

Michigan Master Gardener Volunteer Program

Miscellaneous Series

Michigan State University Extension, Genesee County - (810) 244-8531

The Michigan Master Gardener Volunteer Program is a horticulture education and volunteer leader training program offered by Michigan State University Extension (MSUE). It provides home gardening information to Michigan citizens through a network of trained volunteers. An interest in plants, a personal commitment to volunteerism and an enthusiasm for sharing knowledge with others are the only prerequisites.

The program originated in the state of Washington in **1972** and is now offered in approximately forty-six states and Canada. The first program was held in Michigan in **1978**. Since then, approximately fifty-seven counties have offered the course in one or more years with a total of over 18,000 people participating.

Mission

The Master Gardener Volunteer Program serves two major and equal functions:

- ❖ To provide instruction in basic horticulture science to motivated and active gardeners through an adult educational program offered through Michigan State University Extension and,
- ❖ To provide Extension with trained volunteers committed to responding

to the demands for gardening information, advice and assistance through community service projects.

Educational Requirement

Master Gardener Volunteer classes meet for a minimum of eleven weeks. County Extension agents, specialists from MSU and local gardening experts teach the classes. Students work from a 700-page Master Gardener Volunteer notebook. The course provides a basic overview of major horticultural subjects while introducing the student to a variety of resources for future reference. Topics covered in the eleven basic class sessions are:

- ❖ Introduction to Plant Science
- ❖ Soils for Plant Growth
- ❖ Flower Gardening
- ❖ Household Pests and Wildlife
- ❖ Indoor Plants and their Care
- ❖ Lawn Establishment and Care
- ❖ Plant Health Care/Diagnostics
- ❖ Growing Small Fruits
- ❖ Growing Tree Fruits
- ❖ Vegetable Gardening
- ❖ Woody Ornamentals

Volunteer Commitment

The Master Gardener Volunteer training course consists of a minimum of 40 hours of instruction. An equivalent number of

community service volunteer hours are required to become a certified Master Gardener Volunteer. Half these hours must be spent on Extension-sponsored projects. Examples are, working at a telephone hotline, developing educational materials, and staffing a Master Gardener Volunteer information booth at the county fair. The other hours may be given to activities related to horticulture in the community. Some examples are, designing and planting community beautification projects; working with youth to create an elementary school garden; using horticultural therapy with the disabled and elderly; and setting up garden programs in homes for battered women.

For details on the Michigan Master Gardener Volunteer Program in your area, please call your local county MSU Extension office. There are listed in the government section of your phone book.

SE Regional Offices

MSUE – Genesee County

605 N. Saginaw St. Suite 1A
Flint, MI 48502
(810) 244-8531

MSUE – Lapeer County

287 W. Nepessing
Ste 1
Lapeer, MI 48446
(810) 667-0341

MSUE – Livingston County

2300 E. Grand River Ave.
Howell, MI 48842
(517) 546-3950

MSUE – Oakland County

Dept. 416
1200 N. Telegraph Rd.
Pontiac, MI 48341
(248) 858-0880

MSUE – Saginaw

1 Tuscola
Saginaw, MI 48607
(989) 758-2540

MSUE – Shiawassee County

701 S. Norton
Corunna, MI 48817
(989) 743-2251

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University Extension, Genesee County
605 N. Saginaw St. Suite 1A
Flint, MI 48502

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