



## Jonesboro Farmers Market Plant Clinic *served by Clayton County Extension and MGEVs*

[gamastergardener.org](http://gamastergardener.org)

Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program

Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteers (MGEVs) in Clayton County provide education to local community members by staffing a booth at the Jonesboro Farmers Market. At the booth, they provide guidance to visitors on how to grow vegetables in their own backyards. To support the knowledge they share, they keep UGA Extension publications on hand to send home with visitors as reference materials.

During 2017, the Jonesboro Farmers Market celebrated its tenth year! Clayton County MGEVs have played an important role in sustaining the market during the past decade. From May through September in

2017, MGEVs provided 200 hours of volunteer service by participating in each weekly market. Over the course of 48 market days, MGEVs had approximately 720 contacts. An MGEV in Clayton County, who is a retired librarian, organized a box of easy-to-access relevant UGA Extension seasonal publications for MGEVs to take to each market. This assembled publication box provides detailed information to answer a wide range of questions from new Georgia residents inquiring about planting vegetables in unfamiliar soil, when to plant certain vegetables, how to deter deer from eating hostas, and many other common questions about backyard vegetable gardens and lawn care. This organized approach enabled MGEV trainees, as well as experienced MGEVs, to feel prepared staffing the booth, answering questions, and providing additional information that can be taken home with the inquiring individual.

UGA Extension, Clayton County received several grants for the Jonesboro Farmers Market in 2017. With the funding provided, Extension was able to have a registered dietitian, who is also an organic farmer, provide nutrition lessons, healthy cooking demonstrations, original recipes, and tastings during 26 market days. Through their presence at the markets, MGEVs also



**135** volunteer service hours in 2017

connect visitors to another Extension resource. They share about Extension’s Noontime Knowledge series of free classes taught by MGEVs. The class schedule has recently been expanded to include evening and weekend availability. MGEVs have received positive feedback regarding the horticulture education they are able to spread into the community through staffing market booths. One MGEV shared that she had a Clayton County resident stop by and show iPhone photos of the abundant and colorful produce she has harvested from her plot in a community garden where MGEVs provide coaching and UGA publications.

MGEVs will continue to volunteer at the Jonesboro Farmers Market. By visiting the market, Clayton County residents have improved access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables, and MGEVs connect with them and provide them with the education to hone their home gardening skills.



**48** market days in 2017  
**720** contacts made in 2017 at the Jonesboro Farmers Market

*The Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program prepares volunteers to support UGA Cooperative Extension in delivering gardening information to Georgia’s citizens and communities. Since 1979, Master Gardeners and UGA Extension have helped Georgians become healthier, more productive, financially independent and environmentally responsible.*

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