



The Master Gardener Program

One of the more popular activities people have enjoyed in recent years is home horticulture. This includes landscaping, trees, shrubs, annual and perennial

flowers, and home lawns as well as vegetables and fruits in the home garden. The increasing popularity of this activity has prompted individuals to rely on experienced neighbors for answers.

The Program:

The Master Gardener Program is a volunteer leader training program made up of people who are knowledgeable in horticulture and who want to help others identify problems and answer their questions. The program is intended to bring them up-to-date in all areas of horticulture, to reinforce previous knowledge, and to help them learn how to share this information with others.

Who Can Become a Master Gardener:

Experienced gardeners from all walks of life can become involved in this program. Interested individuals should contact their extension office concerning future training. They will be notified when a training is planned, and asked to pay a small registration fee. Candidates for the program will be selected on their horticultural experience, availability and willingness to help others. This program is open to all people without regard to race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin or handicap.

The Training:

The training program will consist of 48 hours of instruction. A wide selection of horticultural topics will be covered. The instruction will be given by extension specialists from NDSU and experienced Master Gardeners. Besides classroom and field training, a complete horticultural reference handbook will be provided for each participant.

Program Costs:

The registration fee helps cover the cost of publications and handouts. As Master Gardeners continue in the program, they receive newsletters, updated references, and additional training.

Volunteer Responsibility:

The Master Gardener Program is a volunteer program. To officially become a Certified Master Gardener, 48 hours of volunteer work is required during the year. Master Gardeners are also required to submit a yearly report. They are recertified on a yearly basis.

How and Where Volunteers Work With People:

Volunteer time used to help others could be spent in many diverse activities such as:

- assisting in the Extension Office.
- answering gardening questions on the phone or in person.
- working with 4-H and other youth groups.
- presenting gardening information to groups.
- becoming involved in community service activities.
- setting up and staffing horticultural displays.
- working with community groups.
- writing articles for local newspapers.
- setting up and manning plant problem clinics.

All these activities are coordinated through the local extension staff. In this way the county extension staff and Master Gardeners are able to make more effective use of their volunteer commitment and help serve other people.

Benefits of the Program:

Since the program started in Washington State in 1972, thousands of Master Gardeners in almost all states have participated. With the help of Master Gardeners, the distribution of horticultural information to the gardening public has been increased significantly. The Master Gardener Program has the capability of becoming an important resource to the home gardener.

For more information contact:

Todd Weinmann

Cass County Horticulturist

241-5707

todd.weinmann@ndsu.edu

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Extension Service

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