

## WHY BE A MASTER GARDENER

It's that time of year again, time to start thinking about dusting off the Master Gardener applications and spreading the word about the next class. Wait a minute, did I just say application, and class? Now I have you wondering just what is going on.

**WHAT is a Master Gardener?** Do I have to be a gardening expert to take the Master Gardener course? Why would I want to be a Master Gardener? What does a Master Gardener do? These and many other questions come to mind when Master Gardener training is mentioned. Let me try to clarify a few of these points.

**A Master Gardener** is a person who has a thirst for knowledge about home horticulture, you know, all that stuff growing around your house - the lawn, the shade trees, the shrubs, the garden, the fruit trees, and even your houseplants. It is a person who wants to know things like; which tomato does best in Kansas, what are the best shade trees to plant in a small yard, what kind of fertilizer is best for my fescue, when should I prune my lilac, and how do I get rid of moles that are tunneling throughout my yard.

And things like; how many apple trees do I need for good fruit production, how about peaches and pears, will raspberries do any good here, what can I do to improve the soil in my garden/flower beds/yard, do I need to add lime to my soil, what can I do to control ticks, fleas, and chiggers in my yard. Let's not forget about bagworms. What about herbs, and did I mention crabgrass, or dandelions. How many hours of sunshine should you have on your water garden? How much sun does your vegetable garden need?

This is just a small sample of some of the questions that commonly come up in the everyday world of home horticulture. A Master Gardener is not a person who knows all the answers to these questions, but someone who wants to know these answers and wants to learn where to go to find out the answers to other questions just like these.

**WHY would anyone want to become a Master Gardener?** Well, first to gain the aforementioned knowledge, and second, to share this information with friends, neighbors, and other people in the community. Past classes of Master Gardeners have participated in such projects as the landscaping and planting of the courthouse grounds, conducting a tomato taste test at the Butler County Fair, volunteering to assist at the compost site, routing traffic and taking surveys during the Household Hazardous Waste Collection day, and provided assistance during the county fair with the horticulture judging contests and judging of the horticulture exhibits, downtown planting of the planter boxes and establishment and planting of the Extension Demonstration Garden. Most recently the Butler County Master Gardeners have installed a water garden at the demonstration garden, and are currently working on the landscaping of that new feature.

**HOW do I become a Master Gardener?** By simply filling out an application form at the Extension office (we will even mail it to you) and being available to attend twelve training sessions between 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM on Thursdays from mid-September to mid-December.

**IN EXCHANGE** for over 40 hours of comprehensive training in home horticulture you will be asked to give back 40 hours of volunteer service to the horticulture programming efforts of the Butler County Extension office.

There is a fee of \$110.00 to cover the cost of the program and educational materials, but what a small price to pay for what you receive. Sessions on landscaping, gardening, fruit and nut production, lawn care, insect and disease control, organic methods, soil management, annuals and perennials, nuisance animals, plant propagation, houseplants and more are all part of the program.

**ANYONE** that thinks they might be interested in taking the Master Gardener training should call 316-321-9660 or come down to the Extension office at the 206 N. Griffith, El Dorado, and pick-up an application.



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*K-State Research and Extension - Butler County*

**2017 - 2018 MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM APPLICATION**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**MISSION:** The *KSU/Butler County Extension Master Gardener Program* is a volunteer organization of specifically trained Butler County residents designed to provide the public with sound information in all areas of horticulture.

**GUIDELINES FOR MASTER GARDENER PARTICIPATION:**

- g Be a Butler County Resident.
- g Have a High School Diploma or Equivalent.
- g Possess a Broad Interest in Horticulture.
- g Support the Objective of the *Master Gardener* Program and the Extension Programs of the Butler County Extension Council.
- g Be Able to Read and Comprehend an Extensive Notebook of Support Material to Be Used for Future Reference.
- g Complete the Basic *Master Gardener* Training Course.
- g Complete 40 Hours of Volunteer Work as Approved by the Horticulture Agent.

**PRESENT OCCUPATION:**

Employed full time \_\_\_\_\_ Homemaker \_\_\_\_\_  
Employed part-time \_\_\_\_\_ Retired \_\_\_\_\_

If employed, will your work interfere with the completion of the training course or your participation in *Master Gardener* projects? \_\_\_\_\_

If KSU and Extension scientific research and experience indicate benefits from the use of chemical compounds for specific horticultural purposes, would you recommend their use by gardeners who are seeking your advice, even though you may personally oppose the use of any chemical interventions? (If your answer is no, please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your interest in the *KSU/Butler County Master Gardener Program* and for completing this form. It will be carefully considered and you will be contacted as soon as possible.

**Please be sure to sign the application and give us your address, telephone number and e-mail.**

I wish to become a **KSU/Butler County Extension Master Gardener** trainee and would be available for the training session for the Class of 2015 which begins Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> and meets every Thursday through December 10<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m, with the exception of November 2<sup>nd</sup> and November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Most training sessions will be held at the Harvey County Courthouse in Newton, with at least one in Emporia. (For transportation to classes, we usually meet at the Extension Office and ride in the Extension vehicle or you may follow in your own, if you prefer.)

I further understand that if I am accepted into the **Master Gardener** training program, I am entering into a contract to return at least 40 hours of volunteer service to the Horticulture programs of Butler County. I agree to pay the Butler County Extension Office \$110.00 for this course.

**Master Gardener** volunteers may not participate in the **KSU/Butler County Extension Master Gardener Program** for personal gain or for commercial recommendations or endorsements. **Master Gardeners** are expected to provide recommendations based on research-based information, and to provide educational program assistance in support of the general County Extension education program.

**Master Gardeners operate under the control of a trained Extension professional responsible for monitoring their performance and the progress of their continuing education.**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (home) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Is it okay to call you at work if needed? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No