



2018 ELKHART COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER TRAINING PROGRAM

Dates of training:

Thursdays: Aug. 16, 23, 30; Sept. 6, 13, 20, 27;
Wednesdays: Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; Nov. 7, 14, 28; Dec. 5, 12, 19

Time: All classes begin at 1:00 p.m. and end approximately 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time

Location: Elkhart County Extension Office – Conference Room, Elkhart County 4-H
Fairgrounds, 17746 County Road 34, east of Goshen.

Subjects to be covered: Soil science, plant nutrition, plant science, insect identification and control, weed identification and control, disease identification and control, pesticide safety and use, vegetable gardening, woody ornamentals, flowers, indoor gardening, lawn care, tree fruit production, basic landscaping and other topics as needed.

Teachers: Teachers for this course will be Purdue University Extension Educators, Purdue University Extension specialists, or local experts.

Class size: Maximum 32 people. Potential participants must complete an application. Priority will be given to Elkhart County residents and those who will complete Master Gardener volunteer requirements.

Cost: \$175.00 per person, which includes class materials.

Expectations: Master Gardeners is a volunteer training program, not just a series of classes. Participants are expected to attend all sessions. An exam will be given at the last class. Those passing the exam (70% or better) will become Master Gardener interns. Interns are expected to donate 45 hours of public service to the Extension Office. The type of volunteer work is based on a mutual decision with the Master Gardener intern and the Extension Educator in charge of the program. Once the intern has completed the volunteer obligation, the Master Gardener will receive a certificate from Purdue University verifying the participant has completed the Master Gardener course. Additional training and volunteerism can lead to certification as an Advanced Master Gardener.

How do I Get Involved in Master Gardeners?

Pick up your application in Goshen at the Elkhart County Extension Office 17746 CR 34, Goshen. Applications are also available on the Internet at www.ag.purdue.edu/counties/elkhart/pages/default.aspx

Do not send money with your application. Applicants will be notified by letter about the status of their application.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ELKHART COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PROGRAM

WHAT IS "MASTER GARDENERS"?

The Indiana Master Gardener is a program sponsored by Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service through the local county Extension Office.

Master Gardeners is a volunteer training program designed to meet the information needs of the local gardening community. It is much more than a gardening class. Its specific aim is to provide information and technical assistance about gardening and home horticulture through the use of qualified volunteers. Participants in the program volunteer their services in the community.

WHAT IS THE VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT?

The type of volunteer work will be based on a mutual agreement with the Master Gardener and the Extension Educator in charge. Types of volunteer work might include writing articles for the newspaper, coaching individuals at community gardens, speaking to garden clubs or other groups, or preparing materials for other Master Gardeners to use. The possibilities are endless.

In previous years, Master Gardeners have set up and manned booths at various shows, worked with several local parks departments, worked with several retirement homes and neighborhood associations, held seminars for the public and coordinated a local Garden Walk. Others worked at the Extension Office, volunteering time to answer the phone during the gardening season.

HOW DO I BECOME A MASTER GARDENER?

To become a Master Gardener, you must be selected from a pool of applicants, complete the training program, pass an examination administered by the local Extension Educator, and volunteer at least 45 hours of public service through the Elkhart County Extension Office.

Class size is limited to 32 people due to the overwhelming number of interested people. Priority will be given to Elkhart County residents and those who will fulfill the volunteer commitment.

WHAT IS THE CONNECTION WITH PURDUE UNIVERSITY?

Each state has a university designated as its land grant college. In Indiana, that is Purdue University. As a land grant college, Purdue is charged with the responsibility to do research and teaching on agricultural and horticultural issues in Indiana. Much of the informal teaching is performed by the Purdue School of Agriculture, through the Extension Service, which has an office in each Indiana County.

Each county has a person designated as the Extension Educator - Agriculture, who works with the people in that community to answer their agriculture and horticulture questions. If there is interest, the Extension Educator can organize a Master Gardener program. Not all counties offer a Master Gardener program.

WHAT IS A TYPICAL CLASS LIKE?

Most people would tell you, "Fun!" Class starts with a few announcements, followed by an hour or so of instruction. After a mid-class break, it is back to work. Many of the speakers are local experts or Purdue University Extension employees trained in specialty areas. Instructors often give a quiz at the end of the class that can be taken home and completed. Answers to the quiz are passed out the following week.

WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING WILL I RECEIVE?

The training program will cover a wide variety of topics, including: Soil science, plant nutrition, plant science, insect identification and control, weed identification and control, disease identification and control, animal damage and control, pesticide safety and use, vegetable gardening, woody ornamentals, flowers, indoor gardening, lawns, tree fruit and other topics as needed.

Training will be held over a period of 5 months in a series of 18 afternoon meetings. Follow-up training and advance training can be arranged as needed. Participants are expected to attend all training sessions.

I SEE YOU HAVE A PESTICIDE CLASS. IS ORGANIC GARDENING COVERED IN THE CLASS?

Organic gardening topics are interspersed throughout the course. For instance, in the plant nutrition class, we discuss both the use of manure and the use of commercial fertilizers. In the weed control class, we discuss the biological, cultural, mechanical and pesticide methods of control. In the insect class, we discuss numerous types of control: biological, cultural, mechanical, sanitation, host resistance and pesticides.

The pesticide class is designed to teach Master Gardeners about frequently asked pesticide-related questions, including safety, formulations, legal issues, and understanding pesticides labels. Whether a Master Gardener practices organic methods or not, they are expected to understand these pesticide issues.

WHY IS THE MASTER GARDENER CLASS OFFERED IN THE DAYTIME?

Experience in other communities where Master Gardeners has been offered in the evening is that a high percentage of people who wish to participate in the program do not complete their volunteer hours. Many people want the knowledge, but because they work during the day, they lack the time or ability to fulfill the volunteer commitment. We hope such individuals will contact the Extension Office, and encourage the Master Gardeners to hold seminars for the public. This also gives the Master Gardeners a chance to complete their volunteer commitment.

WHAT IF I ONLY WANT SOME GARDENING ADVICE?

Many people want the information about gardening, but do not wish to do the volunteer work. Rather than signing up for the Master Gardener program, these people should let the Master Gardeners know they would like classes offered on gardening topics. If this situation meets your needs, contact the Extension Office and let them know what classes you might be interested in. The Extension Office also maintains a large volume of publications on various horticultural subjects that may answer your questions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Purdue Extension Elkhart County Office
C/O Master Gardener Program
17746 County Road 34 Ste E
Goshen, IN 46528-6898
Phone: 574-533-0554
nborkhol@purdue.edu



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2018 Master Gardener Application

(Turn in the following three pages)

I wish to become a Master Gardener and would like to be considered for the training program. I understand only 32 people will be accepted into the program. If I am selected, I will complete the training, and I will agree to donate a minimum of 45 hours of public service to the Elkhart County Extension Office's Master Gardener program during the next year. Upon acceptance to the program, I understand I will be asked to submit information for a background check.

Signature _____

Print your name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ Cell _____

Fax Number _____ E-mail address _____

Please answer the following questions so that we can match your talents to our volunteer needs. No experience is required, but we would like to know what your interests are.

1. Years of gardening experience _____.

2. Do you have any special training or experience in gardening? Please list: _____

3. Do you have any special interests in gardening? (e.g. vegetables, perennials, greenhouse, lawn care, roses, etc.)

4. Please list any garden group or club affiliation _____

5. Are there any times in the next year you will not be available for Master Gardener classes or volunteer services (e.g. vacation, job responsibilities, other commitments)?

6. What are your hobbies and interests not related to gardening?

7. Are you employed in the horticulture profession? _____

If yes, who is your employer? _____

8. What kind of activities would you volunteer for? Please check those that apply to you.

_____ Speak to groups about gardening.

_____ Organizational activities (e.g., preparing a booth for a mall show or the fair).

_____ Answering gardening questions at the Extension Office, mall shows and other activities.

_____ Writing (news articles, fact sheets, newsletters, etc.).

_____ Identifying plants and their problems.

_____ Other ideas...please specify:

9. What groups do you feel most comfortable working with?

_____ Children (5-10 years old) _____ Teens (11-19 years old)

_____ Adults _____ Senior Citizens

_____ Other Groups _____

_____ Any of the above groups.

10. Why do you want to be a Master Gardener? Why should you be selected as a Master Gardener? Please write a paragraph or two describing why you are interested in this program. No more than one page, please!

If you wish, a letter of reference may be submitted with the application.

- Deadline for applications is 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Aug.10, 2018 or until all 32 openings are filled. Accepted applicants will be notified by. Do not send money with this application!

Please send application form to:
Purdue Extension Elkhart County Office
C/O Master Gardener Program
17746 County Road 34 Ste E
Goshen, IN 46528-6898
Phone: 574-533-0554



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