

## **THE GRAPEVINE**

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### **MASTER GARDENERS ACCEPTING NEW APPLICANTS!!!**

It's that time of year again, time to dust off the Master Gardner applications and spreading the word about the next class.

**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. There's also the Numana community garden that Butler County Master Gardeners are involved with.

**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 September 14<sup>th</sup> to December 14<sup>th</sup>. Thanksgiving is excluded along with the week of November 2<sup>nd</sup>. **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 321-9660 or come down to the Extension office at the 206 N. Griffith(the fairgrounds) and pick-up an application. And if you can't do either of those then you can access our website and print one off at: <http://www.butler.k-state.edu/horticulture/master-gardener.html>

### **Grub Control in Lawns**

If you plan on using a grub preventative on your lawn, the first half of July is a good target date for most products. Preventatives are normally used on areas that have had a history of grub problems. Traditional grub insecticides such as Dylox or carbaryl (Sevin) are normally applied in late July after grubs are present or as a rescue treatment once damage is seen. Products that contain Merit (imidacloprid) are considered grub preventers. Actually, these products do not prevent grubs, but rather kill grubs when they are quite small, and long before they cause damage. Merit is safer to use around pets and humans than traditional grub killers. Merit can be found in Bayer's Season-Long Grub Control, Grub No-More and Grub Free Zone. Another grub preventer with the trade name GrubEx contains chlorantraniliprole. Though this product is very effective, it is less water soluble than imidacloprid. It should be applied earlier, preferably April or May, but applications through June should still be effective. Remember, all grub products should be watered in soon after application.

### **Watering May be Needed This Summer**

Many areas of Kansas went through an extremely wet spring. Gardeners may assume that little watering may be needed this summer as the soils were completely recharged. However, many will likely need to do more watering than they expect. Rain saturated soils can damage root systems. Excess water drives oxygen out of the soil as pore spaces are filled with water. Every living cell in a plant must have oxygen to live. If there is no oxygen, roots will die. Therefore, many of our plants may need to be babied through the summer, especially since it has turned so hot so quickly. Newly planted trees are especially vulnerable as they have not established the extensive root system needed to absorb enough water during hot, dry, windy summers. Even trees two or three years old should receive special care even if the root system was not damaged by saturated soils. Deep, infrequent watering and mulching can help trees become established.

Newly transplanted trees need at least 10 gallons of water per week, and on sandy soils they will need that much applied twice a week. The secret is getting that water to soak deeply into the soil, so it evaporates more slowly and is available to the tree's roots longer. One way to do this is to drill a small hole (1/8") in the side and near the bottom of a 5-gallon bucket and fill it with water. Let the water dribble out slowly next to the tree. Refill the bucket once, and you have applied 10 gallons. Very large transplanted trees and trees that were transplanted two to three years ago will require more water. A perforated soaker hose is a great way to water larger trees, a newly established bed or a foundation planting. In sunbaked soil, you may need to rough up the surface with a hoe or tiller to get water to infiltrate easily. It may be helpful to set the kitchen oven timer, so you remember to move the hose or shut off the faucet. If you are seeing surface runoff, reduce the flow. Regardless of method used, soil should be wet at least 12 inches deep. Use a metal rod, wooden dowel, electric fence post or something similar to check depth. Dry soil is much harder to push through than wet. Record the time that was required to reach 12 inches and then use a time clock for any future waterings.