

Applications Being Accepted for Master Gardener Program

By Lydia Holley

Henderson County Master Gardener Association (HCMGA) is accepting applications for those wishing to become certified as a Texas Master Gardener. The deadline for application is August 11, with classes starting August 19. Cost is \$150. There will be a mix of online and in-person classes held on Thursday mornings.



If you are interested in becoming a Master Gardener please contact the Henderson County AgriLife Extension Office at 903-675-6130.

The Master Gardener program was started in 1972 in Washington State. Six years later, Texas began its own Master Gardener program. Henderson County Master Gardener Association (HCMGA) formed in 2000.

The Master Gardener program is a volunteer organization. Members share their passion and their knowledge about growing plants. To become certified, participants must attend a 50-hour course, then complete 50 volunteer hours. Yearly continuing education and volunteer requirements are required to retain certification.

HCMGA is a 501-c-3 non-profit organization. The mission to share horticultural knowledge with the community is achieved in numerous ways. HCMGA's Dream Garden is an ornamental demonstration garden. The Harvest Garden is a demonstration garden for fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers for cutting.

Educational programs for the public include the "Learn at the Library" Series, held on the second Tuesday of each month. The Summer Series and Fall Conference highlight local experts with programs on various horticultural topics. Members grow plants for the Plant Sale in a greenhouse. This annual sale allows the public access to Master Gardeners to answer individualized questions. Master Gardeners are also available at booths in various events throughout the county.

An e-newsletter, *The Inside Dirt*, offers information monthly.

Email hendersoncmga@gmail.com to sign up to receive this free source. HCMGA also maintains a website (txmg.org/hendersonmg), and a Facebook page (facebook.com/hcmastergardener).

HCMGA publishes a monthly gardening guide book specific to East Texas. Members consult with schools and give programs to gardening groups and civic organizations. If you like to garden, HCMGA would love to have you join the program.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email hendersonCMGA@gmail.com, or visit txmq.org/hendersonmq.