

GEORGIA'S MASTER GARDENER EXTENSION VOLUNTEERS

Impacting Youth, Life Quality, Health, and Communities



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION



2018
report

THE BIG PICTURE:

Program Priorities

Environmental Stewardship

Increasing awareness and knowledge of landscape and garden management for the optimum use and protection of the environment, including management of all aspects of the residential landscape (soil, plants, insects, diseases, and wildlife), understanding and proper use of equipment, pesticides, fertilizers, and other landscaping inputs to have the greatest value with little negative impact on the environment.

Gardening with Youth

Increasing young people's awareness and understanding of the value of horticulture and landscaping, using horticulture as a tool to increase responsibility and leadership for youth, and teaching individuals and professionals (i.e., teachers and therapists) how to use horticulture to reach young people.

Home Food Production

Teaching the benefits of home food production and developing skills and knowledge in growing food, managing community gardens, or contributing to food banks or kitchens.

Value of Landscapes

Developing within communities the knowledge and skill to ensure proper design, installation, and maintenance of sustainable landscapes for economic benefit to residents, state and local government employees and agencies, and professionals in impacted fields, such as tourism and real-estate development.

Health Benefits of Gardening

Teaching the value of the interior and exterior landscape for human health, well-being, and quality of life, transferrable knowledge and skills to intended audiences so that they might utilize this information for personal health and a healthier workplace and community.

Program Impact

Extension Agents enlist the help of Master Gardener Volunteers to assist with meeting the demand for garden-related information requests that Extension offices receive. Requests for information about gardening come through telephone, email, and walk-in clientele as well as from community groups requesting off-site presentations. MGEVs also represent Extension through workshops, demonstration gardens, and with informative displays at numerous fairs and public events. The Georgia Master Gardener Program, continuously active for 40 years under the direction of Extension in more than 60 counties across the state, trains volunteers to assist agents in Extension educational program delivery. As a result, Georgians are able to make environmentally sound gardening decisions. Insects and diseases can be treated with appropriate controls, plant choices can be made to enhance landscapes and property values, individuals can grow their own fruits and vegetables, and youth gain exposure to the joy and wonder of gardening. Agents are able to devote time to developing targeted educational programs that address local issues and needs. MGEVs ultimately help Extension achieve its mission of helping Georgians become healthier, more productive, financially independent and environmentally responsible.



2,511
active GA MGEVs



179,768
Volunteer Service
Hours



\$4,339,599
given back to
communities

a look at 2018:

- 23 counties recruited and trained 259 new volunteers
- 2,511 MGEVs returned 179,768 volunteer hours at a value of \$4,339,599 to the University of Georgia and their communities
- 8,379 hours devoted to continuing education to better prepare for volunteer service
- 237,452 Georgians educated (in person contacts)
- 1,182,533 telephone/email contacts
- **In perspective:**
 - an average of 71 hours of service per active volunteer, or a little more than 1.25 hours per volunteer per week
 - like adding 88 full-time staff to the Extension team

Self-reported data collected from MGLOG, the recordkeeping system for the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program, as of March 20, 2018. *The wage rate of \$24.14 per hour was used. The value of volunteer time is based on the average hourly earnings of all production and nonsupervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls (as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics) increased by 12 percent to estimate for fringe benefits. The information was supplied by the Independent Sector (1602 L Street, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036; 202-467-6100; <http://www.independentsector.org>), a national forum to encourage giving. **The mileage rate is based on \$0.54 per mile.

report provided by:
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