



## **WELCOME TO THE MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM**

*Thank you for your interest in the Master Gardener Training Program taught this winter by the University of Maryland Extension, Montgomery County office. The attached information will explain the background and the details of the program. The course fee includes extensive information that will become part of your personal library. After successfully completing the program and fulfilling the volunteer hour commitment, volunteers will be given a "Maryland Master Gardener" certificate. **Please be advised that class size is limited and participants are selected on a first-come, first-served basis.***

*We are pleased to have with us university specialists and agents who are cooperating to teach this program. Get ready for an excellent learning experience. We are looking forward to working with you.*

*Best wishes,*

*Stephen Dubik  
Horticulture Consultant  
Montgomery County*

*Enclosures: As stated*

## **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION**

### **MASTER GARDENER GUIDELINES**

*Welcome to the Montgomery County Master Gardener Program. We hope that these guidelines will adequately describe the goals of the program and the volunteer opportunities available to you at the University of Maryland Extension, Montgomery County office, and in our Master Gardener Program. As a volunteer with the Master Gardener Program you will have access to the wealth of knowledge and training available through University of Maryland Extension to further the goal of home horticulture education and for personal enrichment.*

#### **Purpose:**

*The Master Gardener Program is a nationwide volunteer training program sponsored by Extension. Volunteers are intensively trained to extend to the general public gardening information related to home horticulture. Training programs are taught by Extension agents and specialists so that volunteers can answer telephone inquiries and can work in demonstration gardens, at plant clinics, and with public service educational exhibits.*

*The training and projects are organized at the county level to reflect the needs of the local gardening population. Your training will reflect the needs of the gardening public of Montgomery County.*

#### **Mission:**

*“The Maryland Master Gardener mission is to educate Maryland residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes and communities.”*

#### **Vision:**

*“A healthier world through environmental stewardship”*

#### **Training:**

*The training program is broad based, but includes the core topics of plant and soil science. Disease, insects, pesticides, and general culture of horticultural plants are*

emphasized. The basic training sessions vary from county to county and from year to year depending on the local needs. Last year's class topics included: botany/ecology and wildlife (20%); soils, composting and nutrient management (15%); vegetables and fruit [emphasis on using "organics" (11%); sustainable landscaping (10%); pesticide use and safety (2%); pest management (19%); diagnostics (7%); group projects (5%); administration (8%); other (3%). Agents and specialists conduct the teaching and call in other experts as appropriate. Attendance is mandatory and certification will not be granted if more than three classes are missed. It is also strongly suggested that class participants have an e-mail address and access to a computer to download university fact sheets.

After achieving Master Gardener status, the volunteer will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of advanced training sessions and field days offered by Extension. During the gardening season, free and timely lectures are provided at the Extension office to **all** Master Gardeners. Many diverse opportunities exist for further formal training and volunteer projects.

The title Master Gardener denotes a well-trained volunteer knowledgeable of the latest home horticulture problems and solutions. Certification will **not** be granted until three requirements are fulfilled: training, successful examination completion, and completing 45 hours of volunteer service. Until completion of the volunteer commitment, the trainee is recognized as a Master Gardener Intern. The title of Master Gardener is conferred for one year after the completion of this course. To remain an active Master Gardener, a mandatory 25 hours of volunteer time and 10 hours of continuing education per calendar year is necessary.

### **Examination:**

A final open-book examination will be administered at the end of the training session. A score of 75 or above is necessary to be certified as a Master Gardener. Anyone scoring less than 75 may take one re-test at a time mutually arranged by the applicant and the coordinator. If the second test score also is less than 75, the applicant will need to re-enroll in a future training session. At the request of the trainee, oral examinations instead of written examinations will be administered.

### **Fees:**

Fees are necessary to cover the cost of the educational materials and the literature that you will receive. The literature becomes part of your personal library. The course fee is \$280.

### **Volunteer Commitment:**

The individual must volunteer a minimum of 45 hours before being designated a Master Gardener. The individual Master Gardener and the Master Gardener Coordinator

*will mutually decide on the type and the location of the work. The program is designed to extend home horticulture information to the general public in an educational and unbiased manner. The coordinator will work with the volunteer to achieve this goal by supporting the volunteer with Extension publications, technical assistance, and the diagnostic capabilities of University of Maryland Extension. The 45 hours must be completed by December 31st that year.*

### **Use of the Title:**

*The title, "Maryland Master Gardener," is for exclusive use by certified volunteers when working with University of Maryland Extension programs and **not** for commercial use. Participants are expected to identify themselves as Master Gardeners only in connection with volunteer work conducted under the auspices of Extension. However, the training and experience that is received as a Master Gardener is valuable educationally and worthy of inclusion in a resume.*

*Employees in the horticultural industry will find the Master Gardener Training Program useful for career development; individuals are encouraged to enroll. However, due to career duties, it may be difficult for these individuals to fulfill the Master Gardener volunteer commitment. The title of Master Gardener is not conferred without completion of the volunteer commitment. It is inappropriate to use the Master Gardener identification cards, tee shirts, logos, name badges, or certificates in commercial industry since it incorrectly implies University affiliation with the industry.*

### **Recommendations:**

*Your goal as a Master Gardener is to educate the general public in the area of home horticulture in an appropriate and non-biased manner. Recommendations for the commercial industry and in the areas of home economics or 4-H fall outside of the area of expertise of the Master Gardener and should be referred to the Master Gardener Coordinator. When necessary, pesticides for home horticulture problems may be necessary to solve an insect or a disease problem. All pesticide recommendations made by Master Gardeners shall be from the recommendations published by the University of Maryland.*

*Maryland Master Gardeners are an invaluable resource serving Maryland residents. Your work as a Master Gardener is greatly appreciated and can greatly extend the resources of the University of Maryland Extension. The faculty and staff of Extension welcome you and wish you success in the program.*

*Best wishes,*

*Stephen Dubik  
Horticulture Consultant  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY*



**ON VOLUNTEERING**

The Montgomery County Master Gardener program offers a number of volunteer opportunities in cooperation with the University of Maryland Extension. These include: plant clinics, telephone hotline, therapeutic horticulture, landscape design, speakers group, demonstration garden, Close Encounters with Agriculture program for fourth graders, as well as numerous internal administrative projects. Please write a short paragraph on how you envision utilizing your talents as a Master Gardener volunteer with us.

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Classes begin Tuesday, January 26, 2010, and continue through March 5 (exact date dependent upon possible snow day make-up). They will be held Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the University of Maryland*

Extension, Montgomery County office, (Agricultural Farm Park), 18410 Muncaster Road, Derwood, MD 20855 (a tentative schedule will be forthcoming). The fee for the class is \$280.00 which includes the Maryland Master Gardener training manual and other materials. ~~The registration deadline is THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2009, but~~ **applicants are encouraged to register early since class size is limited and spaces fill rapidly.** To register, please fill out and mail the attached tear-off sheet along with your check. **First checks, first served;** Montgomery County residents may be given priority, however.

**There will be a Master Gardener orientation on Tuesday, January 12, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon; and again on Wednesday, January 13, 2010 from Noon to 2:00 p.m. (If necessary, a snow date will be on Friday, January 15, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon.) Attendance at ONE of these orientations is mandatory. Please call 301-590-2836 and leave a message to sign up for one of these sessions.**

HAPPY GARDENING!

Stephen Dubik  
Horticulture Consultant  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
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PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to Montgomery County E.A.C. and send it together with this registration form to:

University of Maryland Extension, Montgomery County Office  
Master Gardener Training Program  
18410 Muncaster Road  
Derwood, MD 20855

The Montgomery County Master Gardener Program provides county residents with a valuable resource that addresses horticultural problems and associated concerns. It is a non-profit, volunteer organization associated with the University of Maryland Extension. The University of Maryland Extension programs are open to all citizens without regard to race, color, gender, disability, religion, age or national origin.

10/07/09