Master Gardener
Coordinator’s Guide
OBJECTIVE
For use by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach staff when developing and coordinating a county- or area-based Master Gardener Program. This guide will help you answer the questions:

- What is the Iowa Master Gardener Program?
- How is the core training conducted?
- What can Master Gardener volunteers do?
- What are effective ways to organize and manage the program?
- What resources are available to support the Master Gardener program?

Learn more about the Iowa Master Gardener program

Visit the Iowa Master Gardener website at www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener
Contact the Iowa State University Extension Master Gardener Staff:
  State Coordinator: Susan DeBlieck, 515-294-6764, deblieck@iastate.edu
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ABOUT THE MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

Focus on education and volunteers

The Iowa Master Gardener organization is an educational and volunteer service program of the Iowa State University (ISU) College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and ISU Extension and Outreach. Through the Iowa Master Gardener program, interested volunteers receive training in horticulture and environmental topics of special value to the home gardener.

In exchange for this training, Iowa Master Gardeners share their time and knowledge on approved projects within their communities. Through the leadership, instruction, and hands-on assistance provided by Master Gardeners, the broad resources of Iowa State University are extended to benefit Iowans at the local level and enhance the quality of life in Iowa communities.

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is a partnership including Iowa State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local Extension districts. This partnership cooperates with local governments and citizens to extend information from the university to citizens throughout Iowa.

History of the Master Gardener program

The Master Gardener program began as a response to public demand for horticultural information from local extension offices in the state of Washington in 1972. The pilot program provided interested individuals with specialized home garden horticulture training in exchange for volunteer assistance to extension service personnel in providing individualized information to clients.

The successful program in Washington provided a pattern, and now, all states, the District of Columbia, and four Canadian provinces have organized Master Gardener programs. It is estimated that there are nearly 100,000 active participants in the Master Gardener program nationwide.

The Iowa Master Gardener program was first offered in Scott County (Davenport) in 1979 with 17 trainees. More than 13,000 Iowans in nearly all of Iowa’s 99 counties have been trained as Master Gardeners. In a typical year, training is held in approximately 30 locations around the state. The Master Gardener program also has been used as a model for several other volunteer training programs, including the Master Woodlot Managers, Master Composters and Master Conservationists.

History of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is part of the Cooperative Extension Service. Congress established this national program in 1914 to distribute information developed by land grant universities and research stations to citizens. For more details on the history of Iowa State Extension and Outreach go to http://www.extension.iastate.edu/dubuque/page/extension-service-historical-perspective. For more information on the history of Iowa State University go to www.public.iastate.edu/~isu150/history/time.html
What is the Master Gardener product?

Extension and Outreach’s product is information. The long-term credibility of that information depends on everyone who represents ISU Extension and Outreach. The confidence that clientele have that the information they receive is reliable and credible is the foundation upon which the Extension Service is built. As Extension volunteers, Master Gardeners are expected to uphold university research-based findings even when the information is new or different from the volunteer’s personal experience or opinion. If using the Internet as an information source, volunteers must reference only websites that are reputable based on responsible research that preferably is academic, and appropriate to Iowa’s climate, conditions, and cold hardiness zones.

How is the program administered?

The state Master Gardener program is administered and coordinated by ISU Extension and Outreach faculty and staff. They develop and provide curriculum and program materials, and also oversee the technical details related to course delivery. At the local level, the ISU Extension and Outreach office administers the Master Gardener program. Local staff members coordinate training and provide support to Master Gardener volunteer education and service projects.

State staff responsibilities

- Susan DeBlieck, state coordinator is responsible for supporting coordinators and statewide communications. She coordinates the Master Gardener training and works with ISU faculty and Extension staff to set objectives and prepare the training materials.
- The State Master Gardener Advisory Committee advises the state coordinator on policies for the program and assists with planning state and regional conferences. The group’s objectives are to develop programming strategies and governing policies that are in the best interests of the Iowa Master Gardener program and its volunteers. Each member of the advisory committee serves as an ambassador of the Iowa Master Gardener Program by promoting its mission in word and deed as a volunteer and with particular attention toward communicating this mission to local, county, regional and state officials in order to assure the continuance and effectiveness of the program throughout the state. This group meets at least twice per year. Membership consists of five Master Gardeners and five county coordinators representing five geographic regions of the state. In addition, an Extension & Outreach regional director and members of the state Master Gardener staff serve on the committee. For more details on the committee, including minutes from past meetings, see the State Advisory Committee website page.

Where to find Master Gardener Coordinator materials & information:

- Website: Iowa Master Gardeners
- Facebook: Iowa Master Gardeners
- Twitter: mgardener_IA
Local responsibilities

Local Master Gardener programs require effort and commitment. Extension staff will need to be involved in coordinating and hosting the training, collecting requests for help, providing guidance and support to volunteers, and verifying service hours and activities. Introducing the Master Gardener program may create more demand for horticultural information resulting in a self-perpetuating effect of increased demand. Local programs may encompass one or more counties. A local coordinator is expected to:

- **Training**: Oversee the training site, Direct trainee recruitment and selection, and Schedule local face-to-face classes,
- **Verify Master Gardener service hours**, and
- **Support Master Gardener volunteer projects**.

The local coordinator may be an extension education director, an extension agriculture or horticulture field specialist, a locally paid program assistant, or a Master Gardener volunteer. Master Gardeners and interns may fulfill service hours by helping the coordinator.

For more information about handling finances related to the Master Gardener program see Working with [Master Gardener Finances](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/advisory-committee).

A local advisory committee may be established to discuss program activities and needs, plan recruitment of future Master Gardener trainees, and develop community volunteer activities. See [Appendix A](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/advisory-committee) for an example of the structure of a local Master Gardener advisory committee. Master Gardeners in some parts of the state have organized into groups that meet on a regular basis to work on projects and plan educational programs for their own benefit and to help the public learn about horticulture.

Annual schedule for coordinators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Verify Master Gardener hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Horticulture In-Service meeting for coordinators in Ames</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Search for Excellence Award submissions due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Start of core course training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Fall Saturday class-on-campus training session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Core course training sessions conclude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Volunteer service and continuing education hours are due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Funding

Funds for the Iowa Master Gardener Program come from core training fees, continuing education webinar fees, conference registration fees, and sales of Master Gardener promotional items such as shirts. While ISU Extension and Outreach indirectly supports the Master Gardener program through
staff salaries, no direct line item budget exists for Iowa Master Gardener program operational expenses in the overall ISU Extension and Outreach budget.

The Master Gardener management team seeks external grants for specific programs that involve Master Gardeners. Similarly, many local Master Gardener programs apply for and obtain grants for specific projects. In addition, fund-raising events such as plant sales and class fees help support local Master Gardener groups.

The table below outlines various Master Gardener funding sources and where those funds are used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>What the Funding Source Supports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iowa State University Extension &amp; Outreach and Department of Horticulture through Federal and state funds</td>
<td>Master Gardener state coordinator and program assistant positions; state extension faculty positions that support the Master Gardener program; operational expenses (facilities) for the above positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Extension Master Gardener office through core course fees; ProHort class fees; continuing education class fees; sale of promotional items; conference fees; grants; donations</td>
<td>Operational expenses for the state Master Gardener office and staff including production of educational materials for volunteers; volunteer continuing education classes, conferences, events; volunteer recognition; program promotion and marketing; newsletters; telephone, printing, postage and materials handling fees; IT support for the core course and webinars; some state coordinator and program assistant travel costs; support for selected educational programming activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Extension funds based on county Extension budget allocation</td>
<td>Local extension staff and Master Gardener coordinator positions; county extension support staff positions; county extension office operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Master Gardener Program: local program generated fees through classes; horticulture events; sales, gifts, grants; donations.</td>
<td>Local Master Gardener educational events, classes, etc.; local Master Gardener operations; possibly local Master Gardener revenue share toward local extension staff position and/or operations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who can become a Master Gardener?

All adults (18 years of age or older) with an interest in gardening are eligible to apply for Iowa Master Gardener training. A potential Master Gardener must demonstrate interest in gardening, enthusiasm for acquiring and sharing knowledge, and sincere commitment to volunteerism and community betterment. Applicants who do not intend to volunteer should be directed to apply as a ProHort student rather than as a Master Gardener trainee.

Volunteer Categories

**Master Gardener Trainee**

- An applicant who has been accepted into the Master Gardener core course program or one who has not yet completed the core course, class on campus, and passed (score of 70/100 or higher) the core course final assessment is considered a Master Gardener Trainee.

**Master Gardener intern**

- Volunteer-in-training who has successfully completed the local classroom sessions and class on campus segments of the core course training program and has passed the final class assessment with a score of 70/100 or higher
May need to complete internship before taking on leadership roles in county
Has access to all program & Extension resources, staff, website, education, events, etc.

**Active Master Gardener**
- Successfully completed initial internship of 40 hours
- Annually fulfills and reports on-line a minimum of 20 volunteer service and 10 continuing education hours
- Signs the annual volunteer agreement
- Is eligible for volunteer activities
- Has access to all program & Extension resources, staff, website, education, events, etc.

**Inactive Master Gardener**
- Has not reported the minimum required volunteer and/or continuing education hours during the past calendar year
- If the length of the inactive status is two years or less, may reactivate by completing a minimum of 24 hours of service and 12 hours of continuing education. If the length of inactive status is longer than two years, additional continuing education may be required to reactivate.
- Years in inactive status do not count toward years of Master Gardener service awards
- Has access to all program & Extension resources, staff, website, education, events, etc.

**Lifetime Master Gardener**
- Considered in good standing with the program at the time of such designation
- Has accrued 10 or more years and 1500 or more hours of service as an active Master Gardener
- May continue to volunteer and report hours as able, but is not required to report volunteer hours or meet minimum hours requirements
- Has access to all program & Extension resources, staff, website, education, events, etc.

**Honorary Master Gardener**
- Someone who has contributed significantly to the local or statewide Iowa Master Gardener program, but who is not an active Master Gardener and may not have taken the Master Gardener core course
TRAINING GUIDELINES

Communicating about the training

Materials are available on the staff side of the Master Gardener website to promote the training including: press releases (see Appendix G: Sample Recruiting News Release), brochures, banners, postcards, and newspaper ads.

What is the training schedule?

Master Gardener training is offered in the fall (running September through November).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Training dates for the following fall are announced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>State Master Gardener staff convene a meeting for all sites intending to offer training for the upcoming training sessions starting in September. Coordinators should contact speakers about presenting for the face-to-face sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Online registration is due. County training hosts must place an order with the MG state office to order materials for the class. Coordinator hosts local orientation session for training. Later, the web-based lectures begin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Fall Saturday class-on-campus training sessions are offered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Fall core training concludes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Final session can be hosted by coordinator to celebrate achievements of MG trainees becoming Master Gardeners.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is the registration process?

To register for the Master Gardener training, work with applicants to complete the following steps:

1. Individuals complete an online application form on the Volunteer Reporting System (VRS) by early September and state staff share it with the county office (see Appendix B: Sample Master Gardener Application Form).
2. County Extension & Outreach staff review applications. Please send e-mail messages to applicants letting them know their status (accepted, on the waiting list, or denied).
3. County Extension staff mail background check materials to accepted applicants by a week prior to the state registration deadline. (see Appendix C: Volunteer Background Screening Authorization Form and Appendix D: Volunteer Background Screening Disclosure). Allow 5 business days for the background checks to be processed.
4. The list of who is accepted into the MG Training should be shared with the Assistant Coordinator.
5. Based on the list of accepted trainees, ISU Extension & Outreach Distribution will send training materials directly to county offices. Most orders are shipped within two to three business days after the list is received. Any registrants submitted after the published deadline will be charged a $25 late fee. ISU Extension & Outreach Distribution will send training materials directly to county offices. Most orders are shipped within two to three business days after the list is received.
6. Trainees will receive an e-mail with the pre-assessment to complete by the first day of class.
7. ISU Extension & Outreach Distribution will send an invoice for the cost of materials ($145) plus shipping fees. Alternatively, county staff may pick up the training materials at Extension Distribution to save shipping costs.

About Background Checks

All applicants to the Master Gardener training must undergo a background screening check conducted by First Advantage through the Iowa Association of County Extension Councils. Find more details here. The cost of the background check is approximately $35 and is charged to the county by First Advantage. The $50 of the $195 training fee that remains with the county office should more than cover the cost of the background check. Keep completed background check forms on file in a locked filing cabinet in the county office. Please keep a list of Master Gardeners that have completed and passed the background checks with the date completed (see Appendix C: Volunteer Background Screening Authorization Form and Appendix D: Volunteer Background Screening Disclosure).

Selecting trainees

Selecting motivated learners and willing volunteers can be difficult and demanding. Some coordinators use an application form (see Appendix B for a sample) along with a personal interview. No minimum number of participants is required for a county to offer the training, however, in order to have state horticulture staff present one of the face-to-face class sessions, a minimum of 12 participants is required. To meet the minimum requirement for face-to-face assistance, you may pair with a neighboring county and hold joint face-to-face sessions.

County offices select the best volunteers after they have applied to the Master Gardener program. Interviews may or may not be useful when selecting participants who are motivated to be successful volunteers for the local extension office. Notify applicants as soon as possible regarding their status as “accepted,” “on the waiting list,” or “denied.”

Despite initial appearances, some individuals may drop out of the training program or disappear after graduation. This occurs in every program. A dropout rate of 10 percent or fewer is outstanding for any program. One of the coordinator’s tasks is to maintain contact with those individuals and draw them back to the program if possible. It may take just one phone call to bring them back.

Consideration of the following factors also may be helpful:

- **Desired number of volunteers**
  No minimum number of participants is required by the state Master Gardener office for a county to offer the training. County Extension Councils or the local Master Gardener coordinator may, however, set a minimum class size. Local coordinators have found that a class size of 15 to 25 is a manageable number to train and supervise. Larger classes require more time and a greater number and variety of volunteer projects.

- **Diversity**
Recruiting from all communities and ethnic groups increases the potential for broad volunteer diversity. To learn more, please view the non-discrimination statement on page 21.

**Desired volunteer jobs or tasks**
Deciding how Master Gardeners can most help local programs may influence the qualities sought. While all applicants are likely to have a basic understanding of gardening and/or plant science, a particular community may have a need for volunteers to work with a specific audience (for example, school-age youth or an ethnic group) or to work with local media in providing relevant information during the growing season.

**Individual motivation**
Experience demonstrates that the applicant’s interest and motivation is one of the most significant factors in his/her success as a Master Gardener. The primary reason many volunteers enter the Master Gardener program is to receive additional training and education in gardening and horticulture. The individual who also willingly shares information or who easily works with other people tends is a preferred applicant.

Those individuals who want to receive the training to better manage their property or to get a better job in a nursery or other horticultural business are not as likely to complete a volunteer internship. Also, applicants who are encouraged to apply by their employers (garden centers or landscaping businesses) often fail to complete a volunteer internship. You may wish to encourage applicants with a commercial focus to apply as a Pro-Hort trainee rather than as a Master Gardener trainee. Many of these individuals fail to follow through on their volunteer commitment once the training is completed. Some local programs require participants to sign a volunteer training agreement similar to the state-wide annual agreement.

**About the ProHort option**
Individuals can participate in the core course training as ProHort trainees. They may be looking for a professional training and learning best practices, but are not interested in volunteering. ProHort trainees pay a higher registration fee ($550, of which 20% or $110 stays with the local county) and receive a ProHort certificate upon completion of the core course training. To receive the certificate, they must pass the training post-assessment with a score of 70/100 or higher. They are not Master Gardeners and are not allowed to use the title Master Gardener. ProHort trainees do not need a background check.

**Materials for the training**
Each participant receives two books: the *Iowa Master Gardener Workbook* (MG 5) and the *Resource Guide for Iowa Master Gardeners* (MG 15). Books are shipped from ISU Extension & Outreach Distribution Center directly to the local coordinator’s office after the state office receives the county registration list. The books are shipped within a couple of days from the time class rosters are submitted to the state Master Gardener office.
Study guide review questions and worksheets in the workbook help emphasize main points from class sessions, encourage interns to become familiar with the training materials and other resources, and help interns gain confidence in answering questions they might be asked by the public. The state office does not collect results from the self-study guide materials. Additional educational materials are available in the form of horticulture publications from Extension Online Store (https://store.extension.iastate.edu/). Local site coordinators may want to order or download and print pdfs of publications related to each week’s training session.

In addition to the workbook and resource guide, a Master Gardener Volunteer Manual is available for download by trainees. You may wish to print out hard copies of the volunteer manual for use during the orientation session of the training class.

The link to the online evaluation tool for the Master Gardener Training will be shared with trainees to complete for each lecture.

What is included in the training?

The course includes the following: a) an opening orientation session, b) three face-to-face sessions, c) eight web-based lectures, d) class on campus, e) a wrap-up/graduation session, and f) optional additional educational classes provided locally. See Appendix E for a sample semester schedule. Master Gardener classes use a curriculum developed and reviewed by ISU Extension specialists. Objectives of Master Gardener training units are summarized in Appendix F and may be duplicated to share with Master Gardener program applicants and trainees.

A. One opening session
It is the coordinator’s responsibility to schedule this orientation session. The first session should be held prior to the first scheduled web-based lecture. The orientation session provides time for introductions to the Master Gardener program. It should include a) ice breaker games for folks to get to know one another, b) explanation of training and Master Gardener expectations, c) passing out workbooks and handbooks, d) covering the history of ISU Extension, and e) introducing volunteer projects and the Volunteer Reporting System (a PowerPoint presentation on this topic is available on the “For staff” section of the Master Gardener website).

B. Three face-to-face topic sessions
Local coordinators are responsible for scheduling three face-to-face sessions and finding presenters for these classes. Speakers for these topics may include Master Gardener volunteers, local Extension staff, or ISU Horticulture faculty.

Topics for the face-to-face sessions are: Vegetables and Herbs, Houseplants and Plant Propagation, and Herbaceous Ornamentals. Please share training materials with your speakers; materials include slide scripts, PowerPoint slides, and a copy of the resource guide and workbook chapter on each topic. These materials are available on the “For staff” section of the Master Gardener website.

- Consider using local experts such as Master Gardener volunteers or professional horticulturalists (i.e. farmer or greenhouse manager) to present these programs. As for any Extension and Outreach programming, professionals may not endorse their place of business as part of the presentation.
- Speakers can include local Extension horticulture staff, however the state office will not provide mileage reimbursement for the presentation.
The state Master Gardener office provides mileage for one state specialist to present at a participating county if there are 12 trainees present. Specialist speakers include Iowa State University Horticulture staff (Richard Jauron, Cindy Haynes, and Susan DeBlieck) and field staff (Patrick O’Malley and Joe Hannan). Two or more counties may combine forces to meet the 12-participant minimum for face-to-face sessions.

C. Eight web-based lectures
Local coordinators connect a computer and projector to tune into scheduled webinars. Webinar broadcasts start at 6:30 p.m. and run until 9:30 p.m. with a 10-15 minute break in the middle. ISU instructors provide training via web-based broadcasting for eight lectures (Soils & Botany, Plant Pathology & Entomology, Landscape Trees & Shrubs, Sustainable Home Landscape Design, Fruit Culture, Turfgrass Management, Animal Ecology, and Weeds, IPM & Pesticides).

Trainees should arrive before 6:30 p.m. to be settled in place when the broadcast starts. If you prefer, students can be told to arrive 15 minutes (or more) earlier for review of the previous session’s worksheets, announcements, etc.

D. Saturday class on campus
Trainees are expected to attend one of two Saturday class-on-campus sessions. Campus classes run from 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. with an hour break for lunch. Cost of the catered lunch is included in the core course registration fee. Because food is ordered for these events, the county coordinator needs to share information about a) the number of participants in the class on campus, and b) any dietary restrictions that the trainees have.

Each Saturday class on campus features a series of hands-on exercises related to soil science, botany, compost, entomology, and plant pathology. Participant groups will be assigned a class rotation that they are expected to follow. The compost topic in the MG Resource Guide is only covered in the class on campus; be sure to submit evaluations for that session after the Saturday class on campus.

Additional details regarding driving directions, parking reminders, and class locations are included in the Master Gardener Workbook (MG 5) and reminders are included during the web-based lectures prior to the class on campus. Trainees are encouraged to bring their workbooks (not resource guides) to campus to complete worksheets in class (i.e. Entomology worksheet).

E. Closing session
Coordinators may want to schedule a closing session. A final class session is a time for wrap-up, including discussion of expectations for volunteer service and continuing education activities. Some counties schedule a graduation/recognition event for new interns to help them get acquainted with active master gardeners.

F. Optional/additional classes
Some counties offer additional class sessions and charge additional fees to cover material not included in the state training. Topics may include hands-on workshops such as pruning, plant propagation, and greenhouse management.

Pre- and Post-Assessment
To align with national Extension Master Gardener standards, the Iowa Master Gardener program is required to measure the knowledge gained in the Master Gardener Training. A test including 100 questions covering training topics was created to meet this objective. Both the pre- and post-assessment contain the same 100 questions.
The link to the pre-assessment will be shared with Master Gardener trainees before the Adobe Connect training lectures begin. Trainees may only take the pre-assessment once. They are not required to pass the test.

The link to the post-assessment will be shared with trainees after the last Adobe Connect training lecture. Trainees must pass with a score of 70/100 questions or higher within the defined timeline (i.e. November 16 through December 16, 2016) to become a Master Gardener Intern. The trainees can take the post-assessment as many times as they like. The post-assessment is open-book; trainees are encouraged to use ISU Extension & Outreach and Iowa Master Gardener materials to answer the questions.

**Are students required to attend all the classes?**

Yes. Coordinators are asked to track attendance for each of the sessions. Note that students are permitted to make up missed classes by watching the webcast on their own (links can be accessed by staff on CyBox after each web broadcast session). Recorded lectures include Face to Face topics (Herbaceous Ornamentals, Vegetables & Herbs, and Houseplants & Plant Propagation) and Adobe Connect lecture topics.

All session recordings remain the property of the Iowa Master Gardener Program and are intended only for Master Gardener training. Other arrangements for extenuating circumstances can be made at the discretion of the local coordinator. If a trainee is unable to attend class on campus, the session should be made up at a future class-on-campus date. Alternately, a video series will be available in fall 2016 covering class-on-campus sessions.

**How are fees handled?**

The established statewide fee for Master Gardener training is $195 per volunteer trainee. Each student enrolls as an individual with full privileges and responsibilities, including completing his or her own class assignments and volunteer service. There are no discounts for family members enrolling together. The cost to ProHort trainees is $550.

Of the basic $195 fee, $50 remains in the local office to cover local program costs and the cost to conduct the background check ($34.85). The remaining $145 per trainee appears as an expense on a monthly statement to counties from the Extension Distribution Center Online Store. For ProHort trainees, 20% of the fee, or $110 remains in the county office.

Sites may enroll additional participants after the training deadline, but must pay a late fee of $25 per participant. No additional participants will be accepted after the second web-based lecture.

**TRAINING TIPS**

- Ask participants to review presenters’ outlines before class and to be in their seats before the broadcast begins.

- Remind participants that questions asked of the presenter during the presentation should be brief and limited to the topic immediately at hand. Students can communicate with faculty and staff outside of the session for information about personal concerns. The campus instructors and contact information are listed on page 223 of the Iowa Master Gardener Workbook (MG 5).

- Provide time for local discussion before the Adobe Connect broadcast or on another day to review the lesson material, answer questions, and discuss case histories (also known as individual questions).

- Local coordinators are responsible for checking in class participants before each broadcast. You may request a MG volunteer to handle this responsibility.
Refunds are available only in rare circumstances. If a trainee has not attended class and has not marked on or in his/her student workbook, a full refund of the cost of materials may be given. If a trainee started the course but dropped out in the first two weeks, and he/she has marked on or in the Master Gardener Workbook or Master Gardener Resource Guide, a charge of $25 for each book applies, but the remainder of the $145 state-assessed course fee may be refunded. It is acceptable for the county to buy the trainee’s workbook and resource guide for the $25 fees if desired. If a trainee finds it necessary to drop the course after the second week, no refund is likely. However, local staff may negotiate with the student according to individual circumstances.

Managing Training Sessions

In addition to providing essential program content, group training sessions offer an opportunity to share information about ISU Extension and Outreach, and for participants to begin working together.

- **COMMUNICATION:** Build a strong communication link with interns. Keep trainees informed of class locations, times, and possible travel arrangements. Provide a reminder of local expectations for participation—and for reporting their participation. Remind interns to use the Master Gardener Volunteer Reporting System at the first meeting. Adding participant names to the local newsletter mailing list helps them become aware of community Master Gardener projects and successes. Solicit their suggestions for improving the program. Also remind them to sign up for the state Master Gardener newsletter, *Master Gardener News & Views*, by clicking on the link at the bottom of the home page of the Master Gardener website.

- **COMMUNITY:** Encourage communication among interns. Provide name cards and/or nametags at every session. Arrange tables and chairs so participants can easily converse with one another. Because people tend to sit in the same place time after time, it may be helpful to provide an ice-breaking activity to make it easier for all participants to meet each other.

- **PRACTICE:** Create opportunities for participants to ask and answer simple questions as a way of practicing and preparing for working with the public.

- **REST:** Plan a short break at each session; a break is important to enable participants to stretch their legs, look at materials supplied by the instructor, and mingle. Some coordinators ask participants to volunteer or sign up to bring refreshments as part of the introductory meeting. During the Adobe Connect sessions, campus-based instructors will take one or two breaks during the course of the evening.
MANAGING VOLUNTEERS

What are the Master Gardener service requirements?

Trainees receive approximately 40 hours of research-based classroom training. When training is completed, trainees begin a one-year Master Gardener internship. During this period, interns must complete a minimum of 40 hours of volunteer service on approved Master Gardener projects within their communities. Following the completion of this volunteer service commitment, the intern is recognized as an Iowa Master Gardener. Many counties celebrate with a ceremony to recognize new Master Gardeners. To remain active in the program, individuals must complete a minimum of 10 hours of continuing education and 20 hours of volunteer service annually after their first year of internship.

How does a Master Gardener Intern become a Master Gardener?

A Master Gardener Intern must complete at least 40 hours of approved volunteer service by the end of the calendar year following completion of the core course training in order to become a Master Gardener. For example, a trainee who begins training in September 2015 and finishes the classes in November 2015 must complete a 40-hour internship by December 31, 2016.

Volunteer hours are to be logged in the online Volunteer Reporting System by the intern.

What are the requirements to continue as an active Master Gardener?

Following successful completion of the internship, the volunteer becomes an Iowa Master Gardener and is considered active. The volunteer receives a certificate, an official Master Gardener name badge and lapel pin with the Iowa Master Gardener logo. Active status is valid for one calendar year.

Recertification of active status as a Master Gardener requires the volunteer to sign an annual volunteer agreement and to complete and report volunteer service and continuing education hours by the end of the calendar year. The annual volunteer agreement is shared online on the Volunteer Reporting System (VRS). The volunteer must complete and report a minimum of 10 hours of continuing education and 20 hours of volunteer service during the calendar year. Local Master Gardener programs may require additional service or education hours.

How is volunteer service defined?

State guidelines define appropriate Master Gardener volunteer service as any horticulture-related educational activity, public service, and/or activity that is sponsored by ISU Extension and
Outreach or approved by the local ISU Extension and Outreach office. This definition is purposefully broad in order to accommodate the largest possible range of activities.

The opportunities for Master Gardener involvement are as varied as the individuals who are trained. In addition to traditional Extension-sponsored functions (garden classes, fairs, and answering phone calls at the extension office), other activities may be community-based or school-related, such as information booths at farmers’ markets, school enrichment programs, and library or mall displays.

Ultimately, what counts as volunteer time is a local decision made by the local coordinator, extension education director, or local advisory committee. However, Master Gardener activities should include an educational component, as opposed to activities that are just labor or community beautification. Sharing local guidelines with trainees is one way to clarify expectations and ensure consistency in recordkeeping. Some examples of volunteer service projects are provided in Appendix G.

What counts as continuing education?

Continuing education is expected to advance the Master Gardener’s knowledge and understanding of horticulture. It must be factual, accurate, and provided by a source generally recognized as research based. Most training opportunities offered by educational institutions, public gardens, and education-focused gardening organizations meet this requirement. Sessions offered by entertainers and sales people are less likely to do so. Listening to radio programs, watching television programs, and reading books do not count as continuing education.

Ultimately, which activities count as continuing education is a local decision made by the local coordinator, extension education director, or local advisory committee. Sharing local guidelines with trainees and with active Master Gardeners will help clarify expectations and ensure consistency in recordkeeping. Some examples of continuing education opportunities are given in Appendix I.

Volunteer Reporting System

The Iowa Master Gardener program features an online Volunteer Reporting System (VRS). Master Gardener interns and volunteers use this tool to enter their volunteer hours, continuing education hours, and contacts made while volunteering. How-to videos about the VRS are available here.

The reporting year follows the calendar year; volunteer and continuing education hours are due by December 31st of each year. Volunteers may report their hours throughout the year on an ongoing basis. Late submissions are not included in state or federal reports about the MG program. The MG county coordinator needs to verify the hours in the VRS to mark that yes, these are verified volunteer and continuing education hours.

Records of Master Gardener volunteer and continuing education hours are important for documenting volunteer status, recognizing milestones in a volunteer’s history, and are an important part of Extension’s annual reports to federal and state funding agencies. Data collected from online reporting is used to generate reports about MG impact and help illustrate the value of the program.
New Master Gardener trainees are entered into the VRS automatically when they register. If a volunteer does not have a computer or internet access, it is their responsibility to work with the local county Master Gardener coordinator to receive in-person assistance in reporting hours.

Background Checks

Because they are volunteers on behalf of Extension and Outreach, all Master Gardener volunteers need to pass the background check by September 2016. Volunteers that are considered high risk need to be re-screened every 3 years.

Learn more here: http://www.iacec.info/background-screening

Search for Excellence Award

Each spring, the Master Gardener Advisory Committee seeks submissions for Search for Excellence (SFE) Awards. The SFE Awards recognize group projects that have had a community impact. Categories of group projects include: Youth Programs, Demonstration Gardens, Workshop or Presentation, Community Service, Innovative Project, Special Needs Audience (Senior, Disabled or Horticultural Therapy), and Research (applied scientific methodology).

Through the Search for Excellence recognition program, Master Gardeners can demonstrate their outstanding contributions to their communities, providing significant learning and impact in the local area. All SFE applications must show that significant learning took place, with the focus on educating the general public rather than individual Master Gardeners. All SFE winning projects must be a team effort. Usually the awards are presented to individual county groups, but cooperation across county lines is encouraged as well.

SFE Award submissions are made by the Master Gardeners to the Advisory Committee by March 15th. For more information and to see the guidelines and application, visit our website: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/search-excellence-award

When can the Master Gardener title be used?

The title “Iowa Master Gardener” is to be used only and exclusively in the ISU Extension and Outreach Master Gardener Program. Iowa Master Gardeners are expected to identify themselves as Master Gardeners only when doing unpaid public service work for ISU Extension and Outreach-sponsored programs. Master Gardeners should not advertise or promote their places of business while volunteering as a Master Gardener nor solicit business because of their training as a Master Gardener. Appearing at a commercial activity, having association with commercial products, or giving implied university endorsement of any product or business is improper. ISU Extension and
Outreach, of which the Master Gardener Program is a part, must be viewed as a source of unbiased, research-based information. However, an individual may list his or her Master Gardener education and volunteer service experience on a resume.

When performing Master Gardener activities, Iowa Master Gardeners are agents of Iowa State University. When it is necessary to make recommendations that include the use of pesticides, Master Gardeners must follow ISU and label recommendations. Master Gardeners are expected to give ISU-sanctioned recommendations and not rely merely on their own personal experience, that of others, or common garden folklore.

Experienced Master Gardeners may receive invitations to give educational presentations to various groups and organizations. Any payments or honoraria received can be accepted if offered at the discretion of the group or organization sponsoring the presentation. However, Master Gardeners should not seek payment for such activities. Many Master Gardeners contribute the honorarium money back to their local program to purchase reference materials or to support other local horticulture programs. It is appropriate for Master Gardeners to seek reimbursement from program sponsors for the cost of travel or materials needed to conduct the class.

How do Master Gardeners transfer into the Iowa program?

Transferring to Iowa from another state
Active Master Gardeners trained in other states are welcome to become active in Iowa. Active Extension Master Gardeners from adjoining states (Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois and Wisconsin) who move to Iowa and decide they would like to be a part of the Iowa program must:

- Apply to and be accepted into a new local program including successfully clearing the volunteer background check required by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.
- Request that their previous Master Gardener program coordinator send a letter to the coordinator or leader of new local program. The letter should include the following:
  - Confirm that the individual has been an active Master Gardener in good standing to-date
  - The year the individual completed training and internship
  - Total years in the former program
  - Any additional information about the individual’s volunteer history such as special certifications or leadership positions

- Transfers from the adjoining states are not required to take the Iowa core course, but are
welcome to review the core course webinars. Transferring members also will be expected to pay a fee of $75 to cover the cost of a background check, a copy of the *Resource Guide for Iowa Master Gardeners* (MG 15) and an Iowa Master Gardener name badge.

Transfers from states other than those adjoining Iowa: Active Extension Master Gardeners from other states who move to Iowa and decide they would like to be a part of the Iowa program must meet the same criteria as those from adjoining states, but must also complete the Iowa Master Gardener Core Course post-assessment test and pass with a score of at least 70%.

Once an individual completes the above requirements, they may then assume the title, benefits and responsibilities of an active Iowa Master Gardener.

**Transferring between Iowa counties**

An active Master Gardener in good standing may transfer to another county in Iowa. The process to do so is as follows:

1. Apply and be accepted into the new local program including passing a required volunteer background check if one is not already completed.
2. Request that a letter from the original local program be sent to the coordinator or leader of new local county program. The letter should include the following:
   a. Confirmation that the individual has been an active Master Gardener in good standing to-date.
   b. The year the individual completed training and internship.
   c. Total years in the former program.
   d. Any additional information about the individual’s volunteer history such as special certifications, leadership positions
   a. Go to MG Account List
   b. Click on the volunteer’s red ID number
   c. In the Personal Info tab, select the county field and choose new county from drop-down menu

**Iowans training in other states**

It is preferred that individuals take the core course training from Iowa State University. However, individuals who have taken the training in another state may transfer to Iowa by one of the methods outlined above.

Some Master Gardeners live part of the year in another state and participate at some level in that state’s Master Gardener program. The following addresses some common situations.

• Volunteers active in two states: Master Gardener Volunteers may belong to more than one state program. However, they must fulfill all volunteer and education requirements in both state programs. Volunteer hours in one state cannot be counted toward the volunteer hours in the other state without special approval from one or both state coordinators.

• An Iowa Master Gardener volunteer who does not belong to a second state program, but volunteers for that program: A Master Gardener who belongs to the Iowa program may volunteer in some capacity in another state. However, these hours do not count toward required hours in Iowa without special
approval from the state coordinator and local coordinator.
• Depending on the topic and possible application toward Master Gardener volunteer activity, continuing education hours earned in states other than Iowa may fulfill requirements in both states with permission from the local county coordinator or the state coordinator.

Reinstating Master Gardeners who have been inactive

Former Iowa Master Gardeners who have been inactive or out of the program for two years or fewer may return to the program by completing a minimum of 24 hours of service and 12 hours of continuing education during the first calendar year of reactivation.

If the length of inactive status is longer than two years, additional continuing education may be required to reactivate. In addition, the following criteria must be met:
  o Apply and be accepted into the local program including successfully clearing the volunteer background check required by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.
  o Complete the Master Gardener Core Course post-test online and pass with a score of at least 70%.
  o Purchase of the current version of the Resource Guide for Master Gardeners (MG 15) is not required, but is an option for a fee of $25. Also, if a new Iowa Master Gardener name badge is needed, the local coordinator can order a replacement badge for $5.

Once an individual completes the above requirements, he or she may assume the title, benefits and responsibilities of an active Iowa Master Gardener.

What rights and responsibilities do Iowa Master Gardeners have?

Master Gardener volunteers have the right to:
Have rewarding, suitable assignments with clear expectations and support;
  Be provided with orientation, training, support, supervision, and evaluation;
Be kept informed and be listened to by ISU Extension and Outreach staff;
Be trusted and respected by ISU Extension and Outreach staff and other volunteers;
Be recognized appropriately for their efforts;
Be treated as a co-worker; &
Be valued as a person capable of unique contributions.

Master Gardener volunteers also have the responsibility to:
  Accept assignments suited to their personal interests and skills;
  Participate in orientation and training programs;
  Learn about ISU Extension and Outreach policies, programs, and staff;
  Uphold all the policies of ISU Extension and Outreach;
  Act in a professional manner, which includes respecting confidences;
  Be accountable to and supportive of ISU Extension and Outreach when involved in extension work;
Complete assignments once assumed; Participate in staff and program evaluations; & Be willing to use and teach new ideas,

**Can an Iowa Master Gardener be fired?**

Master Gardener volunteers are expected to follow the same personnel rules as other Iowa State University Extension and Outreach employees. Iowa State University, and hence the Iowa Master Gardener program, does not tolerate discriminatory behavior, sexual harassment, or alcohol or drug use on the job. Volunteers whose actions indicate they are poor representatives of the university may be asked to leave the program.

**EXTENSION NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

The following nondiscrimination statement (also known as the justice statement) is required on all publications created by Iowa State University Extension campus and field staff. The short version is to be used only when space is limited. In addition, use the appropriate cooperating statement.

**NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT - FULL VERSION**

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies may be directed to Ross Wilburn, Diversity Officer, 2150 Beardshear Hall, 515 Morrill Road, Ames, Iowa 50011, 515-294-1482, wilburn@iastate.edu.

**NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT - SHORT VERSION**

*For use only on small materials with limited space*

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran. Direct inquiries to Ross Wilburn, 515-294-1482, wilburn@iastate.edu.
COOPERATING STATEMENT - FIELD VERSION

Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating.

Spanish language versions of these statements are available at http://www.extension.iastate.edu/advancement/templates/justiceStatements.htm

MEDIA RELEASE

Images, video, film or other media used for Extension programs requires a signed media release to be on-file. The release should list all identifiable individuals (including other Extension employees) who are principal players in the media and include a description of how the signer’s image will be used. Also use the release when private property is recognizable. A model release form, accessible by Extension staff, is located at http://www.extension.iastate.edu/forstaff/forms. Signed media release forms must be held on file at the appropriate local extension program office. As part of their application process Master Gardener trainees are asked to sign a blanket media release. Here are additional guidelines regarding release forms:

• Individuals under the age of 18 need the signature of a parent or guardian. The names and addresses for minors should be obtained and releases sent to parents/guardians before the photos are taken; otherwise, obtain signatures before the images are used in Extension materials.

• Individuals who are identifiable in a group should sign releases whenever possible. This includes individuals visible in the foreground of large groups being photographed or videotaped in a public place (outside on the sidewalk or street) or in a public building (a big meeting).

• When photographing personal or private property (a garden, house, place of business, a commercial building, etc.), ask the owner to sign the release. If you are shooting images of public property, there is no need to obtain written consent.

Some examples:
1. A photo of a plant sale on a public street may require a release from people in the crowd if they are recognizable, but does not require a release from the owners of the businesses in the background.
2. A photo of a mother and child in a garden center requires one release from the mother for herself and the child, and another from the storeowner or manager.
COPYRIGHT

Copyright is a form of protection provided by the laws of the United States (title 17, U. S. Code) to the authors of “original works of authorship.” It gives Extension the right to say how others use Extension materials. It provides legal recourse if the materials are used in unintended or unendorsed ways. It discourages copying in lieu of purchasing which helps recover production costs and produces income to fund future material development.

Many publications and resources that volunteers may want to use to create teaching materials such as presentations, articles and handouts, may have a copyright. Copyright can pertain to written material, photographs, website content and music whether in hard copy or found online. Materials authored or created by the United States Government are by law in the public domain, and therefore, not copyrighted.

Before using materials in creating a document, make certain that the references have no copyright protection. If they are copyrighted, get permission from the author(s) or creator(s) prior to using them. Check with your local coordinator or the ISU Technology Transfer Office (http://www.techtransfer.iastate.edu/en/for_iowa_state/educational_resources/copyrights.cfm) for more details about copyright requirements from the university, fair use of copyrighted materials, and acquiring copyright permission. It is always important to acknowledge authors, photographers, and musicians when quoting them or using their work in finished materials.

Plagiarism is a separate issue from copyright infringement, but the two may overlap. Plagiarism is copying someone else’s work and passing it off as your own. Copyright infringement means the illegal use of a work. If a photo or article is in the public domain, it is not copyrighted, but using it without attribution certainly is plagiarism. For more explanation on plagiarism vs. copyright infringement, consult http://www.extension.org/pages/62309/plagiarism-vs-copyright-infringement#.VW9D7KY7shp.

LIABILITY AND ACCIDENT COVERAGE AS A VOLUNTEER

As an agency of the State of Iowa, Iowa State University is self-insured for liability. Claims against the State of Iowa are handled according to provisions in the Iowa Tort Claims Act (Iowa Code, Chapter 669), which also sets forth the procedures by which tort claims may be filed.

In general, Iowa State University does not purchase commercial liability insurance. The majority of liability issues for the university are covered under Chapter 669 of the Code of Iowa. However, unique circumstances may warrant the purchase of commercial liability insurance.

POLICY STATEMENT

Claims Against the State
Under Chapter 669, claims may be filed against the State on account of wrongful death, personal injury or property damage (including reasonable attorney fees) incurred by reason of the negligence of the University or its employees while acting within the scope of employment. The State will defend, indemnify, and hold the University or its employees harmless against any and all tort claims under the U.S. Constitution, statutes or rules of the United States and/or any other state, but will not cover willful or wanton acts, omissions, or malfeasance in office.

The above provisions apply to all employees of Iowa State University including faculty, staff, and graduate assistants on appointment, or any other individual full- or part-time, including students, volunteers, and agents acting in a temporary or permanent capacity on behalf of the institution.

COMMERCIAL LIABILITY INSURANCE
The University may purchase liability insurance or participate in self-insured liability pooling or other arrangements for professional liability, motor vehicle liability, or other liabilities if required by statute, contract, or special circumstance. Purchases must be made through the Office of Risk Management.
TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

Working with Master Gardener finances

The Iowa Master Gardener program is a branch of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. As such, local Master Gardener groups are closely tied to the mission and goals of ISU Extension and Outreach. Local Master Gardeners function as an arm of the local extension office and report to the local Extension Council.

As part of the local extension office, Master Gardener groups are subject to the policies and procedures of ISU Extension and Outreach. Money is handled through the Extension office according to University accounting and audit policies (similar to other Extension programs). The Master Gardener board or steering committee is fiscally responsible to the local Extension Council. All financial records shall be kept by the local Extension bookkeeper.

FUNDRAISING BY EXTENSION MASTER GARDENERS

While the primary role of an Extension Master Gardener is to provide horticulture education, it is becoming increasingly necessary for state and local programs to generate funds from private sector donations and fundraising. Local county Master Gardener programs need to generate and manage financial resources to supplement group activities, support local projects and meet program needs. Most often revenues are generated through fees for services (class fees, event admission for horticulture days, garden tours) and sales of products (plants, calendars). Because the Iowa Master Gardener program is under the umbrella of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, and is not a separate 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, programs are prohibited from conducting fundraisers using games of chance such as raffles or bingo where a gambling license is required by Iowa law.

As part of the local Extension office program, local Master Gardeners groups are expected to follow county Extension fiscal policies:
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/extensionfinance/policies.htm

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach policies and procedures provide the basis for Iowa Master Gardener program financial stewardship guidelines. As a public program of Iowa State
University Extension and Outreach, it is important that money raised to support local county Extension Master Gardener programs is handled with the greatest stewardship. Procedures for handling Master Gardener funds should be transparent and follow sound financial management practices.

**TAX DEDUCTABLE DONATIONS**

The Iowa Master Gardener program is **not** an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Therefore, it does not qualify to receive donations as tax-deductible charitable gifts. For the purpose of receiving such gifts, the Iowa State University Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, can serve as a fiscal agent for this purpose at the statewide level.

For more information about tax-deductible contributions to local Agricultural Extension Districts, follow the tax-deductible contributions link at http://www.extension.iastate.edu/extensionfinance/policies.htm.

**USE OF UNIVERSITY SALES TAX EXEMPTION**

Even though part of the Iowa State University community, county Extension Master Gardener programs are not typically eligible to use the University tax-exempt status to avoid having to pay sales tax on purchases for the program. In order to use Iowa State University’s sales tax exempt status when purchasing items, the University must pay directly for the items using (1) a University purchasing card, (2) payment by University check whether at the time of purchase or on an invoice. (Note: the state Master Gardener office does not have the capacity to place orders and process invoices on the behalf of the many county Master Gardener programs.) However, County Agricultural Extension Districts do have tax-exempt status through the state of Iowa. When Master Gardener finances are run through the local County Extension Council, as they should be, tax-exempt status on purchases may be possible if certain criteria are met. Details are at http://www.extension.iastate.edu/extensionfinance/policies.htm.

**Using the Iowa Master Gardener logo**

To raise awareness about the Master Gardener program it is important to keep marketing materials current and consistent. All promotional materials for the Master Gardener program should include: a) the most recent Master Gardener logo, b) colors as identified by the ISU visual identity system, c) fonts from the ISU visual identity system, and d) the ISU justice statement. Previous Iowa Master Gardener logos should not be used. The visual identity guidelines can be found here: http://www.brandmarketing.iastate.edu/brand-elements/color-palette/

You can find templates for promotional materials for your Master Gardener program on the **For Staff webpage**. These include press releases, banners, brochures, and more. If you would like to order new materials, please contact the Extension Agriculture & Natural Resources Communication office at 515-294-3582.
Master Gardener shirts and other promotional materials can be ordered through the Iowa State University Extension Online Store. The Master Iowa Master Gardener logo may be used in promotional materials, brochures and program materials directly associated with events managed by local Master Gardener groups. However, use of the logo on clothing, nametags, awards or other similar items requires prior approval from the Iowa State University Trademark Licensing office and use of a University approved vendor. A list of approved vendors and links to the forms to complete are located at http://www.trademark.iastate.edu

Helping volunteers interact with the public

As interns become more confident and willing to interact with the public, go over the following sections in the “General Information” section of the Iowa Master Gardener Workbook (MG 5):
  - Writing Horticultural News Articles
  - Diagnosing Horticultural Problems by Phone
  - Sample Client Information Forms
  - Thirteen Steps to Better Instructional Visuals for Electronic Presentation

Some coordinators also have found it helpful to share these tips for working with the public with interns.

- **Our clients are not always right, but they always have rights.** Each person you interact with has the right to courteous treatment, a response based on respect, and an honest answer—even if the answer is “I don’t know.”
- **Our clients do not have the right to abuse you or to be discourteous.** If you do not feel comfortable handling a question or responding to an individual, refer the question or the person to an extension staff member.

Using photos

Include photo release language in the application for all new Master Gardener trainees and collect forms for existing Master Gardeners where possible (see Appendix B: Sample Master Gardener Application Form). Please note, you can track who has signed the photo release in the Volunteer Reporting System (MG Account List – Click on red ID number – Click on Progress).

Sharing photos of Master Gardener activities through the media and your local office website is a good way to promote your program. However, publishing photographs of people and their names is a thorny issue, which involves concerns on everything from privacy rights to child protection. Emphasis is being given to concerns about child welfare and safety—making sure we do not reveal information that could be used to harm children.

Similar concerns may apply to adults. Is their privacy being invaded or are they put at risk by revealing information about them? The Office of University Council at ISU (Legal Services) has information about when and how you should obtain signed releases (permission) to use photos, images, or voices of program participants. Note that using a photo to report a public event does not usually require permission. Permission should be obtained for any use that is more extensive, commercial in nature, or is intended for promotional purposes. A photo release form is available here: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/advancement/marketingmaterials/photorelease.htm
Role as horticulture judges

From time to time Master Gardeners may be asked to serve as a judge at local fairs or horticulture shows. This is a special honor and recognition, as well as a considerable responsibility.

Master Gardeners must have specialized training beyond the basic Master Gardener curriculum in order to be qualified to be horticulture judges. It is not fair to exhibitors, nor is it educational for the public when entries are judged improperly. All judges must be knowledgeable and articulate about published exhibition criteria, skilled and practiced in uniform judging and scoring practices, and able to clearly communicate and educate the public as to why one entry is better than another. Master Gardeners, by their training, have taken an important first step but must have additional training and/or experiences to be considered qualified judges.

Judging youth and 4-H exhibits involves additional skills and abilities. 4-H judges support youth, affirm their efforts, and help youth grow and learn through the 4-H exhibit experience.

Initiating and managing community projects

Some local Master Gardener groups use project proposal forms to define the role of the group in community projects. Others use monies raised from plant sales and garden programs to offer mini-grants to help support horticulture education in their communities. See these examples: Sample Master Gardener Community Project Agreement (Appendix I), Sample Master Gardener Letter of Intent (Appendix J), Sample Master Gardener Mini-grant Proposal Form (Appendix K).

Celebrating achievements

Showing appreciation can range from simply saying “Thank you,” to nominating veteran Master Gardeners for state awards. Printed certificates are available from the state coordinator for recognizing interns and veteran Master Gardeners (see Materials Order Form). A potluck dinner and graduation ceremony that includes spouses and guests is a great way to recognize new and existing Master Gardeners.

Master Gardener volunteers are recognized with name badges and pins to reflect their commitment and service. If desired, these can be presented at a special awards ceremony. The cost is included in the Master Gardener training. A list of existing recognition materials is:

- VOLUNTEERS - service pin, certificate, and engraved name badge are given to interns who have completed their 40 hours of volunteer service.
- **SERVICE HOURS** – service pins are available to volunteers who have completed 500 volunteer hours, 1000 volunteer hours, 2000 volunteer hours, or 3000 volunteer hours. Continuing education hours do not count towards these totals.
- **LONG TERM COMMITMENT** – 10-year service certificate and lifetime certificate (completed at least 10 years & 1500 volunteer hours)
- **HONORARY MASTER GARDENER** – certificate for honorary Master Gardeners, community members who have contributed significantly to the Master Gardener program, but have not taken the classes.

To place an order, coordinators should use the Materials Order Form to provide the information about the appropriate recognition pins and certificates on the “For staff” page of the Iowa Master Gardener website [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/staff](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/staff)

Accurate recordkeeping is an integral prerequisite of such celebrations. Remind interns and veteran Master Gardeners to regularly report their hours through the Master Gardener [Volunteer Reporting System](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/staff). Remind interns and veterans to submit their completed service records—both for documenting their own earned credit, and for showing what local Master Gardeners accomplish. Ask volunteers to make monthly or quarterly reports to help minimize confusion at the end of the year. Regular reporting to the local coordinator also helps develop the habit of writing down the service activity and client contacts before they are forgotten.

### Creating a long-term program

Management is the most challenging and rewarding phase of a successful Master Gardener program. The local coordinator assumes a variety of roles: coach, supervisor, leader, decision-maker, educator, and cheerleader.

Frequent communication is vitally important, not only as a means to encourage active local Master Gardener participation, but also as a way to maintain contact with the statewide network of other Master Gardener coordinators. Communication can happen through local newsletters and/or meetings. As a local coordinator, be sure to ask the state coordinator to provide access for you to the Master Gardener coordinator CyBox where materials relating to Master Gardener management and training are shared with coordinators. Also, make sure to participate in the regularly scheduled regional Master Gardener coordinator conference calls.

The best way to keep interest high and to have a dynamic local Master Gardener program is to offer a variety of volunteer opportunities and to encourage group gatherings for tours and educational presentations. Large groups may benefit from division into smaller interest or activity groups. Interest areas will be evident from surveys received as part of the application process or collected during training sessions (see Appendix E for a sample). Some programs develop a local Master Gardener directory that lists names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses, as well as interests and talents.
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to Ross Wilburn, Diversity Officer, 2150 Beardshear Hall, 515 Morrill Road, Ames, Iowa 50011, 515-294-1482, wilburn@iastate.edu.
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample Local Master Gardener Advisory Committee Guidelines

Purpose:
To serve in an advisory capacity to the local Master Gardener program it represents regarding program direction, development, planning, delivery, and evaluation.

Objective:
To advise local extension staff in developing functional, relevant home horticulture programs and services involving Master Gardener volunteers.

Committee members:

Chairperson
Conducts meetings (selects site, sets time, prepares agenda, etc.)

Secretary/treasurer
Records minutes and maintains mailing list as well as recertification and financial records to assist committee members to fulfill their responsibilities

Public relations committee representative
Helps produce local newsletter, press releases, social media efforts, and advertises program activities

Education committee representative
Coordinates annual training program (schedule), recertification activities, and educational programs at Master Gardener group meetings; interviews Master Gardener training applicants

Projects committee representative
Receives program requests and project proposals and recruits volunteer(s) to fulfill accepted requests

Volunteer service coordinator
Oversees reporting of volunteer service and education hours. Makes certain that all Master Gardeners record their total number of service hours and years of service in the Master Gardener Volunteer Reporting System.

Liaison
Represents local extension staff

Suggested guidelines:

• Hold meetings at least every other month.
• Committee representatives report the activities of their respective committees. They may need to attend only when their committee is active, especially if planning, delivering, or evaluating a specific event.
• Terms of office should be at least two years with members rotating off the committee in manner that provides continuity from year to year.
• The committee may be selected by local extension staff or elected by the group. If multiple counties are involved, representatives from all counties should participate.
• The extension staff representative is the liaison between the Master Gardener group, the local extension council, and the state Master Gardener office. He/she should advise the group but not be the decision-maker for the committee.
• A member of the advisory committee or a Master Gardener selected by the committee may represent the committee and local Master Gardeners on the state advisory committee.
Appendix B:  Sample Master Gardener Application Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City, State, Zip:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check one: mobile ______ work ______ home ______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List involvement in current and previous volunteer programs:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe your interest in gardening:

**Permission release:**
I _________________________________ understand that to be considered for The Iowa Master Gardener program I will be required to complete the appropriate forms, including a background check, provided by the county extension office.

Furthermore, I hereby grant my consent to ISU Extension and Outreach, and/or its representatives to use my image and/or voice as they see fit for educational purposes or for advertising/marketing of ISU Extension and Outreach and its programs. I waive any right to inspect, approve or otherwise restrict the use of my image, voice or musical recordings now or in the future and I will not seek further compensation or royalties from their use.

I also understand that if accepted for Master Gardener training, I will be expected to provide a minimum of 40 hours of approved public service to ISU Extension and Outreach within one year of completing this training.

Signature:

Date:
Appendix C: Volunteer Background Screening Authorization Form

Volunteer Background Screening Authorization Form

I, ____________________________________________, hereby authorize ___________________________________________ County Agricultural Extension District, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background, including social security number verification, motor vehicle, national criminal records, sex offender, state and federal abuse registry checks, including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public records. A consumer reporting agency will be used to accomplish part of this background screen. The purpose of this authorization is to confirm the information contained on my Application and to obtain other information which may be material to my qualifications for service as a volunteer now and, if applicable, during the tenure of my volunteer service with County Agricultural Extension Districts (CAED).

To facilitate the background screening, I agree to provide CAED and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach (ISUEO) with my full name, date of birth, social security number, and other personal information requested on the Background Screening Disclosure Form. I understand that my failure to provide this authorization or information may result in my ineligibility to serve in any capacity involving youth, vulnerable populations, cash handling, or sensitive information.

Information provided by the consumer reporting agency for the criminal background check will not include a consumer credit report or credit score. The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) promotes the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of consumer reporting agencies. For a summary of your rights under the FCRA, please see www.fcra.gov/credit or write to: Consumer Response Center, Room 130-A, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20580.

I have carefully read and understand this Background Screening Authorization and, by signing below, I authorize a consumer reporting agency to release national sex offender registry and/or criminal record reports to ISUEO and CAED. This Background Screening Authorization in original, faxed, photocopied, or electronic form will be valid for securing background screening reports that ISUEO and CAED may request.

Signature ___________________________________________ Date __________

If applicant is under age 18, parental approval is required:

Signature of Parent ___________________________________________ Date __________

This document will be kept on file with the County Agricultural Extension District.

Download form here: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/content/county
councils/
Appendix D: Volunteer Background Screening Disclosure

![Volunteer Background Screening Disclosure Form]

**Complete and return this form with a completed Background Screening Authorization Form.**

The following is my true and complete legal name and all information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name (Printed legibly)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social Security Number: ____________________________

* Date of Birth: ___/___/19

Gender: M [ ] F [ ]

Present Address:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

How Long at Present Address? ___ Years ___ Months

If applicable: Identification Number Passport Issued by (Country) ____________________________

ID#

If applicable: Government ID (Country) ____________________________

ID#

Other Names Used: ____________________________

Maiden Name: ____________________________

Former Address:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

How Long at Former Address? ___ Years ___ Months

Please list all states and counties of residence within the past seven (7) years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Driver's License Number: ____________________________

State of License: ____________________________

*Disclosure of your Social Security Number (SSN) is required of you in order for Iowa State University and the County Agricultural Extension District for the purposes of conducting a background check, as required by ISU Extension and Outreach. Federal and State law protects the privacy and security of your SSN and Iowa State University and the Extension District will not disclose your SSN without your consent for any other purposes except as allowed by law. For a full description of the ISU Social Security Number Policy, please go to the Social Security Number Protection Policy [http://policy.iastate.edu/policy/ssn/](http://policy.iastate.edu/policy/ssn/).*

Download form here: [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/content/countyboards/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/content/countyboards/)
Appendix E: Sample Interest Inventory

Name:
Phone: Check one: mobile ______ work ______ home ______
E-mail:

In order to best match Master Gardeners with projects and activities, and know more about the
talents and special interests we have in our group, please complete the following questionnaire. Be
honest, not humble.

Interest Questionnaire:
What days and times are you (most often) available? 
Circle the days and times that work best for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>a.m.</th>
<th>p.m.</th>
<th>eve.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mondays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesdays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesdays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursdays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fridays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List your garden special interests (vegetable gardening, roses, perennial flowers, trees, tropical
houseplants, etc.):

List your special talents or skills (carpentry, working with children, drawing, painting, calligraphy, writing, etc.)

List activities you particularly enjoy (working with young people, writing, teaching, public speaking, etc.)

Check the activities below that you would like to be involved with.
You are not required to do all of the activities you check. If needed, you may be asked to help with activities
you don’t check.

Answer telephone questions  Assist with organizing the Master Gardeners
Assist with youth groups (schools, 4-H, etc.)  Any type of planting activities
Work with the elderly  Write garden column or newsletter articles
Set up and/or work at displays  Assist with communications
Plant and help with demonstration gardens  Work with community garden projects
Assist with office work  Other, please explain:

Appendix F: Sample Master Gardener Semester Schedule

Each Tuesday class begins at 6:30PM and runs until 9:30PM at [address].
Saturday class on campus is held from 8:30AM-3:45PM at Iowa State University.

2015 SCHEDULE

CONTACT INFORMATION:
[County name]
[Extension staff name]
[Extension staff e-mail]
[Extension staff phone]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>PRESENTER(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[DATE]</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, September 29</td>
<td>Soils and Botany</td>
<td>Lee Burras Denny Schrock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, October 6</td>
<td>Plant Pathology and Entomology</td>
<td>Donald Lewis Lina Rodriguez-Salamanca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, October 10 or</td>
<td>Class on Campus at Iowa State University</td>
<td>Numerous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, October 13</td>
<td>Landscape Trees &amp; Shrubs</td>
<td>Jeff Iles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, October 20</td>
<td>Sustainable Home Landscape Design</td>
<td>Lisa Orgler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, October 27</td>
<td>Fruit Culture</td>
<td>Diana Cochran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[DATE]</td>
<td>House Plants &amp; Propagation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[DATE]</td>
<td>Vegetables &amp; Herbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[DATE]</td>
<td>Herbaceous Ornamentals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 3</td>
<td>Turfgrass Management</td>
<td>Ryan Adams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 10</td>
<td>Weeds, IPM and Pesticides</td>
<td>Kristine Schaefer Laura Jesse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 17</td>
<td>Animal Ecology</td>
<td>Mike Rentz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G: Objectives of Iowa Master Gardener Training Units

Animal Ecology
Provide a basic understanding of the type of environment necessary to attract desirable wildlife to a given area. Review possible techniques for dealing with unwanted animal populations.

Student Learning Objectives for Animal Ecology
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:
• Discuss reasons for concern over wildlife diversity changes
• Discuss how wildlife management can increase or decrease animal numbers
• Define and list wildlife basic needs and wildlife complex needs and describe how these needs relate to wildlife management
• Describe the ecological General Rule of Thumb concerning ecosystem diversity
• Discuss the Basic Ecological Law and explain how it relates to wildlife management
• Describe conditions that attract wildlife to the backyard landscape
• List the tools available for wildlife increase in the landscape
• List the basic steps to wildlife damage management and describe examples of each technique
• Design a simple wildlife damage management plan that uses more than one tactic
• Provide a basic understanding of the proper selection, use, and maintenance of common annual and perennial garden flower species

Botany
Provide a basic understanding of plants including growth habits, parts and their functions, and plant propagation.

Student Learning Objectives for Botany
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:
• Correctly use plant scientific names, and common names, including variety and cultivar
• Describe plant growth habits explain their primary functions
• Explain the inputs and products of photosynthesis
• Explain the role of growth chemicals in plants

Composting
Recognize the benefits of composting on soil improvement. Understand the basics of composting. Review the essential requirements for managing home composting.

Student Learning Objectives for Composting
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:
• Identify materials that can be composted in the home landscape
• Identify materials that should not be composted in the home landscape
• Describe the specific requirements necessary to manage backyard composting
• Design a simple compost bed/pile

Entomology
Provide a basic understanding of what insects are, the benefits they provide, the potential damage they can cause, and how to recognize common insects that infest horticultural crops.

Student Learning Objectives for Entomology
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:
• Recognize the distinguishing physical characteristics of insects and their closest relatives (arthropods)
• Name the stages of development in the two most common insect life cycles
• Name the two major types of insect mouthparts and the damage symptoms each type causes when insects feed on plants
• List the major insect groups (orders) by common name and the life cycle and type of mouthparts for each group
• Define and describe basics of insect behavior such as growth and development, molting, feeding, mating, reproduction, communication by pheromones, etc.
• Explain the pest status of insects (why are insects pests?)
• Recognize the major insect pests of woody ornamentals in Iowa and discuss pest management decision-making and control alternatives for each.

Fruit Culture
Acquaint participants with the kinds of small fruits and tree fruits grown in Iowa and the basic cultural requirements.

Student Learning Objectives for Fruit Culture
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:

- Recognize appropriate site and soil selection characteristics for fruit crops grown in Iowa
- Identify common fruits grown in Iowa.
- List adapted fruit crops and cultivars for Iowa
- Describe fruit plant morphology, growth, and development
- Explain basic cultural requirements of adapted fruit crops (Cultural practices relate to planting, fertilizing, training, pruning, water management, and pest management.)

**Herbaceous Ornamentals**

*Provide a basic introduction of proper selection, use, and maintenance of common herbaceous ornamentals.*

**Student Learning Objectives for Herbaceous Ornamentals**

After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:

- Define an annual, biennial, tender perennial, and perennial
- Describe the requirements for growing herbaceous ornamentals
- Describe the steps in preparing a planting site for herbaceous ornamentals
- List aspects to consider when selecting herbaceous ornamentals for a specific site
- Discuss important considerations for selecting high quality herbaceous ornamentals
- Discuss proper planting and maintenance considerations for herbaceous ornamentals

**Houseplants**

*This class aims to introduce the proper selection, use, and management of common houseplants and houseplants pests.*

**Student Learning Objectives for Houseplants**

After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:

- Recognize the different types and uses of houseplants
- Compare and discuss interior environmental factors affecting plant growth
- Evaluate and discuss cultural and management practices of houseplants
- Analyze methods to assist clients with houseplant questions and diagnosis

**Integrated Pest Management**

*Provide a basic understanding of how several control strategies can be integrated to manage pest populations*

**Student Learning Objectives for Integrated Pest Management**

After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:

- Comprehend that IPM allows them to manage pests in a holistic, common-sense approach, while incurring minimal risk to the ecosystem
- Define economic and aesthetic injury levels and illustrate how they affect management decisions
- Identify six general management strategies (identification, monitoring, cultural, mechanical, biological, and chemical) of IPM
- Distinguish between predators, parasitoids and pathogenic organisms as they pertain to biological pest management
- Formulate the differences between using only one method to control pests versus integrating several control strategies to manage pest populations

**Sustainable Home Landscape Design**

*Introduce the principles landscape garden design with a focus on plant selection and placement. Introduce the process of landscape design, including site analysis and program development. Introduce techniques to prepare a base plan, conceptual diagram, preliminary design and final design. Present the role of planning and design in creating a sustainable landscape*

**Student Learning Objectives for Sustainable Home Landscape Design**

After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:

- Describe the basic principles that lead to good landscape design.
- Explain how these principles are applied to landscape design.
- Determine features of the different use areas in a landscape.
- Describe the design process.
- Differentiate between base plan, conceptual diagram, preliminary design, and final design.
• Recognize and describe the qualities of a well-designed landscape.
• Describe design factors that make a landscape sustainable

**Pesticides and Pesticide Safety**
*Provide a basic understanding of pesticide toxicity and increase awareness of the importance and necessity of proper use and storage of pesticides in and around the home*

**Student Learning Objectives for Pesticides**
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:
• Recognize the general types of pesticides
• Compare pesticides by active ingredients (Inorganic vs. Organic; Natural vs. Synthetic)
• Distinguish between contact and systemic mode of action
• Comprehend the concepts of toxicity, routes of exposure, hazard, LD50, and signal words
• Know the parts of a pesticide label and be able to interpret the label information
• Be familiar with the differences and appropriate uses for common household pesticide formulations
• Identify the proper pesticide storage techniques
• Identify basic safety measures when using pesticides

**Plant Pathology**
*Provide basic introduction to plant disease—including causes and control strategies for specific diseases. Offer the opportunity to practice diagnosing plant diseases.*

**Student Learning Objectives for Plant Pathology**
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:
• List examples of abiotic (nonliving) and biotic (living) factors that cause plant diseases
• Explain the conditions necessary for biotic diseases to occur (disease triangle)
• Recognize common symptoms characteristic of a plant that is diseased
• Explain how plant pathogens are spread
• Discuss plant disease management approaches
• Recognize terms used in describing plant diseases

**Plant Propagation**
*Provide basic introduction to plant propagation principles and techniques.*

**Student Learning Objectives for Plant Propagation**
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:
• Define plant propagation and discuss reasons for propagating plants
• Describe plant propagation techniques, listing advantages and disadvantages of each
• List the appropriate propagation techniques for common plants used in consumer horticulture in Iowa

**Soils and Soil Fertility**
*Provide a basic introduction of the physical and chemical properties of soil. Review essential plant nutrients, their availability in the soil, and their function within the plant.*

**Student Learning Objectives for Soils**
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:
• Identify soil horizons
• Recognize and use a soil texture triangle
• Explain a fertilizer analysis label
• Describe macro-elements and their functions within the soil and plant
• Identify pH and its effects on nutrient availability in the soil

**Landscape Trees and Shrubs**
*Provide a basic understanding of the importance of tree and shrub selection, planting, and maintenance techniques*

**Student Learning Objectives for Landscape Plants**
After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:
• List aesthetic and functional benefits of landscape plants
• List selection criteria to consider when choosing landscape plants for a specific site
• Lists types of available landscape plant nursery stock and describe the advantages and disadvantages of each type
• Describe proper planting techniques
• Discuss proper new plant care
Describe the benefits and importance of pruning landscape plants and the time and process of pruning.

**Turfgrass Management**

*Teach the basic culture of grasses used in Iowa lawns (species selection, seeding, sodding, mowing, fertilization, watering, and renovation)*

**Student Learning Objectives for Turfgrass Management**

After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:

- List the benefits of turfgrass in the urban environment
- Define turfgrass in the context of the urban landscape
- List 5 turfgrass species suitable for Iowa conditions and the practical uses of each grass for the home lawn
- List the site-specific requirements of common turfgrass species
- Identify the functional parts of the turfgrass plant
- Define the terms *—warm season grass and —cool season grass*
- Describe practical turfgrass management as it relates to fertility, mowing (frequency and height), irrigation, cultivation, and thatch management
- Describe turfgrass establishment processes, including techniques and timing
- Describe IPM in an urban turfgrass setting; list common insects, weeds, plant diseases, and management alternatives
- Recognize common insects, weeds, and plant diseases of turfgrass in Iowa

**Weed Science**

*Provide a basic understanding of the importance of proper weed identification and effective weed control strategies*

**Student Learning Objectives for Weed Science**

After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:

- Define a weed in the context of the home garden
- Explain weed life cycles and classify common weeds by their life cycle
- Describe ways weeds reproduce and spread
- List cultural and mechanical methods of weed prevention and control
- Describe types and timings of herbicides
- Describe precautions to be aware of when using herbicides in the home garden

**Vegetables and Herbs**

*Identify where a vegetable should be placed, understand how to reduce pest problems, learn about season extension, and list cool and warm season crops.*

**Student Learning Objectives for Vegetables & Herbs**

After studying this topic, the Master Gardener Trainee will be able to:

- Define environmental variables for success
- Define cultural practices for success
- List primary cool season, warm season, and perennial vegetables
- Explain production techniques
Appendix H: Guidelines for Iowa Master Gardener Interns and Master Gardener

Using the Master Gardener title
The title Iowa Master Gardener is to be used only and exclusively in the ISU Extension Service Master Gardener Program. Iowa Master Gardeners are expected to identify themselves as Master Gardeners only when doing unpaid public service work for ISU Extension and Outreach-sponsored programs. Master Gardeners should not advertise or promote their place of business while working as a Master Gardener or solicit business because of their training as a Master Gardener. Appearing at a commercial activity, having association with commercial products, or giving implied University endorsement of any product or business is improper. ISU Extension, of which the Master Gardener program is a part, must be viewed as a source of unbiased, research-based information.

When performing Master Gardener activities, Iowa Master Gardeners are agents of Iowa State University. When it is necessary to make recommendations that include the use of pesticides, Master Gardeners must follow ISU and label recommendations. Master Gardeners are expected to give ISU recommendations and not rely on their own personal experience, that of others, or common garden folklore. Experienced Master Gardeners may receive invitations to give educational presentations to various groups and organizations. Any payments or honorariums received can be accepted if offered at the discretion of the group or organization sponsoring the presentation. However, Master Gardeners should not seek payment for such activities. Many Master Gardeners contribute the honorarium money back to their local program to purchase reference materials or to support other local horticulture programs. It is legitimate to be reimbursed for the cost of class materials.

Master Gardener Service Opportunities
The state Master Gardener Advisory Committee has defined appropriate Master Gardener service as any horticultural-related public service, educational program, and/or activity that is sponsored by ISU Extension and Outreach or approved by a local ISU Extension office.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Organize and/or staff displays or booths at lawn and garden shows
- Teach horticulture therapy activities at nursing homes
- Write columns for the local newspaper
- Write a local Master Gardener newsletter
- Answer horticulture-related telephone calls during scheduled hours at extension office
- Serve as superintendent or volunteer for horticulture exhibits at local fairs
- Assist 4-H’ers with garden projects
- Teach horticulture programs as guest speaker to school-age youths
- Present in radio and TV programs
- Conduct educational meetings or workshops for youths and adults
- Assist with community solid waste reduction programs
- Coordinate gardening project at correctional facility
- Plant and maintain a demonstration garden and host field days
- Help at public parks, arboretums, botanical centers
- Assist with community Arbor Day festivities
- Answer clientele questions one-on-one
- Help at ISU Research Farm demonstration gardens
- Serve as local Master Gardener volunteer coordinator
- Help teach Growing in the Garden curriculum in elementary schools
- Set up and/or assist with community garden

Continuing Education Opportunities
Several opportunities exist for Master Gardeners to receive additional training as required to remain active. Here are a few examples.

- Master Gardener training lectures (after the initial training year)
- State, regional, or national Master Gardener conferences
- Field days, workshops, or conferences sponsored by ISU Extension and various grower groups, such as the Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, Society of Iowa Florists and Growers, Iowa Turfgrass Conference, and the Shade Tree Short Course (Master Gardeners are required to pay registration fees for these events.)
- Local meetings specified by the ISU Extension and Outreach Education Director or state coordinator
- Field days at ISU Research and Demonstration Farms held during the summer at locations around the state
- Horticulture workshops offered by public gardens and by other garden-focused groups, such as the Federated Garden Club
- Webinars offered by eXtension

Maintaining status as an active Master Gardener requires at least twenty hours of volunteer service, and at least ten hours of continuing education annually.

Local programs can (and many do), set additional requirements. Questions about whether a particular activity counts for volunteer or continuing education hours should be discussed with the county ISU Extension and Outreach staff.
Appendix I: Sample Master Gardener Community Project Agreement

Thank you for inquiring about a potential Master Gardener volunteer project and/or program. Please review the information below and answer the questions on the next page. The information you provide will help Master Gardeners determine the eligibility of your project. If approved, a committee of Master Gardeners will work with you to complete the project.

Please send your application to:
[ADDRESS]

The Iowa Master Gardener program is an educational and volunteer opportunity through which individuals receive advanced training in horticulture and environmental topics of special value to home gardeners. In addition to training, each Master Gardener is expected to donate at least 40 hours of educationally related volunteer service.

Volunteer service projects must:
- provide home horticulture information and education consistent with Iowa State University recommendations.
- provide educational value to participants; for example, by consulting, sharing information, demonstrating techniques, and/or assisting with organizing or publicizing an event.

The following types of projects are generally discouraged:
- Projects in which Master Gardeners are expected only to provide labor, or to provide all of the labor on a project.
- Projects or events involving commercial businesses that appear to be a conflict of interest or endorsement of a particular business.

Iowa State University policy discourages Master Gardeners from competing with commercial landscape design businesses. It is not appropriate for individual Master Gardeners to provide landscape design services as a Master Gardener volunteer. It is appropriate for volunteers to provide educational information and ideas for the selection of appropriate plants for particular sites.

Master Gardener volunteers reserve the right to select projects based on community needs, availability of volunteers, and the educational impact potential of the project.
Your answers to the following questions will help Master Gardeners decide how to respond to your request. Please be as complete and concise as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is your idea for a project/program?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What organization is responsible for the project/program?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Is this a one-time or on-going project/program?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. If this is a one-time project, what opportunities will there be for additional educational activities related to this project/program?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. If this is an existing project, why are Master Gardeners being consulted now?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. If this project involves planting or establishing a garden, what plans exist for ongoing maintenance of the garden?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. If this will be an on-going project, what specifically are you requesting from Master Gardeners?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How will your project/program be financed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Will this project/program generate income? If yes, how will it be allocated?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Please list all organizations involved in this project/program and describe their role(s).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. What else do you want Master Gardeners to know about this project/program?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Who should Master Gardeners contact if they have questions about this request?</td>
<td>Name: Address: Phone: E-mail:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix J: Sample Master Gardener Letter of Intent for Client

The intent of this letter is to specify the services that will be provided by the [County Name] Extension Master Gardeners and to state the responsibilities of the client.

The [County Name] Extension Master Gardeners will
• provide design plans and suggestions for landscaping (*specified place or address*)
• suggest appropriate plants for growing conditions in this site
• demonstrate recommended planting and maintenance techniques

The [County Name] Extension Master Gardeners will NOT
• provide watering or on-going maintenance

The client [Client Name] will
• choose a final design plan
• purchase plants
• provide workers for creation and planting of garden area
• be responsible for watering and on-going maintenance

Please sign here.

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________
Appendix K: Sample Master Gardener Mini-grant Proposal Form

Mini-grants are available from [County Name] Extension Master Gardeners

Application packet should include the following information:

Name of applicant(s), including description of mission if an organization, and any partners

Name, phone number, and e-mail for one designated contact person

Project description and justification
• What is the project?
• What is the educational component of this project?
• How will project benefit area citizens? How many people will benefit?
• Where is project located?
• What is the project time frame?
• What specific help is requested from [county name] Extension Master Gardeners?

Successful proposals will
• provide specific educational/other benefits to area citizens,
• encourage and/or demonstrate environmentally sound horticultural practice(s), and
• include resource contribution (time/money/materials) from applicant(s).

Examples of projects that could be funded include (but are not limited to)
• School- or preschool-based gardens,
• Summer garden camps,
• Horticulture education interns, and
• Horticulture resources for libraries.

Proposals are accepted year-round but must be received at least one month before desired start of project.

Proposals may include requests for dollars, materials, and/or time.

A committee of [county name] Extension Master Gardeners will review proposals within a month after they are received.

Successful applicants will be expected to give appropriate public credit to [county name] Extension Master Gardeners and to provide a written report with photos, if appropriate.

Gardeners are available for support of horticulture-related education projects.

Mail 3 copies to:
[ADDRESS]
Or, e-mail to:
[me@iastate.edu]
Questions? Call
[xxx-xxx-yyy]

MASTER GARDENER COORDINATOR’S
Appendix L: Horticultural Plant and Pest Specialists

Please contact consumer horticulture specialists with gardening questions. In general, commercial horticulture specialists assist commercial business owners and managers. They also help people who are interested in starting a new or expanding an existing horticulture business.

### Horticulture, Iowa State University

**Adam Thoms** athoms@iastate.edu  
Turfgrass  
106 Horticulture, 515-294-1957

**Diana Cochran** dianac@iastate.edu  
Commercial Fruit Production  
106 Horticulture, 515-294-0703

**Christopher Currey** ccurrey@iastate.edu  
Commercial Greenhouse Production  
127 Horticulture, 515-294-1917

**Kathleen Delate** kdelate@iastate.edu  
Organic Agriculture/Alternate Crops  
147 Horticulture, 515-294-7069

**Joe Hannan** jmhannan@iastate.edu  
Commercial Horticulture  
515-993-4281

**Cynthia Haynes** chaynes@iastate.edu  
Consumer Horticulture  
106 Horticulture, 515-294-4006

**Jeff Iles** illes@iastate.edu  
Woody Ornamentals  
103 Horticulture, 515-294-0029

**Richard Jauron** rjauron@iastate.edu  
Consumer Horticulture  
106 Horticulture, 515-294-1871

**Ajay Nair** nairajay@iastate.edu  
Consumer Vegetables  
145 Horticulture, 515-294-7080

**Patrick O’Malley** omall@iastate.edu  
Commercial Horticulture  
319-337-2145

### ISU Plant & Insect Diagnostic Clinic

**Lina Rodriguez-Salamanca** lina@iastate.edu  
**Ed Zaworski** zaworski@iastate.edu  
**Laura Jesse** ljesse@iastate.edu

### Other Specialists, Iowa State University

**Adam Janke** ajanke@iastate.edu  
Wildlife Specialist  
203 Science Hall II, 515-294-7429

**Allen Pattillo** pattillo@iastate.edu  
Aquatic Management  
107 Science II, 515-294-8616

**Ken Holscher** kholsche@iastate.edu  
Pesticide Applicator Training and IPM  
102 Insectary, 515-294-5967

**Donald Lewis** dlewis@iastate.edu  
Horticulture Crop and Household Insects  
104 Insectary, 515-294-1101

**Mark Shour** mshour@iastate.edu  
Pesticide Applicator Training and Urban IPM,  
10 Insectary, 515-294-5963

**Bob Hartzler** hartzler@iastate.edu  
Weed Management  
2104 Agronomy Hall, 515-294-1164

**Mike Owen** mdowen@iastate.edu  
Weed Management  
2104 Agronomy Hall, 515-294-5936

**Kristine Schaefer** schaefer@iastate.edu  
Weed Management  
9 Insectary, 515-294-4286  
327 Bessey, 515-294-0581, pidc@iastate.edu

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**HortLine**

hortline@iastate.edu, 515-294-3108

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**MASTER GARDENER COORDINATOR’S**
Appendix M: ISU Insurance Liability Policy

Introduction

As an agency of the State of Iowa, Iowa State University is self-insured for liability. Claims against the State of Iowa are handled according to provisions in the Iowa Tort Claims Act (Iowa Code, Chapter 669), which also sets forth the procedures by which tort claims may be filed.

In general, Iowa State University does not purchase commercial liability insurance. The majority of liability issues for the university are covered under Chapter 669 of the Code of Iowa. However, unique circumstances may warrant the purchase of commercial liability insurance.

Policy Statement

Claims Against the State

Under Chapter 669, claims may be filed against the State on account of wrongful death, personal injury or property damage (including reasonable attorney fees) incurred by reason of the negligence of the University or its employees while acting within the scope of employment. The State will defend, indemnify, and hold the University or its employees harmless against any and all tort claims under the U.S. Constitution, statutes or rules of the United States and/or any other state, but will not cover willful or wanton acts, omissions, or malfeasance in office.

The above provisions apply to all employees of Iowa State University including faculty, staff, and graduate assistants on appointment, or any other individual full or part time, including students, volunteers, and agents acting in a temporary or permanent capacity on behalf of the institution.

Commercial Liability Insurance

The University may purchase liability insurance or participate in self-insured liability pooling or other arrangements for professional liability, motor vehicle liability, or other liabilities if required by statute, contract, or special circumstance. Purchases must be made through the Office of Risk Management.
Appendix N: Master Gardener Standards of Behavior

Extension Master Gardener volunteers are representatives of Iowa State University and their local county Extension program, and serve at the discretion of ISU. Just as it is a privilege for Extension to work with volunteers who offer their time and talents, it is a privilege—not a right—to be an Extension volunteer. Participants must understand and accept responsibility for their actions, words and deeds when volunteering on behalf of ISU.

Master Gardener volunteers are expected to review and abide by the standards of behavior as listed below. These important policies are designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all Master Gardener participants (audiences, staff, professionals, and other volunteers) and promote a positive, enjoyable experience for all. Extension volunteers are representatives of the Iowa State University and must conduct themselves accordingly.

Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Standards of Behavior:

1. Uphold volunteerism as an effective way to meet the horticultural education needs of Iowa citizens.
2. Accept supervision and support from extension staff while involved in the program.
3. Represent the local county program and the Iowa Master Gardener program with dignity and pride by being positive spokespersons and mentors for others.
4. Be courteous, civil and respectful, refraining from profanity and behavior that physically, verbally, or emotionally abuses, threatens or harms any Extension program participant.
5. Abstain from the use or the influence of alcoholic beverages or other controlled substances when interacting with the public as an Extension Master Gardener volunteer.
6. Comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws and the policies of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.
7. Perform duties in a responsible, professional and timely manner.
8. Dress professionally and wear the Iowa Master Gardener nametag whenever serving as a volunteer.
9. Report immediately any threats to the volunteer’s emotional or physical well-being to the county or state extension staff coordinating the Extension Master Gardener program.
10. Be responsible and accountable for personal actions.
11. Promote and support Extension Master Gardener activities and volunteer peers in order to develop an effective county and state program.
12. When applicable, operate machinery, vehicles, or other equipment safely and responsibly.

Failure to follow the standards of behavior listed above can result in termination from the program and loss of all privileges associated with the status of an Iowa Master Gardener volunteer. Should an issue arise, the volunteer will be placed on temporary leave, and the local Master Gardener coordinator will inform and work in concert with the state coordinator and/or program assistant to resolve the issue and determine what, if any, disciplinary steps need to be taken. While attempts may be made to correct disqualifying behavior, resolution may lead to reinstatement, reassignment of volunteer duties,
reinstatement with limitations, or termination from the program. The volunteer may also be terminated immediately. The state coordinator must authorize any termination from the program.

**NETIQUETTE**

“Netiquette” refers to etiquette displayed while using the internet. As more web-based tools and programs are used to communicate and share information electronically, it is important that volunteers follow good netiquette standards. Inappropriate communication or misuse of the internet as a volunteer can lead to restrictions on using Master Gardener internet-based tools and programs.
Appendix O: Available Promotional Materials

For Staff https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mg/homepage.html

- Training Materials
  - MG Training Brochure & Registration Form
  - Editable Press Release
  - Training Flyer
  - ProHort Flyer
  - Editable Newspaper Ads
- General
  - Webinar Flyers
  - Editable Event Flyer
  - Editable Vertical Flyer
  - Postcard
  - Yard Signs
  - Custom Banners

Extension Online Store (login to see available products)

- Master Gardener Brochure (MG 1103)
- Master Gardener Workbook (MG 5)
- Master Gardener Resource Guide (MG 15)
- Master Gardener Business Cards (MG 1104)
- Master Gardener T-shirts & Polo Shirts (MG 109 & 110)

Materials Order Form

- New Master Gardeners
- Replacement MG Name Badge
- Hours-of-Service Pins: a) 500-hour service pin, b) 1,000-hour service pin, c) 2,000-hour service pin, and d) 3,000-hour service pin.
- Service Certificates: a) certificate of appreciation, b) 10-year service certificate, c) lifetime MG certificate (at least 10-years & 1,500 hours of service), and d) honorary MG certificate.
- MG Lapel Pin