

MSU Extension Master Gardener Program

MISSION

To further the land grant university goal of disseminating scientifically based information via a network of trained volunteers who receive support and guidance from MSU Extension to educate Michigan residents on the most current and environmentally sound horticulture information.

The MSU Extension Master Gardener Program® encompasses two major functions to meet this mission: To provide instruction in basic, research-based horticulture science to motivated and active gardeners through an adult (18 years or older) educational program offered through MSU Extension.

To provide MSU Extension with trained gardeners who will educate others in the community about research based and environmentally sound practices through horticulture-based volunteer activities

WHY JOIN?

By joining the MSU Extension Master Gardener Program, you'll have the opportunity to learn many horticulture subjects from MSU Extension and community experts. You will learn new gardening skills, hone existing skills, learn how to solve gardening problems, and help others in your community by sharing your knowledge. Best of all, you will meet new people who enjoy gardening and who want to learn and share as much as you do! For more info: http://www.canr.msu.edu/master_gardener_volunteer_program/

CONSIDERATIONS AND STEPS TO JOIN

- Must be 18 years of age or older
- Be willing to commit to completing the 14-week training course by attending all classes and completing all open-book testing documents with a minimum score of 80% on each
- Be willing to commit to completing and recording 40 hours of horticulture-based service, volunteering to share research-based knowledge with others in your community within the first year after successfully completing the 14-week training course (EMG status is trainee until this has been completed and recorded)
- In subsequent years as an EMG, complete and record at least 20 hours of pre-approved community service and 10 hours of education. In addition, complete the annual 3-step re-certification process during the designated timeframe
- Complete the MSU Extension Volunteer Selection Process (VSP) https://msu.samaritan.com/custom/502/#/volunteer_home
- Complete the Extension Master Gardener training course application - link provided after VSP is initiated
- Submit \$325 payment in full to reserve your seat (partial scholarships may be available)

ARE YOU READY TO BECOME AN MSU EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER?

1. Do you have enough time to attend the 14-week training and complete 40 hours of volunteer service within the first year of training?
2. Are you eager to participate in the practical and intensive training program?
3. Do you want to learn more about Michigan's plants, trees, shrubs, grasses, and share this knowledge with people in your community?

If you answered "yes" to any of the these, sign up to become an Extension Master Gardener today!

GENERAL INFORMATION

An Extension Master Gardener (EMG) is a volunteer educator. As an EMG, you learn throughout the year and then share your knowledge with others through your volunteer projects. These projects can be working at demonstration gardens or with schools, and other nonprofit organizations. You can choose your level of involvement and projects. It's about being active in the Program and community, finding others who enjoy gardening and have a passion for learning.

When interacting with the public as an EMG you are representing Michigan State University Extension and need to adhere to the Program Code of Conduct and volunteer guidelines. These standards apply when interacting with the public, fellow EMGs and at any EMG event.

EMGs are unbiased and do not endorse a specific business or product when sharing information with the public.

Program participants are correctly referred to as "Extension Master Gardeners."

EARNING HOURS

You can earn **Educational Hours** by:

- Taking a webinar or lecture/classes that teaches science-based, environmentally and economically sound horticultural practices.

You can earn **Volunteer Hours** by:

- Volunteering at approved EMG projects. (Project approval forms are available in Volunteer Central for download)
- Volunteer individually by educating the general public outside pre-approved EMG projects. (i.e. teaching a garden class as a local library)
- Volunteering at a nonprofit event that you are not directly educating the public, but the overall event is educating the public. (i.e. volunteering at the Fall Gathering, hosted by the Kalamazoo Master Gardener's Association).



WHAT IS AN EMG?

Each year, Extension Master Gardeners participate in EMG gathering events, where everyone comes together to learn, enjoy delicious food, and enjoy the company of fellow EMGs.

EMGs often volunteer together on projects such as The Giving Garden (which produces thousands of pounds of food for local Kalamazoo food banks), the Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds planting and education gardens, learning and teaching how to identify and remove invasive species of plants, and working at informational booths at area events.

The profiles and records of Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs) are maintained in Volunteer Central (VC) by geographic groups known as "rosters." EMGs who reside in Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren counties are members of the Southwest Region roster.

To contact an expert in your area, visit extension.msu.edu/experts or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464)