What is a Master Gardener™ Volunteer?

Master Gardener™ volunteers are members of the local community who take an active interest in their lawns, trees, shrubs, and gardens. They are enthusiastic, willing to learn and help others. What really sets these volunteers apart from other home gardeners is their special training in horticulture and their willingness to educate others. In exchange for their training, Master Gardeners™ contribute time as volunteers, work through their Cooperative Extension Center to provide horticulture-related information to the public.

Volunteer Commitment

Once you successfully complete the training program and pass the final exam, you will begin a volunteer internship. During your internship, you will learn even more about plants and people. Master Gardeners™ function as resource individuals for horticultural questions that come in to their local Extension center.

What kind of volunteer activities are there?

The opportunities for volunteer services are limitless. Examples include:
- diagnose plant, insect, and disease problems
- staff plant clinics and educational exhibits
- design a demonstration or community garden
- lecture on various gardening topics
- bring the joy of gardening to senior citizens or young children

Volunteer Training

If accepted into the Extension Master Gardener™ program in your county, you will attend a training course. Classes are taught by Extension staff, local experts, and Master Gardeners™. The program offers a minimum of 40 hours of instruction on horticulture topics including: lawns; ornamental trees and shrubs; insect, disease, and weed management; soils and plant nutrition; vegetable gardening; home fruit production; garden flowers; and water conservation. You will receive a North Carolina Master Gardener™ training manual --- full of comprehensive horticultural subjects. It will be a valuable tool in answering home owners plant questions.

Pitt County Cooperative Extension offers Master Gardener Training every spring. The next training will be held in Spring 2010 beginning Tuesday, February 23th and ending Tuesday April 28th. The class meets every Tuesday from 9:00 am until 12 noon. This year the cost of the class will be $100.00.

How do I become a Master Gardener™ Volunteer?

Send a completed application to Danny Lauderdale, NC Cooperative Extension, 403 Government Circle - Suite 2, Greenville NC 27834. If you need further information please call the office at (252) 902-1709. Or stop by and see us! Our office hours are Monday through Friday, from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm. The Master Gardeners are here on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 am until 12 pm.