



## **TEXAS MASTER GARDENER TRAINEE APPLICATION-NUECES MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION 2022 Class 33**

Registration and course fee (cash, check, credit card, PayPal) Registration Closes June 15

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Texas Master Gardener Program is designed to support the mission of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service by providing horticultural education and training to residents of Nueces County.

### **HISTORY**

Texas A&M AgriLife trains volunteers to educate their community in the cultivation of plants and resource conservation. The Nueces Master Gardener Association was established by Texas A&M AgriLife to enhance the community through demonstration gardens and workshops relevant to our unique South Texas environment.

Our mission focuses on educational outreach to the community, sharing research-based, environmentally conservative methods of garden and landscape management, water protection, plant selection and other horticulture issues. Master Gardener volunteers use and provide information generated by research at Texas A&M University, Texas A&M AgriLife Research centers and institutions of higher education that are part of the United States Land Grant University system.

### **PROCESS**

You will receive training from University professors, Extension specialists and other regional horticulture experts. Class topics include botany, vegetable gardening, composting, integrated pest management, Earth-Kind horticulture, greenhouses, rain harvesting, plant propagation, water management and more.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

Applicants should have a desire to serve the community through our volunteer programs. These programs are the cornerstone of Master Gardeners and provide an important outreach to the community. We are seeking people who desire to make a long-term commitment to the program. A background check is required on all applicants. Read the Membership Policy and Procedure. If you have questions, ask before you register. You will be assigned a mentor throughout your training until you are a Certified Master Gardener.

### **TIME COMMITMENT**

The orientation session has been scheduled for July 18<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 to 8:30pm at the South Texas Botanical Gardens Classroom. Please plan to attend this session.

Classes will be held on Mondays and Saturdays and will consist of a lecture on Mondays from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and lab in person at the South Texas Botanical Gardens and other locations as announced on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. - Noon. The Monday lectures will be held via a reoccurring Zoom link. Saturday lab sessions will take place mostly at the education classroom at South Texas Botanical Gardens and Nature Center, but a several classes will be at different locations throughout Nueces County.

Please check the class schedule to ensure dates and times do not conflict with your schedule. Class size is based on space availability (currently limited to 25 on a first-come-first-served basis).

As a Texas Master Gardener volunteer trainee, you will attend the Master Gardener classes and will donate an additional 50 hours of volunteer service to the community and 6 hours Continuing Education (CE) to become certified. After trainees obtain certification, they are required to re-certify each calendar year thereafter by completing 6 Continuing Education credits (CEs) and 30 Volunteer hours on projects sponsored by AgriLife or approved by the coordinating Agent.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

Please print or type your answers to all questions. It is preferred that you email the completed application to [NuecesMasterGardener@gmail.com](mailto:NuecesMasterGardener@gmail.com) and pay online at PayPal @[nuecesmastergardener](https://www.paypal.com/payto/nuecesmastergardener). Alternately, you can mail your application and payment to Nueces Master Gardener, Inc., Attn: Class 33 Enrollment, 2112 Domingo Dr., Sinton, TX 78387. The course fee is \$280.00, there is a couples and family rate (see Fee Schedule) is due with the application. The fee covers the registration, course fee, Texas Master Gardener Handbook, name tags, & materials, and a NMG T-Shirt and Badge (awarded when certified). Please attach a selfie photo. At the orientation (July 18<sup>th</sup>) you will learn all about the cooperative relationship between Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Nueces Master Gardeners. Horticulture Agent Kevin Gibbs and certified Master Gardeners will be available to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

### INFORMATION

Name (First, M.I., Last):

Address:

City & Zip:

County:

E-mail Address:

Daytime Phone:

Evening Phone:

Cell Phone:

Place of Employment:

Your profession:

If employed, how do you plan to fit the training and volunteer service hours into your schedule?

If retired, what was your profession?

Have you applied for a Master Gardening class before?      Yes                      No

If so, when?

Will you be able to complete the minimum requirement of 50 volunteer and 6 CE      Yes              No

hours? When are you most likely to volunteer for projects? Check all that apply.

Morning                      Afternoon                      Evening

Weekdays                      Weekends

Please indicate any areas of horticulture specialization that interest you. Check all that apply.

Horticulture Help Desk

Landscape Design

Plant Propagation

Vegetables

Greenhouses

Grant Writing

Fruit and Nut Trees

Water Gardening

Herbs

Water Conservation

Ornamentals

Landscape Irrigation

Native Plants

Turf grass

Fund Raising/Plant Sales

Public Speaking/Presentations

Social Media/Website

Other

List any volunteer experience you may have:

What would you like to achieve as a Master Gardener?

How did you find out about the Master Gardener program?

Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in this program are encouraged to contact the coordinating Extension Agent, at 361.767.5217 to determine if reasonable accommodations can be made.



# MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM INTERN CONTRACT



I understand that the Texas Master Gardener Program and the Nueces Master Gardener Association are volunteer organizations of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. As a Master Gardener Intern, I agree to:

- Attend weekly classes to complete a minimum of 50 hours of classroom time.
- Provide a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer service and 6 hours of Continuing Education (CE) by December 15, 2023.
- Pay applicable fees\*\* via PayPal payable to @NuecesMasterGardener or cash, check, credit card

• Student	Couple	Parent + Child	Parents (2) +1 Child or Parent + 2 Children
\$280.00	\$320.00	\$320.00	\$375.00

- Submit volunteer hours at least monthly (weekly is best for keeping track)

I understand that the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Nueces Master Gardener Association will:

- Provide quality training and associated materials
- Keep track of cumulative volunteer hours
- Provide support through regular meetings, activities and newsletters
- Provide opportunities for volunteer service and CE hours on approved projects

Upon completion of the course, test, initial 50 volunteer service hours and 6 CE credits, I will continue to support the Nueces Master Gardener Association. To maintain my active status as a Master Gardener I understand that I must:

- Pay annual local and state dues (currently a total of \$20) by December 31 for the coming year's dues; no dues first year after course.
- Contribute a minimum of 30 hours of volunteer service annually after the first year.
- Attend 6 hours of approved continuing education annually after the first year.
- Attend Master Gardener meetings regularly starting when course begins
- Submit hours and contacts on a monthly basis
- Use acquired knowledge to educate the community and youth on sound horticultural techniques/practices
- Not use the title of Master Gardener for personal gain
- Provide only research-based information to clientele
- Submit a signed Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement annually
- Submit to a background check every 3 years
- Read the Nueces Master Gardener Membership Policy and Procedure before signing.

Signed

Date

Name (printed)

\*\* Fees subject to change without notice

## Confidential

### Volunteer Background History Check Authorization/Waiver

To be completed by Extension program volunteers (ENP, BLT, etc.) and Master Volunteers only.

Please print:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. APPLICANT'S FULL, LEGAL NAME _____</p> <p>3. ADDRESS _____</p> <p>5. FIRST 5 DIGITS OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____</p> <p>7. DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER (optional) _____</p> <p>9. Are you of Hispanic ethnicity? Yes / No<br/>RACE (circle one) White / Black / Asian / American Indian<br/>Alaskan Native / Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander</p> | <p>2. COUNTY _____</p> <p>4. CITY _____ ZIP _____<br/>_____/_____/_____</p> <p>6. DATE OF BIRTH _____</p> <p>8. GENDER (circle one) Male / Female</p> <p>10. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AREA _____</p> |
|--|---|

#### Previously Screened

11. 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.**

12. I hereby authorize the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension or its authorized service provider 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 A&M AgriLife Extension 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 A&M AgriLife Extension.

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 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 Texas A&M AgriLife Extension or its 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 written request within a reasonable period of time to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension or its authorized service provider 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.

13. Date \_\_\_\_\_

14. 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,
4. City and zip code.
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. Date of Birth – Complete with the month, day and year of birth.
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. Gender – Complete by circling one of the options
9. 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.
10. Volunteer Program Area – Complete with the program area you are volunteering for (e.g., Better Living for Texans, Expanded Nutrition Program, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, Master Wellness Volunteer).
11. Previously Screened – Texas A & M AgriLife Extension 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 includes 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 A & M AgriLife Extension stating you have been screened and tested. \*\*\*
12. Authorization Statement – State agencies screening volunteers are required by legislation to perform criminal background history checks through the Volunteer Center of North Texas. 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.
13. Date Completed
14. Applicant Signature



## Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement



We appreciate your commitment to the Texas Master Gardener program. Your satisfaction and progress in this volunteer position is 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. This agreement must be renewed 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 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 Nueces 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 30 (varies by county but must be a minimum 12 hours) hours annually after my intern year and gain 6 (varies by county but must be a minimum 6 hours) continuing education hours annually. See Membership Policy and Procedure for specify details on project areas and hours.
- Provide a record of this service as directed by the Master Gardener Volunteer Management System 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 Master Gardener volunteers and clients.
- Carry out and discharge all duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Avoid conflict of interests
  - 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 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

Regarding Master Gardener Coordinators, 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.
- Follow the regulations, policies and customs of all host organizations.

Regarding Master Gardener Colleagues, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Welcome volunteers from all backgrounds
- Respect and safeguard the 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.