



UF/IFAS Leon County Extension
Invites You to Apply to the



2018 Master Gardener Class



Dear Future Master Gardener Trainees,

Please look through the information in this newsletter and follow the links to learn more about this amazing, statewide and beyond program. It's important to remember that being a Master Gardener is more volunteering in the community than gardening. While the volunteer activities revolve around gardening and we will be doing quite a bit of gardening as a group here at the Extension Office, the main goal of the Master Gardener Program is to educate local citizens on sustainable landscape practices and helping them find solutions to their gardening questions. I can't wait to meet you all and look forward to pulling weeds with you!

Sincerely,

Mark Tancig



Application Details

Due to high demand and our small class size, the application process is fairly competitive. We will be accepting around **~20 trainees** who we feel best fit our program goals in the coming years, are interested in interacting and collaborating with other Master Gardeners, are passionate about serving the community, and those who are eager to learn as much as possible about horticulture. The application is up on our website and will remain open until **September 30th**. Interviews will begin late October and throughout November, and decisions will be made in December. Interviews will provide an opportunity for applicants to express their interest in current/future projects, experience, and passion for the program. Once accepted, trainees will attend an orientation in January, and then **11 monthly classes** (~4 hours long), with graduation in December. Trainees will also attend monthly demonstration garden work-days (every 3rd Monday) to apply methods/ideas mentioned in class, as well as office training sessions to prepare for citizen assistance at the office. Trainees will be matched up with Leon County Master Gardener mentors to increase learning potential and familiarity with our program. We are very excited for this upcoming class and the breadth of horticulture knowledge that will be passed on to the trainees! Any questions? Please call **606-5202**. Interested applicants can find the application at: <http://leon.ifas.ufl.edu/ing/gardening-resources/master-gardener/>. Please turn into 615 Paul Russell Rd., or email to Mark or Kelly.

The Florida Master Gardener Program

Who are Master Gardeners?

Master Gardeners are volunteer educators of the horticultural arts and sciences. With training from UF/IFAS Extension, Master Gardeners are active in their communities, offering leadership and guidance in gardening projects of all types and sizes.

The Florida Master Gardener Program has been around since 1979, and each year, approximately 4,700 Master Gardeners contribute a total of 420,000 hours of service, helping to make their communities better informed, more sustainable, and more beautiful.

Once you've successfully completed training you're required to volunteer a minimum of 75 hours the first year to achieve Master Gardener certification. Every active year following graduation, Master Gardeners must complete 35 hours of volunteer service and 10 hours of Continuing Education Units to further horticulture knowledge. Master Gardeners work closely with the public, answering questions and providing guidance over the phone or in person, participating in community and school garden projects, writing newsletter columns, recognizing Florida-Friendly™ yards, and many other activities.

Many Master Gardeners far exceed the required service hours, and continue in the program well beyond the first year because of their passion for gardening and willingness to help others in their community. UF/IFAS Extension provides advanced training to keep Masters Gardeners up to date on the latest horticultural information.

Program Success

The success of the program has been phenomenal. In 2014, more than 4,500 volunteers contributed 423,968 hours to local county Extension educational programs, providing horticultural services to citizens of Florida in 60 Florida counties. This equals \$9.78 million or 203 FTEs provided to Florida's economy.

Other noteworthy statistics include:

- 2014 was the 35-year anniversary of the Florida Master Gardener Program.
- From 1979 through 2009 Florida Master Gardener volunteers have donated a total of 6.2 million volunteer hours, valued at well over \$98 million.
- More than 80 percent of counties adopted the program within its first two decades.
- Each county has an average of 66 trained volunteers
- More than 82 percent of active counties train one new class of Master Gardeners each year.

The ultimate end to the educational outreach efforts of the Florida Master Gardener Program is to extend the vision of the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, all the while protecting and sustaining natural resources and environmental systems, enhancing the development of human resources, and improving the quality of human life through the development of knowledge in agricultural, human and natural resources and making that knowledge accessible.

Mission

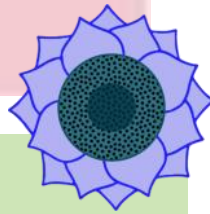
"To assist Extension Agents in providing research-based horticultural education to Florida Residents"



Program Projects

Trainee Master Gardeners and Active Master Gardeners will get to choose from a variety of projects and opportunities to educate, serve, and enrich the lives of members of the Leon County community. Master Gardeners can lead projects based on time availability, seniority, and experience, or lend time to a project when able. Examples include:

- 4-H Horticulture Club
- Adopt-A-Garden Program/ Garden Educator Training Program (school & community gardens)
- VegHeadz & Irrigation Teams (Demonstration Garden)
- Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Site Visits
- Right Plant, Right Place Team
- Ask-A-Master Gardener Booth
- Invasive Plant Team
- Speaker's Bureau
- Article writing, TV, radio spots
- Continuing Education Hours Team
- Green Yarders
- Big Bend Farm



Classes

** Speakers will be Extension faculty or experts in related fields*

- Orientation
- Plant Science/Botany
 - Plant Propagation
- Landscaping Planting and Maintenance
- Soils, Nutrients, and Fertilizers
 - Turfgrass
- Plant Pathology/Entomology
 - Weeds/Invasive Plants
 - Vegetable Gardening
 - Wildlife Management/Integrated Pest Management
- Florida Friendly Landscaping
 - Dooryard Fruits/Citrus
- Graduation

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County

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