

MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM POLICY

University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Yavapai County

Effective January 1, 2006 (Revised 4/1/2009)

Requirements for Training and Certification, Volunteer Activities, Documentation, and Use of the Master Gardener Title

The Master Gardener Program, administered by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension in Yavapai County, is a partnership between Cooperative Extension and volunteers enrolled in the program. Cooperative Extension trains, certifies, and supervises Master Gardener volunteers who help Cooperative Extension provide information that is endorsed by the University of Arizona on home horticulture to the public.

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Upon acceptance into the Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program, volunteers are designated as Associate Master Gardeners. In order to become Certified Master Gardeners, Associate Master Gardeners must:

1. Complete the Master Gardener Volunteer Training Course. Attendance is mandatory and no more than 3 absences will be excused (make-ups are required for excused absences).
2. Complete the final exam.
3. Complete and document 50 hours of approved volunteer service by June 30th of the year following the completion of training (i.e. a little over 1 year after training).
4. Maintain a current Volunteer Information Sheet on file at the Extension Office.
5. Maintain a signed Terms of Agreement on file at the Extension Office.

Note: Master Gardeners from other counties/states must complete the Yavapai County Master Gardener course before becoming active Master Gardeners in Yavapai County.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

To remain certified, Master Gardeners must:

- Submit documentation of completion of 25 hours of approved volunteer service and 6 hours of approved continuing education hours per fiscal year. The fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th.
- Maintain signed, current copies of the Volunteer Information Sheet and Terms of Agreement on file at the Extension Office.

In order for activities to count toward approved volunteer service, the Master Gardener must be identified as a Master Gardener by wearing a Master Gardener Badge. If applicable, promotion of the event should include reference to the contribution made by Master Gardeners.

The following activities count toward approved volunteer service:

- A. Performing free educational activity that provides information on non-commercial horticulture and gardening to the public when you are represented as a U of A Cooperative Extension Master Gardener.
- B. Answering home gardening and pest management phone calls and helping visitors at the Cooperative Extension Office or Satellite Offices.
- C. Conducting unpaid horticulture presentations, demonstrations, tours, plant clinics, staffing exhibits, helping with seminars, etc., when you are represented as a U of A Cooperative Extension Master Gardener.

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- D. Making unpaid radio and TV appearances.
- E. Writing unpaid articles for a newspaper or newsletter and preparing publications. The byline must include "University of Arizona Master Gardener."
- F. Spending time organizing, researching, planning, and preparing for a talk, plant clinic, educational exhibit, seminar, or other Master Gardener project or event.
- G. Preparing art work, posters, fliers, or displays that benefit the Master Gardener Program or the Cooperative Extension.
- H. Spending time on committees or as a coordinator for any Master Gardener purpose.
- I. Working with other groups as an educator or organizer of a horticultural event.
- J. Organizing reference materials and performing clerical or administrative work for the Master Gardener Program or Cooperative Extension.
- K. Picking up and delivering supplies for a talk, clinic, exhibit, seminar, or other Master Gardener functions.
- L. Working on research projects and reports for the purpose of developing and disseminating information on non-commercial horticulture or pest control topics under the supervision of a Cooperative Extension advisor.
- M. Traveling to and from a volunteer activity.

Note: Hours beyond the minimum requirement may not be carried over to the next year.

OTHER APPROVED VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

When the Master Gardener Program began, Master Gardeners primarily answered telephone requests for horticultural information. They also staffed plant clinics and information booths. Those opportunities are still vital to Cooperative Extension.

In recent years, however, creative Master Gardener and Cooperative Extension agents have recognized that talents which citizens bring to the Master Gardener Program can be utilized in a variety of horticultural activities.

The activities described above are by no means a complete list. Please consult the Yavapai County Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent if you have any questions or are in doubt about a project being eligible to fulfill your volunteer requirement.

Exceptions to the above rules for volunteer hours may be granted by the Extension Office.

ACTIVITIES THAT DO NOT COUNT TOWARDS VOLUNTEER HOURS OF SERVICE

The following activities do not count as volunteer hours:

- Physical labor for a community garden, home gardener, or community group cannot be counted unless it is being done to teach others. However, installation, maintenance and support of sanctioned educational gardens may be counted as volunteer hours. Contact the Yavapai County Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent to find out if a project is eligible. Keep in mind that we are educators, not a free source of labor for other agencies or community groups.
- Any activity for which you charge a fee.

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CONTINUING EDUCATION

As representatives of the U of A Cooperative Extension, Master Gardeners are expected to keep abreast of current local horticulture issues and current U of A recommendations, and in general are encouraged to continue to increase their knowledge of home gardening. The requirement of 6 hours of continuing education per fiscal year can be achieved by attending such things as: local garden seminars, agriculture related classes (classroom time only), talks by experts in specific horticulture/agriculture fields, etc. Travel time is not counted toward continuing education hours.

HOURS REPORTING

Records of volunteer service and continuing education must be submitted on the official reporting form (either electronically or manually). Documentation must be legible and contain a sufficient description for each activity. Submit one copy to the Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Office monthly, if possible, and retain one copy for personal records monthly. Both volunteer and continuing education hours must be reported by June 30th for fiscal year reports and by December 31st for annual reports.

EXCEPTIONS

Master Gardeners who have substantially, but not completely, fulfilled the volunteer &/or continuing education requirement may submit a written request to the Extension Agent in charge to be allowed to donate the remaining service during the following year in addition to that year's requirements during the next year.

Master Gardeners who do not meet these criteria due to illness, family emergency, or other reasons may submit a written request to the Extension Agent in charge in order to be classified as temporarily inactive. Temporarily inactive Master Gardeners will be required to complete only the current year's requirements during the next year.

Any Master Gardener who resigns or has been "inactive" may submit a request to rejoin the program to the Extension Agent in charge. The request should include plans for completing 25 volunteer and 6 continuing education hours within 12 months.

USE OF THE MASTER GARDENER TITLE

As a Master Gardener you are representing the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension. Your Master Gardener name badge must be worn when you are engaged in Master Gardener activities.

You may not charge for services you provide as a Master Gardener except to request reimbursement for personal expenses such as travel and duplication of handouts, etc. If you are charging for a service, you may not do so as an official representative of the University of Arizona Master Gardener Program.

Master Gardener credentials may be proudly displayed, except when the use of such implies endorsement by the University of Arizona or Yavapai County Cooperative Extension for monetary gains.

MASTER GARDENER DESIGNATIONS

The attached addendum further defines the Master Gardener designations, active and inactive status and privileges.

MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM POLICY – Addendum
Yavapai County Master Gardener Designations
 Revised November, 2007

MG Designation	Criteria	MG Status	Newsletter	MGA Voting Status
Associate Master Gardener	- Attending training class or working on first 50 volunteer hours	Active	Monthly E-mail notification w/ link to U of A website when newsletter is posted or Paper mailed subscription - \$16/yr payable by Jan 5 th – check to U of A, sent to Prescott Ext Ofc. or Pick up paper copy at Ext Office for \$1.25	Non-voting member
Certified Master Gardener	- Completed MG training course & first 50 volunteer hours	Active		Voting member
	- Signed Profile and Terms of Agreement on file			
	- Completed 25 volunteer hours and 6 continuing education hours each fiscal year (subsequent to 50 volunteer hours the first year)			
	- If unable to meet the volunteer or continuing education criteria, have approved Waiver or Leave of Absence on file			
	- One fiscal year with less than 25 volunteer and 6 continuing education hours or have not completed 50 volunteer hours within one fiscal year of class completion and no approved Waiver or Leave of Absence on file	Inactive	Non-voting member	
	<u>MG Reinstatement</u> - To return from inactive status, must submit written request, with plan for completing 25 volunteer and 6 continuing education hours within 12 months. If no hours submitted within first six months, will be moved back to inactive status	Inactive	Non-voting member	
Master Gardener Emeritus	- 10 years or more with an active status - No volunteer or continuing education hours required	Active	Voting member	

Note: Fiscal year = July 1st to June 30th