



Little River Basin Master Gardener Association (Milam County) Training Program Application Information



Who are the Little River Basin Master Gardeners?

The Master Gardener Program is a volunteer development program offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. It is designed to increase the availability of horticultural information and improve the quality of life through education and horticultural projects. The Little River Basin Master Gardeners are a diverse, service-oriented, local group who take an active interest in gardening and a search for knowledge, while educating the public about horticultural areas. The program, which began in 2005, now has about 50 active members who have continued to update their training and volunteer hours each year.

Is the Little River Basin Master Gardener Program for me?

Do you want to learn more about the culture and maintenance of many types of plants? Are you eager to participate in a practical and intense training program? Do you look forward to sharing your knowledge with people in your community? Do you have enough time to attend training and to complete the volunteer service? If you can answer yes to these questions, the Master Gardener program could be for you!

How do I apply?

Complete the attached Little River Basin Master Gardeners 2025 Training Application and the Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement. Submit completed and signed forms, along with a check for \$175 to Little River Basin Master Gardeners, AgriLife Extension Office, 806 North Crockett, Suite B, Cameron, TX 76520 as soon as possible but no later than December 15, 2024. The program fee includes the training, all class materials, and field trip admission fees. Class is limited to 20 students.

Training Dates and Requirements

The training will be held in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 102 East 1st Street, Cameron, TX, each Wednesday from February 5 – mid May. Normally, classes meet from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm (times may vary) each Wednesday, except for days when a field trip is scheduled. The program offers (and members must complete) a minimum of 50 hours of instruction that covers topics including lawn care, ornamental trees and shrubs; insect, disease and weed management; soils and plant nutrition; vegetable and herb gardening; home fruit production; garden flowers; and water conservation.

Volunteer Commitment

To become a **certified** Master Gardener, you must complete 50 volunteer hours by December 31, 2025. The hours may begin during your training and are attained by working on approved projects, such as public education, the Junior Master Gardener program, demonstration gardens, and the LRBMGA plant sale. With the many opportunities available, meeting the volunteer hour requirement is not a problem for most participants.

Recertification

After initial certification, 10 hours of continuing education training, 24 hours of volunteer activities, and attendance of at least 4 meetings are required each calendar year to maintain certification status. These are the requirements you must complete beginning in 2026.

Need more information on the 2025 class?

Contact Reba Fischer, Class Coordinator, 979-253-3303 or rebaf22@gmail.com.



**Little River Basin Master Gardener
Association (Milam County)
2025 Training Application**



Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Briefly explain why you wish to be a Master Gardener Volunteer:

Briefly provide a little background on yourself (experience, knowledge and skills):

(continue on reverse)

____ Enclosed is my payment of \$175, made payable to the Little River Basin Master Gardeners. If you are not selected for the program (class is limited to 20), your check will be returned after the December 15 deadline.

____ Enclosed is my signed Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement.

Mail to:
Little River Basin Master Gardeners
Texas AgriLife Extension Service
806 North Crockett, Suite B
Cameron, TX 76520



Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement



We appreciate your commitment to the Texas Master Gardener program. Your satisfaction and progress in this volunteer program are important to us. Please read the following expectations and indicate your willingness to cooperate by signing at the end of this form. This form must be signed and filed with the county Extension office and will need to be updated every three years. Volunteers not adhering to all items in this agreement may forfeit their certification as an Extension Master Gardener volunteer.

I understand that I am trained by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in the field of Horticulture, and I am expected to extend research-based information to the public on behalf of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. In exchange for the minimum of 50 hours of Extension Master Gardener Training provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, I will:

- Commit to a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer service to the horticultural programming efforts in Milam County by the end of the training year to become a certified Extension Master Gardener.
- I understand that to maintain active status as an Extension Master Gardener Volunteer, I must volunteer 24 hours annually after my intern year, gain 10 continuing education hours annually, attend 4 general meetings, and pay dues.
- Provide a record of this service as directed by the Texas Master Gardener Program Coordinator.
- Comply with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Background Check policy. The background check is to be renewed every three years.

When acting as a Texas Master Gardener volunteer, I agree to:

- Consistently exhibit a positive professional manner toward and about Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the Master Gardener Program, the Master Gardener Coordinator, other Extension Master Gardener volunteers, other Texas A&M AgriLife employees, and clients.
- Carry out and discharge all duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Avoid any conflict of interest
- Not use my Extension Master Gardener status to promote any commercial activity or private business.
- Volunteer's efforts at their place of employment will not be considered volunteer service to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.
- Recommend and use (when functioning as an Extension Master Gardener) Texas A&M AgriLife approved information for any public pesticide, herbicides, fertilizer, or cultural practices.
- Provide my own transportation and pay my own expenses incurred as part of official volunteer activities. (Expenses may be tax deductible with proper documentation.) Some County Master Gardener Associations may assist volunteers with expenses for certain types of events. Check with your local Master Gardener Program Coordinator for more information on specific association policies and procedures.
- Act in accordance with the highest standard of ethics:

- Not physically, verbally, or sexually harass/abuse anyone
- Refrain from illegal or unsafe behavior
- Dress appropriately and not use harsh language

All work by an Extension Master Gardener - text, written, spoken, images, photos, illustrations - is expected to result from the Extension Master Gardener's thought, research, or self-expression. All outside work sources (text, written, spoken, images, photos, and illustrations) must incorporate appropriate attribution. Failure to comply is plagiarism and puts the Texas Master Gardener program and the Extension Master Gardener at risk of copyright infringement.

In regard to Master Gardener Coordinators, Extension Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Recognize the responsibilities of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service staff/ Master Gardener Coordinator in setting program priorities, standards, and direction. Specific projects for the performance of the volunteer work are determined locally and should reflect local needs.
- Refer all commercial horticulture inquiries to the Master Gardener Coordinator or other Extension staff.

In regard to Master Gardener Colleagues, Extension Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Welcome volunteers from all backgrounds
- Respect and safeguard the individual rights, competencies, safety, and property In regard to Clients, Extension Master Gardener volunteers will:
- Provide quality service to the public without regard to socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

I further understand that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service employees are held to the highest standard of respect and ethical behavior toward all. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will hold employees accountable for providing the following:

- Provide training, supervision, and direction to Extension Master Gardeners through the local county Extension office.
- Communicate expectations and responsibilities of the program to volunteers.
- Match volunteer skills and interests with volunteer opportunities within the county.
- Support Extension Master Gardener volunteers and the local Master Gardener Association.
- Provide continuing education opportunities.
- Provide access to Extension horticulture reference materials and reasonable access to Extension professionals.
- Uphold and cultivate a trustful relationship between staff and volunteers.
- Reassign and/or terminate, if necessary, any volunteer who does not uphold Texas Master Gardener policies, procedures, guidelines, and/or values.

Grievance Policy: In the event of a disturbance in the program or between individuals, it is expected that you will visit with your agent to communicate the facts of the events. Your agent will consider all positions and determine what is best for the program. Further, if you have a conflict with your agent, it is expected that you will visit with the agent first about your perspective and try to resolve the situation with them. If a resolution is not found, please contact

Jayla Fry, Texas Master Gardener Coordinator, who will determine the best course of action. You will be contacted within two weeks of the initial communication.

I understand that, as a volunteer, I will not be acting as a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service employee and will not receive pay or employee benefits. I also understand that I am not covered by workers' compensation laws in connection with my volunteer affiliation. I understand and agree that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and I both have the right to end my volunteer relationship with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at any time, for any reason, and without advance notice.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Volunteer Printed Name

Agent Signature

Date

Agent Printed Name

More information may be found in the Texas Master Gardener Management guide found at <https://txmg.org/administration/management-guide> for further details on the Extension Master Gardener program, volunteerism, and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension.

More information about the Little River Basin Master Gardener Association (Bylaws and Policy and Procedures Guide) may be found at <https://txmg.org/milam/> under "Member Links."

Information taken from: Purdue, Rutgers, Georgia, Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, California, & Texas (Montgomery Co. and Denton Co.) Master Gardener Programs.