



Woobury County Master Gardener Hours Record Book

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

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 August 2018 and finishes the classes in November 2018 must complete a 40-hour internship by December 31, 2019.

Following successful completion of the internship, the volunteer becomes an Iowa Master Gardener and is considered active. Count coordinators place a request on the Materials Order Form for the new Master Gardener certificate, name badge and lapel pin. 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) in the beginning of the year. County staff may use the paper copy of the annual agreement to track who plans on being an active Master Gardener each year. County staff use this information to renew background checks of Master Gardeners and report to the Extension county council about the number of volunteers that need to be covered in the liability policy.

The volunteer must complete and report **a minimum of 10 hours of continuing education and 20 hours of volunteer service** during the calendar year. Hours need to be logged on the Volunteer Reporting System by December 31st of each year. Local Master Gardener programs may require additional service or education hours.

Master Gardener volunteer service is: Unpaid, volunteer service, with an emphasis on gardening, in public spaces. 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 programs.

Ultimately, what counts as volunteer time is a local decision made by the Extension county coordinator. 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.

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 Extension county coordinator or local advisory committee. Sharing local guidelines with trainees and with active Master Gardeners will help clarify expectations and ensure consistency in recordkeeping.

Enter hours on the Volunteer Reporting System. Those without computer access can return to:

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