

# Master Gardener Specialist Training Conclave

May 21-22, 2015 on Texas A&M Campus

MG Vegetable Specialist; Course Director-Joe Masabni

MG Earth-Kind Landscape Specialist; Course Director- Tim Hartmann

MG Citriculture Specialist; Course Director-Monte Nesbitt

MG First Detector- Invasive Pest & Pathogen Specialist; Course Director- Kevin Ong

The MG Specialist Conclave is an opportunity for certified master gardeners to gain specialist training in a conference setting. Four specialist courses will be taught concurrently on the Texas A&M University Campus at College Station, Texas. Certified master gardeners with approval and support of their county coordinator may register for one of the training sessions.

**Registration \$250**

***\*\*Master Gardeners completing their requirements are eligible for \$50 in rebates from the Texas Master Gardener Association.***

***On-Line Registration: <http://agriliferegister.tamu.edu> (keyword Master Gardener)***

***Course Descriptions-All four courses involve 16 hours of classroom instruction spanning two days, as listed above. Registrants must begin and complete each session during the listed dates (no exceptions). 20 hours of volunteer service must be completed in one year to gain certification.***

**Citriculture:** The citriculture specialist training will prepare master gardeners to assist extension programming in their county in the area of dooryard citrus production. Texas citrus-producing counties are at risk from Citrus Greening Disease, and thus a focus of this training will be on recognition, prevention and management of CG and other insects and diseases. In-depth training on general citriculture will also be provided, providing participants the opportunity to learn how to grow their own citrus successfully.

**Vegetable:** The vegetable specialist training will address topics necessary to increase knowledge and improve skills in vegetable gardening. Topics covered include soil building, garden location and setup, insect, disease, and weed management, organic options, raised bed gardening. The workshop will also consist of a hands-on tomato grafting session where participants will graft their own plants and take home for planting.

**Earth-Kind® Landscaping:** This specialist training is designed to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge and tools to build and support strong programs in Earth-Kind in their counties. Participants will receive advanced training in the principles and practices of Earth-Kind. A wide range of topics will be covered that specifically relate to the Earth-Kind landscape including: plant selection, pest and disease management, innovative landscape design, soil

preparation, turf management, rainwater harvesting and irrigation management. Participants will also be exposed to a wide variety of new and novel plants for use in a water-efficient landscape.

**First Detector-Invasive Pest & Pathogen:** The Master Gardener Specialist First Detector-Invasive Pest & Pathogen training will introduce participants to the National Plant Diagnostic Network's efforts to protect US agriculture and plants through awareness information of invasive, non-native pests and pathogens. Trainees will learn:

1. Observational and surveying skills – symptoms and damage patterns recognition.
2. Damage pattern and symptom documentation practices.
3. Basic insect identification and plant disease diagnostic skill.

This training will prepare the Master Gardener Specialist to serve as a First (early) Detector. The model subjects used in this training will be the invasive insect – Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB) and the feared *Phytophthora ramorum* causing Sudden Oak Death.

Participants will undergo refresher sessions on basic entomology and plant pathology. Additionally, trainees will also learn various strategies to manage landscape disease problems in Earth-Kind approaches.

**Logistics-**Texas A&M University is located in College Station, Texas. Drive time is 1.5 hours from Houston, 2.0 hours from Austin, 3.0 hours from San Antonio, and 3.0 hours from Dallas-Fort Worth. The dates for the MGS Conclave are between the TAMU spring and summer semesters when few students are on campus. Bryan/College Station is served by Easterwood Airport (code CLL) which has daily flights by United Airlines and American Airlines.

Please bring your Master Gardener Name badge.