



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension - Collin County
825 N. McDonald Street, Suite 150
McKinney, Texas 75069

Dear Applicant for the Master Gardener Training Program,

Thank you for your interest in the *Collin County Master Gardener 2020 Training Program*. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is an educational organization provided by the Federal, State and County governments, through the Texas A&M University System. Because of the size and scope of our programs, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service trains volunteers to assist in reaching the citizens of Texas with research-based information.

The Master Gardener Program is a volunteer development program offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and is designed to increase the availability of horticultural information and improve the quality of life through horticultural projects. Program objectives are implemented through the training and use of local volunteers, known as Master Gardeners. They aid Extension by conducting school garden projects; answering telephone requests for horticultural information; establishing and maintaining research and demonstration gardens; working with special audiences in the community; and designing and implementing community improvement projects, as well as coordinating Master Gardener projects. The Master Gardener program is made up of certified volunteers who have been trained by Extension and meet the required volunteer service hours each year. While participants will benefit personally in this training, it should be understood that the principal criteria for acceptance into the program is the availability and willingness of the applicant to volunteer.

The training covers topics such as: the proper environmental and cultural practices in the cultivation and management of ornamental and flowering plants, the production and care of vegetables, fruits and nuts, the care and maintenance of turf and landscape plants, and a general understanding of the sciences of Plant Pathology, Entomology, Botany, and Soils. The training will consist of 12 classes, each Tuesday from August 25, 2020 through November 10, 2020. Orientation Day is scheduled for Tuesday, August 18 at 9:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m. There will be 65 hours of training provided to you during this training program. Extension Specialists, Master Gardeners, and regional experts will teach individual classes. Each class will start at 8:30 a.m. and will last until 4:00 p.m. with one hour for lunch.

In order to meet the requirements to become a Master Gardener you are required to be present at each class for the entire class time. CCMGA recognizes that unplanned events occur, and students may find it necessary to miss a class due to illness or other reasons. Excessive absences make it difficult to stay current with the class material and create an unfair environment for instructors and students that attend all classes. Therefore, CCMGA Leadership may, at their discretion, make a decision to drop a student from the class due to excessive absences. *Applicant to initial to acknowledge notification of excessive absences approach.* _____

Applicants are asked to have some previous computer experience and feel comfortable navigating the Internet and using email. Students will also need access to a computer for extended periods.

All classes will be held inside The Landing at Myers Park and Event Center in McKinney, Texas. Please see the following website for location information:

<http://www.co.collin.tx.us/parks/myers/landing.jsp>

In return for 65 hours of training, you are required to contribute a minimum of 65 hours of volunteer service with an approved Master Gardener project during the year following the training class. Master Gardener Interns must complete 65 hours of volunteer service by December 31 of the year following classroom training to become certified. Of these 65 hours, Interns will be required to have at least eight (8) hours at Myers Park and eight (8) hours in the Information Center. Our interest in selecting individuals for this program goes beyond the first year of service. We need people who are willing to commit to continued participation as experienced Master Gardeners through annual re-certification. Re-certification requirements are 25 hours of volunteer service and 6 hours of Continuing Education training for each calendar year.

The Master Gardener Training Program fee is \$250 for the Training Class. The Master Gardener Handbook, extension fact sheets, expert teachers, and other class materials will be provided. Background checks of all Extension volunteers are mandatory for the protection of our clientele. Volunteers must adhere to Youth Protection Standards established by the Extension Service and participating organizations.

The training class will be limited to approximately 50 participants. Selection will be based on the date we receive your application and the information in the application. A full refund will be provided to those not selected for the program.

To apply, please send the course fee of \$250, and fully read, initial, complete and return this document (8 pages) **PLUS** the Volunteer Application (2 pages), which includes a background check authorization by Tuesday, July 21, 2020. You may apply by submitting the required documents to mgtraining@ccmgatx.org by July 21, 2020. **Incomplete documents will be returned.** These forms are found under the Apply section on the Master Gardener Training page at ccmgatx.org. Payment for the course may also be made at ccmgatx.org by accessing the Master Gardener Training page. Click on the Payment button and follow the instructions on the website.

Two ways to submit **application forms**:

- 1 Print, complete, scan and email to mgtraining@ccmgatx.org by July 21, 2020.
- 2 Print, complete, and mail by July 21, 2020 to:
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension – Collin County
825 N McDonald Street, Suite 150
McKinney, TX 75069

Two ways to **submit payment**:

- 1 Online by credit card at <http://www.ccmgatx.org/shop/mgtraining.aspx>
- 2 Mail your check with your completed application. Check payable to Collin County Master Gardeners Association. You may pay online with credit card even if you submit your application in the mail.

Upon acceptance to the Master Gardener program, you will be notified of the next steps. At the Orientation Meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 further information will be provided, and we will explain the mission and purpose of the Texas Master Gardener Program. This meeting will also provide an opportunity to visit with current Master Gardeners.

I encourage you to visit the following websites: <http://agrilife.org/> , <http://collin.agrilife.org>, <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu>, <http://earthkind.tamu.edu>, <https://txmg.org> , <http://www.ccmgatx.org>.

If you have any questions, please contact us at mgtraining@ccmgatx.org

Sincerely,
Susan Blakey
President, Collin County Master Gardeners
Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Collin County



Collin County Master Gardener Application

I am applying for acceptance into the Texas Master Gardener Training program offered by Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Collin County. I understand that in exchange for the training made possible through Texas AgriLife Extension Service, I agree to volunteer 65 hours of my time to the Master Gardener Program during the year following completion of the training course. Of these 65 hours, at least eight (8) hours at Myers Park and eight (8) hours in the Information Center. I understand that I will become a certified Texas Master Gardener when I complete both the training and the volunteer service within the first year. I agree to attend all Master Gardener Training classes each Tuesday from August 25 through November 10, 2020 and stay for duration of class time. I have access to a computer and printer to download and print assignments for class. I agree to pay the fee of \$250 for the training course and understand that refunds are not available after August 31, 2020.

Name: _____
(Please Print Name)

(Signature)

Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Telephone: (Day) _____ (Night) _____

Email Address: _____

Emergency contact name and phone: _____

Medical conditions we should know about (optional): _____

Please complete the following questions.

1. Are you a resident of Collin County? If yes, how many years? : _____

2. How did you learn of the Master Gardener Program? _____

3. Why do you want to become a Master Gardener? _____

4. Any formal gardening related training? _____

5. Please describe any other skills and/or abilities you have which might be useful in volunteer work (e.g., computer and/or clerical skills, web page design, public speaking, artistry, photography, graphic design, fund-raising, newsletters and media relations, program and/or presentation development, editing, etc.):

6. Are you currently employed? If yes, where? _____

Title: _____ Duties: _____

7. Is there any reason you will not be able to attend all classes? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, please provide a reason. _____

8. Do you have access to a computer? _____

9. Are you comfortable using email and navigating the Internet? _____

10. Have you ever been employed in the field of horticulture or gardening? If yes, in what capacity? _____

11. To become a Master Gardener is important to me because:

1= least important

5=most important

- a. I will be able to increase my knowledge and skills as a gardener. 1 2 3 4 5
- b. I will have the opportunity to meet and share information with other gardeners. 1 2 3 4 5
- c. I will be certified by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. 1 2 3 4 5
- d. I will gain gardening experience that can help me get a job. 1 2 3 4 5
- e. I will be able to improve the environment. 1 2 3 4 5
- f. I will be able to improve my community. 1 2 3 4 5
- g. I will be able to provide a service to people in my community/neighborhood. 1 2 3 4 5
- h. I will be recognized by people in my community. 1 2 3 4 5
- I. I will be able to work with youth in my community. 1 2 3 4 5

9. Please indicate your degree of interest in the areas listed below.
Mark "H" for high, "A" for average, and "L" for low.

Answering telephone inquiries	_____	Computer work	_____
Clerical work	_____	Newsletter	_____
Writing/editing articles	_____	Fund-raising	_____
Photography	_____	Plant variety trials	_____
Developing displays	_____	Speaking engagements	_____
Garden Installation & Maintenance	_____	Graphic design	_____
Landscape Design	_____	Physical Labor	_____
Research for program development	_____	Specialized training	_____

10. Please provide additional comments:

Please complete this application and return it to:

mgtraining@ccmgatx.org

For additional information, please call the Extension Office

(972) 548-4232 or metro (972) 424-1460 x 4232

or e-mail questions to mgtraining@ccmgatx.org

Complete applications are due in the Collin County Extension Office by July 21, 2020

Individuals selected for the program will receive official notification by e-mail.

Extension programs serve people of ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. A member of the Texas A&M University System and its statewide Agriculture Program.

Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement

We appreciate your commitment to the Texas Master Gardener program. Your satisfaction and progress in this volunteer position is important to us. Please read the following expectations and indicate your willingness to cooperate by signing the end of this form. This form must be signed and filed with the county Extension office and will need to be updated annually. Volunteers not adhering to all items in this agreement may forfeit their certification as a Master Gardener volunteer.

I understand that I am trained by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in the field of Horticulture and I am expected to extend research based information to the public on behalf of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. In exchange for the more than 65 hours of Master Gardener Training provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, I will:

- Commit to a minimum of 65 hours of volunteer service to the horticultural programming efforts in Collin County within one year following training to become a certified Master Gardener.
- Master Gardener Interns must complete 65 hours of volunteer service by December 31 of the year following classroom training to become certified. Of these 65 hours, Interns will be required to have at least eight (8) hours at Myers Park and eight (8) hours in the Information Center.
- I understand that in order to maintain certification as a Master Gardener Volunteer, I must volunteer 25 hours annually after my intern year and gain 6 hours Continuing Education hours annually.
- Provide a record of this service as directed by the Master Gardener Program Coordinator.
- Comply with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Background Check policy. The background check is to be renewed every three years.

When acting as a Texas Master Gardener volunteer I agree to:

- Consistently exhibit a positive professional manner toward and about Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the Master Gardener Program, the Master Gardener Coordinator, other Master Gardener volunteers and clients.
- Carry out and discharge all duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Avoid conflict of interests
 - Not use my Master Gardener status to promote any commercial activity or private business.
 - Volunteer's efforts for their place of employment will not be considered as volunteer service to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

- Recommend and use (when functioning as a Master Gardener) only Texas A&M AgriLife approved information for any public pesticide, herbicides, fertilizer or cultural practices.
- Provide my own transportation and pay my own expenses incurred as part of official volunteer activities. (Expenses may be tax deductible with proper documentation.) Some County Master Gardener Associations may assist volunteers with expenses to certain types of events. Check with your local Master Gardener Program Coordinator for more information on specific association policies and procedures.
- Act in accordance with the highest standard of ethics:
 - Not physically, verbally or sexually harass/abuse anyone
 - Refrain from illegal or unsafe behavior
 - Dress appropriately and not use harsh language

Regarding Master Gardener Coordinators, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Recognize the responsibilities of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service staff/ Master Gardener Coordinator in setting program priorities, standards and direction. Specific projects for the performance of the volunteer work are determined locally and should reflect local needs.
- Refer all commercial horticulture inquiries to the Master Gardener Coordinator or other Extension staff.

Regarding Master Gardener Colleagues, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Welcome volunteers from all backgrounds
- Respect and safeguard the individual rights, competencies, safety and property.

Regarding Clients, Master Gardener Volunteers will:

- Provide quality service to the public without regard to socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age or national origin.

I further understand that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will:

- Provide training, supervision, and direction to Master Gardeners through the local county Extension office.
- Communicate expectations and responsibilities of the program to volunteers.
- Match volunteer skills and interests with volunteer opportunities within the county.
- Support Master Gardener volunteers and the local Master Gardener Association.
- Provide continuing education opportunities.
- Provide access to Extension horticulture reference materials and reasonable access to Extension professionals.
- Uphold and cultivate a trustful relationship between staff and volunteers.
- Reassign and/or terminate, if necessary, any volunteer who does not uphold

Texas Master Gardener policies, procedures, guidelines, and/or values.

I understand that, as a volunteer, I will not be acting as a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service employee and will not receive pay or employee benefits. I also understand that I am not covered by workers' compensation laws in connection with my volunteer affiliation. I understand and agree that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and I both have the right to end my volunteer relationship with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at any time, for any reason, and without advance notice.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Information used from: Purdue, Rutgers, Georgia, Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, California, & Texas (Montgomery Co.) Master Gardener

