

THE GRAPEVINE



July 9th, 2020

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Reminders

- o Water plants as needed.
- o Complete final pinching of chrysanthemums.

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.

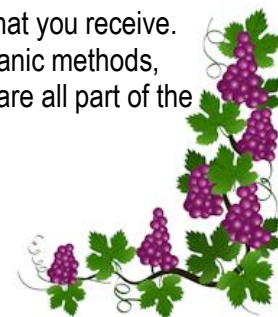

A Master Gardener is a person who has a thirst for knowledge about home horticulture, you know, all that stuff growing around your house - the lawn, the shade trees, the shrubs, the garden, the fruit trees, and even your houseplants. It is a person who wants to know things like; which tomato does best 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 17th to December 17th. Thanksgiving is excluded along with the week of October 18th.

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>

Blister Beetles

These beetles are notorious for quickly stripping vegetables (especially tomatoes) and ornamentals of their foliage. There are several species of blister beetles which vary in size (often between 0.5-0.75 inch long) and color (such as black, gray or brown-striped), but most are recognized by their elongated, narrow, cylindrical, soft bodies with middle body part (thorax) narrower than the head or wingcovers. Some home gardeners like to use hand picking as a nonchemical method for controlling these large insects. However, wear gloves and use caution because these beetles contain a substance called cantharidin. This chemical is an irritant capable of blistering internal and external body tissues exposed to the chemical. On tender human skin, body fluids of adult blister beetles may cause large, erect, watery blisters. Chemical control of blister beetles is also possible and may be the only practical method of control if populations are large. Cyfluthrin (BioAdvanced Vegetable and Garden Insect Spray) and permethrin (Bonide Eight and Hi-Yield Lawn, Garden and Farm Insect Control) are recommended. Cyfluthrin and permethrin have a 0 day waiting period on tomatoes.

Budworms on Garden Plants

If you have noticed a small hole in the buds of some of your flowers, you may have tobacco (geranium) budworm (*Helicoverpa virescens*). Though a number of flowers can serve as hosts, geraniums and petunias are most commonly attacked. The larva of this insect damages the buds by boring into them before they open. The caterpillars feed on the flowers for about a month and then drop to the soil to pupate. There are normally two generations per year, with the second causing the most harm. The striped caterpillars vary widely in color with green, red, light brown and dark forms possible. The color of the larva is related to the color of the flowers on which they feed. The adult of this insect is a moth. Damaged buds often fail to open. Those that do will show evidence of feeding on the petals. Damage normally peaks in late summer because of increased numbers from the second generation. Control of the budworm is difficult. Handpicking at dusk can be effective on small plantings. For larger plantings, chemical control may be the only practical option. Look for products with synthetic pyrethroid active ingredients such as permethrin (Bonide Eight and Hi-Yield Lawn, Garden and Farm Insect Control), esfenvalerate (Asana, Bug Buster II), cyfluthrin (BioAdvanced Vegetable & Garden Insect Spray), bifenthrin (Hi-Yield Bug Blaster Bifenthrin) or gamma-cyhalothrin (Spectracide Triazicide). Products with the organic active ingredient spinosad (Natural Guard Spinosad, Captain Jack's Dead Bug Brew, Monterey Garden Insect Spray) should also be effective. Severe winters can be a natural form of control from one year to the next. Temperatures below 20 degrees F are hard enough to kill overwintering pupa. Because pupal cases are usually 2 to 6 inches deep, most exposed areas in Kansas will provide good control during a cold winter. Microclimates next to heated buildings may allow survival.

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