

WHAT IS A MASTER GARDENER?



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 thirsts for knowledge about home horticulture, you know, all that stuff growing around your house - the lawn, shade trees, shrubs, garden, fruit trees, and even 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 in 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 home horticulture. A Master Gardener is not someone 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 knowledge mentioned above, and second, to share this information with friends, neighbors, and others 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, assisted the Butler County 4-H Fair with the horticulture judging contests and judging of the horticulture exhibits, planting and care of the Kansas Oil Museum Victory Garden, planting and weeding of the Augusta Community Garden Demo Garden and establishment and planting of the Extension Demonstration Garden.

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), you are eligible to attend twelve in-person training sessions between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Thursdays from mid-September to mid-December or the online training sessions from 1 to 4 pm on those dates.

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 \$135.00 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 who thinks they might be interested in taking the Master Gardener training can get an application by calling 316-321-9660, pick up a copy at the Extension Office - 206 N. Griffith, El Dorado, or go to:

<http://www.butler.ksu.edu/horticulture/master-gardener.html>

K-State Research and Extension - Butler County

2025-2026 MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM APPLICATION

NAME _____ Date _____

MISSION: The K-State Research and Extension/Butler County Extension Master Gardener Program is a volunteer organization of specifically trained Butler County residents or residents of surrounding counties without Master Gardener programs. The KSRE Master Gardener Program is designed to provide the public with sound information in all areas of horticulture.

GUIDELINES FOR MASTER GARDENER PARTICIPATION:

- Be a Butler County resident or a resident of a nearby county without a Master Gardener Program.
- Have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Possess a broad interest in horticulture.
- Comply with the policies, rules, and regulations of the Extension Master Gardener Program and the Butler County Extension Council.
- Complete the Basic Master Gardener Training Course either online or in person.
- Complete 40 Hours of volunteer work or advanced education classes as approved by the Horticulture Agent.
- Submit application to the Extension Office by August 1st.
- Pay the \$135 fee within one month of acceptance into the program or before the first session of the Master Gardener Basic Training course, whichever comes first.

Acceptance into the EMG program is based on your responses in this application. Please reply to all questions completely and informally, but keep your answers brief and concise.

Present Status:

- ☐ Employed Full-Time
- ☐ Employed Part-Time
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Other _____

Are you available for basic training? Basic Training is offered on Thursdays from mid-September and can be attended either in person or online. The in-person training starts on September 11th and runs till December 11th from 9 am to 3:30 pm in cooperation with Harvey and Reno counties. The online version is offered via Zoom from September 11th to December 4th from 1 pm to 4 pm and is offered synchronously or asynchronously, depending on your schedule. Both training sessions will not meet on October 23rd and November 27th. A detailed schedule will be provided upon acceptance into the program. Please describe your time availability and known conflicts for Basic Training. (Please note that we will work with any trainees on conflicts, provided you contact the Horticulture Agent)

Are you available for volunteer activities? EMG Volunteer activities occur during various times of the day but are mostly through the months of March through October. Describe your free time to engage in volunteer activities.

TIME AVAILABLE FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE: ☐ Weekdays ☐ Evenings ☐ Saturdays ☐ Sundays

Describe your horticultural experience and any areas of garden specialization or interests that you have. Include any training, courses, or other horticulture education programs you have attended.

Briefly discuss where you are a volunteer and what you find most satisfying about the experience. Describe an experience you had as a volunteer.

Tell us about your hobbies/skills/talents/areas of interest/ professional skills etc.

If KSRE 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)

Why do you want to be a KSRE Butler County Master Gardener?

In order to be considered, you must complete all parts of this application, sign and return it to us. Thank you for your interest in the KSRE/Butler County Master Gardener Program and for completing this form. It will be carefully considered, and you will be contacted as soon as possible.

I wish to become a KSRE/Butler County Extension Master Gardener trainee. I understand that there are two training options, one offered virtually, which begins on Thursday, September 11th, and meets every Thursday till December 4th from 1-4 pm (except October 23rd and November 27th). This class can be completed synchronously or asynchronously depending on your schedule. There is also an in-person option which begins Thursday, September 11th, and meets every Thursday through December 11th, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with the exception of October 23rd and November 27th. Most training sessions will be held in Newton, with field trips to Haysville and Hesston. We will also meet in El Dorado and Hutchinson (For transportation to classes, we usually meet at the Extension Office and ride in the Extension vehicle, or you may drive on 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 \$135.00 for this course by September 1st.

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

Master Gardeners operate under the direction and recommendation of a trained Extension professional.

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

Which class option (online or in-person) do you plan to attend? _____

I would like information on the financial aid opportunities _____ Yes _____ No