

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Join the Extension Master Gardener Program in January!

Have you ever heard about the Extension Master Gardener program, but did not know what the program was about, or how to participate? Here is information that introduces the public to the program and helps recruit gardening enthusiasts to join the program in Nebraska!

Anyone interested in the Extension Master Gardener program does not have to be a perfect gardener to participate, unlike the misconception that the public may have. A desire to learn about aspects of the horticulture world, and the willingness to share that knowledge with others in their communities are the qualities that Nebraska Extension is looking for in prospective Extension Master Gardener volunteers.

In return for training volunteers who were interested in helping, Extension offers a specific training course on a variety of horticultural topics for these volunteers to give our non-biased, scientific based recommendations to the people they assisted. In trade for the Extension-based horticulture training, these volunteers donate a specific amount of volunteer hours on Extension sponsored educational programs in return for certification purposes with the Extension Master Gardener program.

Our program in Nebraska has been active since its establishment in 1976, reaching thousands of citizens and horticulture industry professionals across the state and the United States in face-to-face, news media, and social media outreach through demonstrations, educational programs, and information sharing. The Extension Master Gardener program is a wonderful example of recruiting, training, and empowering volunteers who are interested in horticulture into trained, program certified volunteers who extend the reach and diversity of the Nebraska Extension Horticulture program.

Applications to join the Extension Master Gardener program in West Central Nebraska are now open to participate in classes from January through April, and resume in September and October. These classes are taught in person in North Platte or online through Zoom. For anyone who wants to participate in the classes without becoming a certified volunteer is also available, a nominal yearly fee is charged to participate. For new volunteer trainees, the training fees covers the manuals, t-shirt, name badge, and

program fees. Fees for volunteers in their second year and beyond are much lower to cover state program fees and local program support. The online application can fill out at <https://go.unl.edu/wnebrmgapplication> for anyone who wants to participate in the program.

If anyone has questions about the program in West Central Nebraska, please send an e-mail message to dlott2@unl.edu or contact the Nebraska Extension Office in North Platte at (308) 532-2683 to receive the class schedule, and paper application if needed. Applications need to be submitted before Friday, January 6th.

David Lott is the Horticulture Extension Educator with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in North Platte, Nebraska.

Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.