

2020 Lubbock Master Gardener Intern Program Application

Course Objectives

- Lubbock Master Gardener Interns should gain a basic understanding of the topics covered by the Texas Master Gardener handbook including plant growth and development, soils, water, and plant nutrition, Earth-Kind landscaping, plant health management, fruit and nut production, vegetable and herb gardening, landscape horticulture, and lawn care.

Who are Texas Master Gardeners?

- Master Gardeners are members of the local community who take an active interest in their lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers, and gardens. They are enthusiastic and willing to learn. The goal of all Master Gardeners is to help others and communicate with diverse groups of people.
- What sets Master Gardeners apart from other home gardeners is their special training in horticulture. In exchange for their training, Master Gardeners contribute time as volunteers. Working through their Extension office, Master Gardeners provide horticultural-related information to their communities.

Is the Master Gardener Program for Me?

To help you decide if you should apply to be a Master Gardener, ask yourself these questions:

- Do I want to learn more about the culture and maintenance of many types of plants?
- Am I eager to participate in a practical and intense training program?
- Does sharing my knowledge with people in my community seem worthwhile and exciting?
- Can I meet the time requirements for training and volunteer service?

Training

- The program requires a minimum of 50 hours of online and classroom-style instruction.

Volunteer Commitment

- In exchange for training, participants are required to volunteer time to the Lubbock County Extension Horticulture program. At least 50 hours of volunteer service within one year following the training is required to earn the title of "Texas Master Gardener."
- The type of service done by Master Gardeners varies according to community needs and the abilities and interests of the Master Gardeners. Some Master Gardeners answer telephone requests for information related to gardening. Other Master Gardeners staff plant clinics or displays at farmers markets or community events. Master Gardeners will speak to local groups and conduct workshops. They may help establish community garden projects, work with 4-H youth, or assist their agent with news or radio releases related to gardening. The Horticulture Extension Agent in the Lubbock County Extension office decides how volunteer time will be best utilized.
- Master Gardeners are representatives of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas A&M System. In all volunteer work related to the program, Master Gardeners follow the research-based recommendations of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. The title "Texas Master Gardener" can be used by volunteers only when engaged in Extension-sponsored activities.

Certification

- Participants become certified Master Gardeners after they have completed the training course and fulfilled their volunteer commitment.

Important Information

- **Cost:**
 - \$250.00 per Intern
- **Class meeting schedule:**
 - **Online Class Portion** (32 hours of the required 50): March 15-May10, 2020
 - Each participant must have access to a computer with internet
 - **In-Person Class Portion** (18 hours of the required 50): Each Saturday, March 21-May16, 2020 9:00 am-12:00 pm Location to vary weekly (all within Lubbock)
 - Interns will finish the training portion of the course with ten volunteer hours accrued
- **Requirements for Certification:**
 - Completion of Master Gardener training course
 - Completion of 50 hours of volunteer time
 - Completion of a criminal background check
- **Application requirements and deadlines:**
 - Completed application form
 - Check for \$250.00 payable to **Lubbock Master Gardeners Association** (checks will be deposited after acceptance into the program)
 - Due by February 15, 2020
 - Can be mailed to:
 - Christina Reid
 - P.O. Box 10536
 - Lubbock, TX 79408
 - Can be hand-delivered to:
 - Lubbock County AgriLife Extension Office
 - Attention Christina Reid
 - 916 Main Street, Suite 401
 - Lubbock, TX 79401
 - Can be scanned and e-mailed to:
 - Christina.reid@ag.tamu.edu

Thanks for your interest in the Lubbock Master Gardeners Association! Please don't hesitate to contact Christina Reid with any questions at 806-775-1740 or christina.reid@ag.tamu.edu.

Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ County: _____ Zip Code: _____
Home Phone: _____ T-Shirt Size: _____
Cell Phone: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

If you live outside of Lubbock County, you must have your local county extension agent sign this form. (See the last Page)

Your name and contact information, including e-mail address, will be added to an official mailing list, which is used for approved official Lubbock Master Gardener business.

_____ How did you find out about the Master Gardener program?

_____ Why do you want to become a Master Gardener?

Requirements of the Program

Master Gardener Interns must attend all scheduled classes, pass the final exam, and complete a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer service during the 12 mo. period following completion of training.

_____ Will you be able to attend all the required classes? (please circle one) YES NO

If you have travel or other events that will cause you to miss a class, please detail:

_____ Will you be able to complete 50 hours of volunteer service during the 12 mo. period following completion?

YES NO

_____ To what extent are you available to volunteer during the workday versus on weekends?

_____ Are you currently employed? (please circle one) YES NO

_____ How many years do you anticipate being a Master Gardener? _____ Years

Gardening and Volunteer Experience

_____ Describe your gardening experience. (none is required)

_____ What are your areas of interest, e.g., vegetable gardening, roses, water-wise plants, perennials, daylilies, container gardening, cacti, trees, etc.?

_____ List any garden clubs, plant societies, or other horticultural organizations to which you belong(ed).

_____ Briefly describe what type of volunteer work you currently do or have done in the past. (Organization and type of work you did.)

Educational and Work Experience

_____ Describe any courses relating to gardening or horticulture that you have taken that might be helpful.

Describe work experience that might be useful to you as a Master Gardener.

Teaching or public speaking:

Research (online or other types)

Volunteer Preferences

Please indicate your level of interest in each of the following categories of volunteer activities.

These are general categories. There are many volunteer activities. (Rating scale: 1=very interested; 2=somewhat interested; 3=neutral; 4=somewhat disinterested; 5=not interested)

Rating Issue

Present programs to children

Present programs to adults

Answer gardening questions (e.g., garden shows, libraries, fair, phone)

Write gardening articles for various news media/publications/websites

Work with "hands-on" gardening projects

Assist with special projects, such as plant sales, garden tours, conferences

Serve on Master Gardener committees

I want to be accepted in the Master Gardener training program offered by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

I agree to attend the training sessions and pay the registration fee of \$250.00 (this does cover the \$10.00 for a mandatory background check).

I understand that in exchange for the training, I will volunteer at least 50 educational hours of my time to the county's Master Gardener program March 2020, to March 2021, under the supervision of the Lubbock County Extension Horticulture Agent.

I understand that I will become a Certified Master Gardener when I complete the training and volunteer work.

Applicant Signature

Date

POLICIES

Texas Master Gardener Policies (please read and initial each)

When to use the Texas Master Gardener Title

Because the Texas Master Gardener Program is a public service program operated by Extension to provide unbiased information, volunteers may use the Texas Master Gardener title only when doing unpaid work in this program.

Graduates of the Texas Master Gardener Program should not display credentials or give the appearance of being a Texas Master Gardener at a place of business unless that location is designated as a Master Gardener educational activity location by the local Extension office. They also may not use the title *Texas Master Gardener* in any form of advertisement. It is improper to imply that Extension endorses any product or place of business.

When Texas Master Gardeners speak before groups on a horticultural subject, it is permissible for them to accept unsolicited reimbursements or gifts.

Pesticide recommendations by Master Gardeners

When making pesticide recommendations, Texas Master Gardeners must follow the current recommendations in the various publications available from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. They must not make any other pesticide recommendations, chemical or "organic."

When making pesticide recommendations, Master Gardeners should name multiple products if more than one product is listed as satisfactory. Cultural problems and soil additives that are not specifically covered by extension recommendations and publications should be recommended only after consultation with County Extension Agents or Extension Specialists.

Refer to the local county extension personnel any questions about commercial production of horticultural crops and pest management on such crops.

Volunteer Background Check

All Master Gardener Volunteers must complete and submit a Volunteer Background Check Form (E-446). All volunteers who work directly with youth and adults are screened through the Youth Protection Standards Program. Initial screening of a volunteer is conducted when he/she applies for a volunteer role with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Rescreening through the YPS program is conducted every three years from the volunteer's most recent screening.

Recertification

To retain the Texas Master Gardener title, individuals must participate each year in a minimum of 6 hours of continuing education and 12 hours of volunteer service through the local Extension office.

Just as for the original certification, the documentation and validation of training and volunteer service hours for recertification are under the purview of the Lubbock County Extension Horticulture Agent or a person designated by the agent.

Applicant Signature

Date

Volunteer Application Form

And consent for criminal background history check authorization/waiver

To be completed by Extension program volunteers (EFNEP, BLT, etc.) and Master Volunteers only.
4-H volunteers must register online via 4-H CONNECT or by completing the 4-H Adult Volunteer Application (4-H 2-1.056)

Please print:

1. APPLICANT'S FULL, LEGAL NAME

2. COUNTY

CITY

ZIP

3. ADDRESS

4. ____/____/____

DATE OF BIRTH

5. FIRST 5 DIGITS OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

6. GENDER (*circle one*)

Male

Female

7. DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER (optional)

8. Are you of Hispanic ethnicity? Yes / No

9. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AREA- Master Gardener

RACE (*circle one*) White Black Asian American Indian

Alaskan Native Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander

Previously Screened

10. I verify that I have been previously screened, including a criminal background check and PASSED. Yes No

If yes, by who?

When (Year): _____

For what purpose?

Did you pass? If not, what restrictions were imposed? _____

If you have been screened and passed a criminal background check through an Extension-approved entity, a letter/proof must be submitted.

Please sign at the bottom of the form.

11. I hereby authorize VeriFYI and/or its Service Provider and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service to request and receive any and all background information about or concerning me, including, but not limited to, my Criminal History, Driving Record, Employment History, Military Background, Civil Listings, Educational Background, Professional License from any Individual, Corporation, Partnership, Law Enforcement Agency, and other entities including my Present and Past Employers. I authorize the Texas AgriLife Extension Service or any of its components to make reference checks relating to my volunteer service. I understand that this information will be used to determine my eligibility as a volunteer/employee with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

The criminal history, as received from the reporting agencies, may include arrest and conviction data, as well as plea bargains and deferred adjudications and delinquent conduct committed as a juvenile. I understand that this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility for an employment/ volunteer position with this organization. I also understand that as long as I remain an employee or volunteer here, the criminal history check may be repeated at any time. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review the criminal history as received by the client/agency, and a procedure is available for clarification if I dispute the record as received. I also understand that the criminal history could contain information presumed to be expunged.

I further release and discharge VeriFYI and their Service Provider and all of their Subsidiaries, Affiliates, Officers, Employees, Contract Personnel, or Associates, from any and all claims and liability arising out of any request for information or records pursuant to this authorization and/or procurement of an investigative consumer report and understand that it may contain information about my character, general reputation, personal characteristics, and mode of living, whichever are applicable.

I understand that I have the right to make a written request within a reasonable period to VeriFYI for additional information concerning the nature and scope of the investigation. I acknowledge that I have voluntarily provided the above information for employment/volunteer purposes, and I have carefully read and understand this authorization.

12. Date

13. Applicant's Signature

Volunteer Application Form Instructions

1. Applicant's Printed Name – Complete with first name, middle name, and last name.
2. County – Complete with the county name in which you are applying to be a volunteer.
3. Address – Complete with your current mailing address, city, and zip code.
4. Date of Birth – Complete with the month, day, and year of birth.
5. Social Security Number – Complete with at least the **first five** digits of the social security number. The social security number is an individual descriptor that enables the system to complete a national criminal search of 47 jurisdictions.
6. Gender – Complete by circling one of the options.
7. Driver's License Number – Complete with current driver's license number and state. Although optional, this helps affirm your identity during a background check.
8. Race – Complete the race and ethnicity section by circling the answers that apply. This field is optional; however, it is very important in confirming accurate identity.
9. Volunteer Program Area – Complete with the program area you are volunteering for (e.g., Better Living for Texans, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, Master Wellness Volunteer).

**4-H volunteers should complete the Texas 4-H Adult Volunteer Application (4-H 2-1.056).*

10. Previously Screened – Texas AgriLife Extension Service will accept prior screenings conducted within the past three years from other entities. The approved list of prior screenings either as an employee or volunteer include: school districts, churches, youth groups/associations (Little League, sports associations, etc.), youth agencies/organizations (Big Brother/Big Sister, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, after school/extended care programs), law enforcement (county, state or federal/prison system), Texas Youth Commission, Department of Defense – Child and Youth Services, Department of Defense – Family Programs, concealed handgun license; and/or licensed childcare workers.

** The minimum requirement is a criminal background check conducted through DPS or a National Criminal Search entity. **

*** Other sources may be considered based on documentation provided with screening criteria and specifics. ***

**** Documentation is required for screenings from other entities. This could include a letter of acceptance from the employer or volunteer group or a letter written from the screening entity to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, stating you have been screened and tested.*

11. Authorization Statement – State agencies screening volunteers are required by legislation to use the Volunteer Center of North Texas. The Volunteer Center contracts with VeriFYI. VeriFYI is a background verification software system that accesses multi-jurisdiction checks utilizing one of the largest private-sector criminal history databases in the nation (180 million records). All information received is held in confidence and not shared at the county level. Criminal record results are shredded when a volunteer’s status is determined.

12. Date Completed

13. Applicant’s Signature

We appreciate your commitment to the Texas Master Gardener program. Your satisfaction and progress in this volunteer position are important to us. Please read the following expectations and indicate your willingness to cooperate by signing the end of this form. This form must be signed and filed with the county Extension office and will need to be updated annually. Volunteers not adhering to all items in this agreement may forfeit their certification as a 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 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 Lubbock County within one year to become a certified Master Gardener.
- I understand that in order to maintain active status as a Master Gardener Volunteer, I must volunteer 12 hours annually after my intern year and gain six (6) continuing education hours annually.
- Provide a record of this service as directed by the Lubbock County Extension Horticulture Agent.
- 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 Lubbock County Extension Horticulture Agent, other Master Gardener volunteers, and clients.
- Carry out and discharge all duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Avoid conflict of interest.
- Not use my Master Gardener status to promote any commercial activity or private business.
- Volunteer's efforts for their place of employment will not be considered as volunteer service to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.
- Recommend and use (when functioning as a Master Gardener) only 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 to certain types of events. Check with your local Master Gardener Executive Board 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
- Regarding Lubbock County Extension Horticulture Agent, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Recognize the responsibilities of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service staff 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 Lubbock County Extension Horticulture Agent or other Extension staff.
- Regarding Master Gardener Colleagues, Master Gardener volunteers will:
 - Welcome volunteers from all backgrounds
 - Respect and safeguard individual rights, competencies, safety, and property
 - Regarding Clients, 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 will:

- Provide training, supervision, and direction to 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 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.

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.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

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