



Master Gardeners Teach Youth, Adults and Create Beautiful, Sustainable Landscapes 2020 Master Gardener Program Applications Now Available

Soon the beauty of winter will be upon us, with frost on the trees and pristine snow-covered landscapes. It's a time when many people prefer to stay indoors, enjoy a good book, a warm fire in the fireplace and a hot cup of cocoa, giving little thought to the outdoors. But for gardeners, winter is a time to dream and plan for next summer's gardens. But for Nebraska Extension Master Gardener (EMG) volunteers, winter is also a time to gather new knowledge, reinforce knowledge from year's past, and prepare to share their knowledge with others.



Do you enjoy working in your garden and talking with friends about your newest plant acquisition? Do your friends ask you for advice on their lawns, vegetables and flowers? Would you like to learn more about the art and science of horticulture? Then you should consider becoming an Extension Master Gardener. You have all the qualifications!

Who are Master Gardeners?

They are people who love plants, and enjoy sharing their knowledge with others. At Nebraska Extension, we teach adults and youth in many different settings, from the county fair, to schools & classrooms, and demonstration landscapes, and our EMG volunteers help us do that.

After training, EMGs assist Extension staff to provide clientele with information by answering phone and walk-in questions, teaching youth or adult programs, and working in demonstration landscapes. The Extension Master Gardener program's goal is to provide Nebraskans with the knowledge they need to create and maintain beautiful, healthy, sustainable landscapes, while conserving water, and protecting themselves and the natural environment from exposure to improperly applied or excessive amounts of pesticides and fertilizers.

Here's how Lori, a long-time EMG, got interested in the program. "After retiring from a long, and enjoyable, teaching career, I was looking for something new to keep my mind and body active. I realized my school days weren't yet over when I spotted an article in the local newspaper telling about the Master Gardener's class being offered at my local Extension office. For 30 years flower and vegetable gardening had been my hobby (and my therapy). Here was a chance to actually find out how to do it. I enrolled."

Training

EMG interns learn about a wide range of horticulture topics including soils, fertilizers, botany, plant selection, plant diseases, insects and weed control. Forty hours of classroom instruction gives them a good foundation in general horticulture, plus basic insect and disease control knowledge. After training, EMG interns give back 40 hours of volunteer service in their community through a variety of activities.

Why get involved in the Extension Master Gardener program? First, because you love gardening. Each Master Gardener has their own special area of interest; a particular type of gardening or type of plant that they love to grow, whether it is roses, herbs, water plants, wildflowers, fruit trees or vegetables. Through the program, EMG interns meet many great people who share their love of gardening and are always happy to share their knowledge. And as a volunteer Master Gardeners make a contribution to their community, by protecting the environment - including water resources and native wildlife - while creating beautiful, sustainable greenspaces.

How To Get Started

Complete and submit an application. Two Master Gardener programs are available for residents of Lancaster county and surrounding areas.

Evening training classes- 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Classes are held from early February through May, at Kiem Hall on UNL's East Campus, 33rd & Holdrege. Complete an application on-line at <http://MasterGardener.unl.edu>, click on "Become a Master Gardener." Or contact Teri James, email: tjames2@unl.edu, (402) 472-8973. Program cost is \$190.00 per person. Application deadline - January 17th.

Weekday training classes- 9:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. Classes are held from mid-February through early April, at the Lancaster County Extension Office, 444 Cherrycreek Road. Complete an application on-line at <http://go.unl.edu/mgapplication>, or contact Mary Jane Frogge for more information. Email: mfrogge2@unl.edu, (402) 441-7180. Program cost is \$190.00 per person. Application deadline - January 17th.

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Image credit- Nebraska Extension. EMGs teaching how to build and maintain a compost pile at Pioneer's Park Nature Center.



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