Trainees are responsible for all material on the exams and are required to pass a midterm and final exam with a score of 70 percent or better on each.

By completing the 2023 Master Gardener Volunteer Program Application and Reference Forms (below), you are indicating your interest in the Georgia MGEV Program. You will receive follow-up communication from the Greene County Extension office.

As enrollment in the Master Gardener program is limited, you are encouraged to fill out the application as thoroughly as possible. The selection committee, comprised of an Extension staff member and a group of veteran Master Gardener Extension Volunteers, reads all applications. Selections will be based on your interest in being an

Extension volunteer, your interest in community service, as well as your knowledge, expertise and experience in related areas. Applicants will be called for an interview by November 15, 2023.

If selected for participation in the MGEV program, you will be notified by the local Extension office. At that time, you will be asked to submit any program fees by the specified deadline. If payment is not received by the deadline, and no arrangements have been made, your name will be removed from the class acceptance list and an alternate selected.

The Georgia Master Gardener Program offers many opportunities to make new friends and enhance your horticultural expertise while becoming involved in fulfilling community service activities. We look forward to receiving your application!

If you have any questions, please contact:

Sincerely,

C. Monte Stephens

C. Monte Stephens

College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences

Greene and Taliaferro County Extension Coordinator

Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent

1180 C. Weldon Smith Dr. | Suite 110 | Greensboro, GA 30642

[706-453-2083](tel:706-453-2083) | uge3133@uga.edu | extension.uga.edu/county-offices/greene



Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer General Role Description (Trainee)

(Must be included as part of the volunteer application and Volunteer Agreement)

ROLE TITLE: Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Trainee

SUPERVISOR: C. Monte Stephens, Greene and Taliaferro Counties and Agriculture & Natural Resource Agent

LOCATION: Greene County Extension, Greensboro GA

GOAL OF MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM:

The Master Gardener program in Georgia is a volunteer training program designed to help University of Georgia Cooperative Extension staff transfer research-based information about gardening and related subjects to the public by training home gardeners. Through this program, Cooperative Extension is able to reach out and serve more citizens with educational programming and demonstrations. Master Gardener Extension Volunteers complement, enhance, and support on-going Agriculture and Natural Resources educational programs using applied research and the resources of University of Georgia. The Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program is a county-based volunteer program designed as an educational program delivery system and teaching resource to assist Cooperative Extension with the main goal of addressing community non-commercial, horticulture and gardening issues and needs.

VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS:

- Available 100 hours in the first year for training and volunteer service, project implementation (25 hours each year thereafter)
- Interest in teaching Georgians about horticulture and gardening
- Basic knowledge of gardening and horticulture preferred
- Enthusiasm
- Ability to communicate with others
- Knowledge of community resources
- Previous volunteer experience a plus

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Participate in appropriate orientation, training, planning, and evaluation sessions (completing the required 50 hours of classroom training before volunteering), and keep up-to-date on the latest horticulture information, including annual completion of Risk Management Training (RMT).
- Complete a University of Georgia Volunteer Agreement and background screening.
- Provide reliable, unbiased information in accordance with published Cooperative Extension resources.
- Promote awareness of Cooperative Extension.



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- Maintain records of volunteer service, including hours volunteered, contributions, and results. Report records to the Agent, coordinator, or other supervisor as directed.
- Wear an official UGA Master Gardener Extension Volunteer nametag while volunteering on behalf of UGA.
- Exercise personal integrity as a volunteer.
- Uphold the policies and follow the procedures of the UGA CAES MG Extension Volunteer Program.
- Follow through with completion of educational programs/projects, communicating about problems and successes.
- Identify needs for training and participate as a team member of UGA CAES Extension.
- Participate in approved UGA Extension projects. Indicate on the attached sheet the projects/teams in which you are interested in volunteering.

TRAINING AND/OR RESOURCES TO BE PROVIDED:

- Master Gardener Extension Volunteer training sessions
- Periodic organizational/ educational meetings
- Master Gardener Extension Volunteer reference manuals available for use in office
- Horticulture library in office
- Consultations with Cooperative Extension staff

TIME ESTIMATE:

- Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Training: 60 hours
- Volunteer Service: 50 hours (about 4-5 hours per month) minimum during the first year after training
- Periodic organizational/educational meetings: 1-2 hours per month

BENEFITS:

- Participate in training programs in all aspects of basic horticulture.
- Learn new skills and sharpen old ones.
- Meet and work with other individuals interested in horticulture.
- Receive basic program materials at minimal cost.



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INTENT TO VOLUNTEER

I, _____, commit to at least 50 hours of instruction and 50 hours of volunteer time as a UGA Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Trainee, following program policies and procedures, within one year of the date on this role description.

 MGEV Trainee

 Date

 C. Monte Stephens, Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent
 Greene and Taliaferro Counties

 Date



Tell Us About Yourself:

Basic Information

Name					
Preferred name for name badge (First & Last)					
Mailing Address					
City		State		Zip	
Email Address					
Preferred Phone #		Alternate Phone #			

Preferred Method of Contact

Phone Email Alternate Phone USPS

The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (working cooperatively with Fort Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the counties of Georgia) offers its educational programs, assistance, and materials to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or protected veteran status and is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action organization. Provision of demographic information will help ensure we are supporting all members of our community.

Gender:

Male Female _____

Race/Ethnicity

Asian African American Native/American Indian/Alaska Native

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Two or More Races Caucasian

I am an adult, aged 18 years or older.

Yes No

If accepted into the program, I consent to have my name, address, email and phone number included in a class roster in the participant binder and provided to local Master Gardener organization members.

Yes No

Your Skills and Interests:

Please select the skills and interests that you want to contribute to or learn more about during your MGEV experience.

	I want to know more about:	I consider this to be a personal strength
Vegetable gardening		
Flower gardening		
Herb gardening		
Trees/shrub		
Native plants		
Wildlife gardening		
Houseplants		
Lawns and turf grass		
Plant propagation		
Landscape design		
Diseases/Insects		
Water conservation gardening		
Ornamental Ponds		
Community gardens		
Greenhouse production		
Other:		

How long have you been a gardener?

--

What horticultural experience or training have you had? (credit or non-credit courses, workshops, etc.)

What is your greatest area of gardening interest?



Have you done any of the following? If yes, please describe your experience.

	No	Yes	If yes, please describe.
Writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper Articles • Blog Posts • Social Media Content 			
Public speaking/teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented to small or large group? • Tour guide? • Hands-on demonstrations? 			
Computer Technology:			
Organizing events or projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small events or projects? • Large events or projects? 			
Managing people:			
Advertising and public relations:			
Fundraising:			
Other:			

Which skills from your previous professional experiences would be useful in your role as a Master Gardener Extension Volunteer?

Tell Us About Your History as a Volunteer.

Please list any previous volunteer experiences, including nongardening and gardening experiences. Specify organization, type of work, and approximate dates (i.e., garden clubs, professional or hobby associations, plant specialty societies, civic clubs, etc.). *Note: Previous volunteer experience is not required to be accepted into the program.*

Have you participated in any UGA Extension programs in the past? Please list the most recent. If not, please write "N/A".

Why do you wish to become a Master Gardener Extension Volunteer?

What are some ways you can see yourself volunteering as a Master Gardener in our community?

If you are selected to be a part of the Master Gardener Extension Volunteer program, your volunteer hours will support the Extension office in one of the following activities. Check topics of interest to you:

Ask a Master Gardener diagnostics--Answer questions from the public at public events and in the Extension office. Events may include themed exhibits at local farmer's markets and festivals, the Georgia National Fair, area retail merchants, and other community venues to answer homeowner questions,

Youth activities and programs—Work with a team of Master Gardeners to conduct horticulture activities with youth in grades 4-12, such as in-class presentations, school gardens, Junior Master Gardener programs, MG SPROUTS, summer camps, or other activities.

Media--Create brochures, newsletters and flyers using Publisher Software; develop PowerPoint presentations for use in classes; write news articles for local newspapers and websites; social media posts; radio and/or TV.

Speakers' Bureau--Prepare a short, 15-20-minute talk for various civic and church engagements to offer horticultural information. Plan and teach classes on basic gardening topics to groups of 20-30 homeowners. Specialty: _____

Demonstration and community gardens--Help with installation and perform ongoing maintenance to include weeding and watering; plan and execute activities and classes at the garden sites. Provide leadership, coordination, and education at community garden sites.

Rate your preference for the following experiences (1= least preferred ↔5=most preferred)

	(1) Least preferred (3) Neutral (5) Most preferred				
	1	2	3	4	5
Telephone/office work at County Extension Office					
Speaking to groups on gardening					
Teaching small groups					
Teaching large groups					
Teaching children/teens					
Teaching adults/senior citizens					
Teaching persons with disabilities and special needs					
Diagnosing plant problems and providing answers/recommendations					
Newsletter editing/layout					
Writing articles for newsletter/newspaper					
Public relations/publicity					
Working on community landscape projects					
Photographing plants/horticulture activities					
Organizing events					

There will be other volunteer opportunities that will arise throughout the year. Do you have anything in mind that you'd be interested in working on that wasn't mentioned above?

Where are you comfortable volunteering? check all that apply)

- Extension office
- Garden
- Public place
- Classroom
- Face-to-face
- Written
- Phone

With which audience(s) are you most comfortable? (check all that apply)

- Youth
- Adult
- Senior adult
- Special needs
- _____

Describe Your Availability:

- Full time employment
- Part time employment
- Am not employed
- Retired
- Other _____

Please indicate times that you are typically available to volunteer:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8am-12pm							
1pm-5pm							
After 5pm							



References (required)

Please provide 3 references who are not immediate family members and who reside outside of your home address. They should be familiar with your skills and abilities related to potential duties associated with volunteering, particularly with youth. Local CAES or Extension staff should not serve as references. Individuals will be contacted by Extension.

Reference 1				
Name:				
Address:				
City:		State:	Zip Code:	
Phone Number:		Email:		
How long have you known this person?		In what capacity have you known this person?		
Reference 2				
Name:				
Address:				
City:		State:	Zip Code:	
Phone Number:		Email:		
How long have you known this person?		In what capacity have you known this person?		
Reference 3				
Name:				
Address:				
City:		State:	Zip Code:	
Phone Number:		Email:		
How long have you known this person?		In what capacity have you known this person?		



Master Gardener Program Agreements:

Initial each statement and sign at bottom to indicate that you understand and agree to the following conditions if accepted into the program. I understand that submission of this application does not guarantee acceptance to the program.

- I understand that to be considered as a UGA MGEV Trainee, I will need to complete a UGA Volunteer Agreement, background screening (including motor vehicle records check), interview with Extension personnel, and pay any program fees.
- I understand that Georgia Master Gardener® status is acquired only after successful completion of the volunteer training program and volunteer service, including:
 - Completion of classroom training (minimum of 50 hours), not missing more than 20% of training classes. I am responsible for class material covered in my absence;
 - successfully passing the midterm and final exams with a score of 70% or better on each;
 - and completing 50 hours of volunteer service in support of Extension-approved projects in the county in which I completed training within 12 months of completing classroom training. Any exceptions must first be approved by my local coordinator.
- I will not use my Master Gardener Extension Volunteer status to promote any commercial venture or to make money.
- I understand that I can continue with the MGEV program after completing the first year. To do so, I will complete an annual Intent to Renew form and meet annual criteria, 10 hours of continuing education plus 25 hours of volunteer service each year, update my Risk Management Training (RMT), and maintain a current UGA Volunteer Agreement form and background screening, as required by the University of Georgia. I agree to not use the Georgia Master Gardener® title for any commercial publicity or private business purposes. Participating in a commercial activity, associating with commercial products, and giving implied Master Gardener or UGA Extension endorsements to any product or place of business is in violation of the Georgia Master Gardener® program policy.
- I acknowledge that I have read the above guidelines and will abide by them.

Signature: _____ **Date of Application(mm/dd/yyyy):** _____

Return Completed Application due November 1, 2022:

- Physically:** The Greene County Extension Office, 1180 C Weldon Smith Drive, Suite 110,
Greensboro, Ga. 30642

- Digitally:** uge3133@uga.edu with the subject line reading “2023 MGEV Training Application”