



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

301 Manny Martinez Sr. Drive. 2nd Floor, El Paso, TX 79905

Telephone: 915-273-3502

June 3, 2025

Dear Master Gardener Applicant,

The following letter contains information regarding the application process for the Fall 2025 El Paso County Master Gardener Program.

Thank you for your interest in the Master Gardener course and volunteer program.

The Master Gardener Program is a highly successful volunteer training initiative used in all fifty states and even some foreign countries. Although the program began in Washington in 1972, Texas was not far behind. El Paso, which has been training Master Gardeners since 1982, hosts the second-oldest program in the state.

This 12-week program provides intensive, weekly horticultural training covering topics such as vegetable gardening, tree care and proper pruning, xeriscaping, soils, fertilizers, plant pests, and more. After completing the course, participants are required to volunteer their time to share their knowledge with the community through various educational projects.

While a basic understanding of gardening is helpful, selection is based more on a demonstrated willingness to volunteer and engage actively in this elite group of El Paso County gardeners. If accepted, you will receive intensive horticultural training that forms the foundation for the deeper knowledge you'll gain through hands-on volunteer experience. Many past participants have commented that they truly retained the course material through active service.

- Deadline: August 8, 2025

- Application options:

-Online: <https://evs.tamu.edu/application/master-gardener>

-PDF Application: A printable PDF version is available on our website under the "About us" tab, then click the "Application" section.

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law.



- Submission Options:

- Email: eduardo.rascon@ag.tamu.edu
- Mail: (Address listed below)

After your application is received and preliminarily approved, you will receive an email with instructions to complete a background check (cost: \$12). Once the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service receives the results, you will be invited to schedule a face-to-face interview with the El Paso Master Gardener Committee and County Extension Agent. Final acceptance into the program will be determined based on the background check and interview.

Volunteer Commitment:

Upon course completion, you are expected to complete at least 62 hours of approved volunteer service by October 2026. These hours may include:

- Answering gardening questions from the public
- Assisting in research and demonstration gardens
- Creating and delivering educational presentations
- Participating in various community-based horticulture projects

To maintain your Master Gardener certification in future years, you must complete a combination of volunteer hours and continuing education annually. Advanced training opportunities exclusive to the Master Gardener Association will also be available.

Orientation & Classes:

- Orientation: Thursday, August 28, 2025 (4-hour session)
- Class Schedule: Every Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., September 4 – November 13, 2025
- Location:
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service – Ascarate Annex
301 Manny Martinez Sr. Drive, 2nd Floor
El Paso, TX 79905

Classes will be led by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service professionals and regional horticultural experts.

Cost:

- Course Fee: \$215.00 (due at orientation — please do not send money with your application)
- Includes: The Texas Master Gardener Handbook and supplementary handouts

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If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me by phone or email. I wish you the best in your gardening journey and hope to see you in the program.

Sincerely,

Eduardo Rascon

County Extension Agent – Horticulture

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Email: eduardo.rascon@ag.tamu.edu

Phone: (915) 273-3502 Extension: 2329

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