



Dear Applicant for the Master Gardener Program,

Thank you for your interest in the Grayson County Master Gardener Training Program. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service is an educational organization provided by the Federal, State and County governments, through the Texas A&M University System. Because the size and scope of our programs, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service trains volunteers to assist in reaching the citizens of Texas with research-based information.

The Master Gardener Program is a volunteer development program offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service and is designed to increase the availability of horticultural information and improve the quality of life through horticultural projects. Program objectives are implemented through the training and "employing" of local volunteers, known as Master Gardeners. They aid Extension by conducting school garden projects, answering telephone requests for horticultural information, working with special audiences in the community, and designing and implementing community improvement projects, as well as coordinating Master Gardener projects. The Master Gardener program is made up of certified volunteers who have been trained by Extension and meet the required volunteer service hours each year. While participants will benefit personally in this training, the principal criteria for acceptance into the program is the availability and willingness of the applicant to volunteer.

The training course covers topics such as: the proper environmental and cultural practices in the cultivation and management of ornamental and flowering plants, the production and care of vegetables, fruits and nuts, the care and maintenance of turf and landscape plants, and a general understanding of the sciences of Plant Pathology, Entomology, Botany, and Soils. There will be more than 50 hours of instruction provided to you during this training course. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agents, specialists, volunteers, and local experts will teach individual classes.

The Grayson County Master Gardener training course for 2019 will begin on February 20 and end on April 10. Training takes place once a week for 8 weeks. We need a minimum of 10 students for the class to make. See 2019 Grayson County Master Gardener Intern Class schedule for details.

To be certified as a Master Gardener, you must attend all training classes for a minimum of 50 training hours, complete 50 hours of approved Volunteer Service, and attend 4 Grayson County Master Gardener meetings during 2019. We need people who are willing to commit to continued participation as experienced Master Gardeners through annual recertification. Re-certification annual requirements are 15 hours of approved Volunteer Service, 6 hours of training, and attendance at a minimum of 4 Grayson County Master Gardener meetings.

The Master Gardener Training Program fee is \$180. This fee includes:

1. The Master Gardener Handbook
2. Extension Fact Sheets
3. One soil test
4. Other class materials
5. Over 50 hours of training
6. Background check (Mandatory for of all Extension volunteers for the protection of our clientele. Volunteers must adhere to Youth Protection Standards established by the Extension Service and participating organizations.)
7. Master Gardener Dues for the first year, called intern year

Please send the following to the Grayson County Extension Office.

1. **Course fee of \$180 - make checks payable to Grayson County Master Gardeners.**
 - a. **If training course is cancelled your check will be returned.**
2. **Grayson County Master Gardener Application**
3. **Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement**
4. **AgriLife Volunteer Application Form (background check)**

Resources to learn more:

- Grayson County Master Gardener website at <http://www.graysoncountymastergardeners.net/>
- Texas Master Gardener websites, <https://txmg.org/> and <https://mastergardener.tamu.edu/>
- Grayson County Extension website, <http://grayson-tx.tamu.edu/>
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension website at <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/>
- Texas A&M Horticulture website, <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/>

I look forward to meeting you at the initial session Wednesday, February 20, 2019.

Sincerely,

Joyce White
Family & Consumer Sciences Agent
ja-white@tamu.edu
903-813-4203
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Grayson County
100 West Houston
Sherman, Texas 75090

Frances Nelson
Grayson County Master Gardener
President
Sherman, Texas 75090
(cell: 903-893-2065)
(e-mail: francesnelson@yahoo.com)



Grayson County Master Gardener Application

I am applying for acceptance into the Texas Master Gardener Training program offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service in Grayson County. I understand that in exchange for the training made possible through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service, I agree to volunteer 50 hours of my time to the county's Master Gardener Program by the end of my intern year. I also agree to attend a minimum of 4 Master Gardener monthly meetings during my intern year. I understand that I will become a certified Texas Master Gardener when I complete both the training and the volunteer service within the first year, and attend the 4 Master Gardener meetings, I agree to attend all Master Gardener Training classes and stay for duration of class time. I agree to pay the fee of \$180 for the training course and understand that refunds are not available after January 30th, 2019.

| |
|---|
| Name: _____ (Please Print Name) |
| _____ (Signature) |
| Address: _____ |
| City/State/Zip Code: _____ |
| Telephone: (Day) _____ (Night) _____ |
| Email Address: _____ |
| Emergency contact name and phone: _____ |
| Medical conditions we should know about (optional): _____ |

Please complete the following questions. Use additional pages if necessary.

1. Are you a resident of Grayson County? If yes, how many years? _____
2. How did you learn of the Master Gardener Program? _____

3. Why do you want to become a Master Gardener? _____

4. List areas of specialization or hobbies (e.g., flowers, vegetables, ornamentals, house plants, community gardening, fruit crops, trees, creating wildlife habitats, organic gardening, etc.):

5. Please provide additional comments, including skills from your professional, community, or personal experiences.

Please complete this application and return to:

**Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Attn: Master Gardener President
100 West Houston
Sherman, TX 75090**

**For additional information, please visit the web site @
<http://www.graysoncountymastergardeners.net/>
call the Master Gardener Office at (903) 813-4204**

**or e-mail the Master Gardener office at mastergardeners@co.grayson.tx.us
Complete applications are due in the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service office by
February 1, 2019**

Extension programs serve people of ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. A member of the Texas A&M University System and its statewide Agriculture Program

Volunteer Application Form

And consent for criminal background history check authorization/waiver

To be completed by Extension program volunteers (EFNEP, BLT, etc.) and Master Volunteers only.

4-H volunteers must register online via 4-H CONNECT or by completing the 4-H Adult Volunteer Application (4-H 2-I.056)

Please print:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. APPLICANT'S FULL, LEGAL NAME _____ | 2. COUNTY _____ |
| 3. ADDRESS _____ | 4. CITY _____ ZIP _____ |
| 5. FIRST 5 DIGITS OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____ | 6. DATE OF BIRTH _____/_____/_____ |
| 7. DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER (optional) _____ | 8. GENDER (<i>circle one</i>) Male / Female |
| 9. Are you of Hispanic ethnicity? Yes / No RACE (<i>circle one</i>) White / Black / Asian / American Indian Alaskan Native / Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander | 10. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AREA _____ |

Previously Screened

11. I verify that I have been previously screened including a criminal background check and PASSED. Yes No
- If yes, by who? _____ When (Year): _____
- For what purpose? _____
- Did you pass? If not, what restrictions were imposed? _____
- If you have been screened and passed a criminal background check through an Extension-approved entity, a letter/proof must be submitted.

Please sign at the bottom of the form.

12. I hereby authorize VeriFYI and/or its Service Provider and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service to request and receive any and all background information about or concerning me, including, but not limited to, my Criminal History, Driving Record, Employment History, Military Background, Civil Listings, Educational Background, Professional License from any Individual, Corporation, Partnership, Law Enforcement Agency, and other entities including my Present and Past Employers. I authorize the Texas AgriLife Extension Service or any of its components to make reference checks relating to my volunteer service. I understand that this information will be used to determine my eligibility as a volunteer/employee with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service.
- The criminal history, as received from the reporting agencies, may include arrest and conviction data, as well as plea bargains and deferred adjudications and delinquent conduct committed as a juvenile. I understand that this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility for an employment/volunteer position with this organization. I also understand that as long as I remain an employee or volunteer here, the criminal history check may be repeated at any time. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review the criminal history as received by client/agency and a procedure is available for clarification, if I dispute the record as received. I also understand that the criminal history could contain information presumed to be expunged.
- I further release and discharge VeriFYI and their Service Provider and all of their Subsidiaries, Affiliates, Officers, Employees, Contract Personnel, or Associates, from any and all claims and liability arising out of any request for information or records pursuant to this authorization and/or procurement of an investigative consumer report and understand that it may contain information about my character, general reputation, personal characteristics, and mode of living, whichever are applicable.
- I understand that I have the right to make written request within a reasonable period of time to VeriFYI for additional information concerning the nature and scope of the investigation. I acknowledge that I have voluntarily provided the above information for employment/volunteer purposes, and I have carefully read and understand this authorization.

13. Date _____ 14. Applicant's Signature _____

Volunteer Application Form Instructions

1. Applicant's Printed Name – Complete with first name, middle name and last name.
2. County – Complete with the county name in which you are applying to be a volunteer.
- 3/4. Address – Complete with your current mailing address, city and zip code.
5. Social Security Number – Complete with at least the **first five** digits of the social security number. The social security number is an individual descriptor that enables the system to complete a national criminal search of 47 jurisdictions.
6. Date of Birth – Complete with the month, day and year of birth.
7. Driver's License Number – Complete with current driver's license number and state. Although optional, this helps affirm your identity during a background check.
8. Gender – Complete by circling one of the options.
9. Race – Complete the race and ethnicity section by circling the answers that apply. This field is optional; however, it is very important in confirming accurate identity.
10. Volunteer Program Area – Complete with the program area you are volunteering for (e.g., Better Living for Texans, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, Master Wellness Volunteer).
**4-H volunteers should complete the Texas 4-H Adult Volunteer Application (4-H 2-1.056).*
11. Previously Screened – Texas AgriLife Extension Service will accept prior screenings conducted within the past three years from other entities. The approved list of prior screenings either as an employee or volunteer include: school districts, churches, youth groups/associations (Little League, sports associations, etc.), youth agencies/organizations (Big Brother/Big Sister, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, after school/extended care programs), law enforcement (county, state or federal/prison system), Texas Youth Commission, Department of Defense – Child and Youth Services, Department of Defense – Family Programs, concealed handgun license; and/or licensed childcare workers.
** The minimum requirement is a criminal background check conducted through DPS or a National Criminal Search entity.**
*** Other sources may be considered based on documentation provided with screening criteria and specifics.***
**** Documentation is required for screenings from other entities. This could include a letter of acceptance from the employer or volunteer group, or a letter written from the screening entity to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service stating you have been screened and tested.*
12. Authorization Statement – State agencies screening volunteers are required by legislation to use the Volunteer Center of North Texas. The Volunteer Center contracts with VeriFYI. VeriFYI is a background verification software system that accesses multi-jurisdiction checks utilizing one of the largest private-sector criminal history databases in the nation (180 million records). All information received is held in confidence and not shared at the county level. Criminal record results are shredded when a volunteer's status is determined.
13. Date Completed
14. Applicant's Signature



We appreciate your commitment to the Texas Master Gardener program. Your satisfaction and progress in this volunteer position is important to us. Please read the following expectations and indicate your willingness to cooperate by signing the end of this form. This form must be signed and filed with the county Extension office, and will need to be updated annually. Volunteers not adhering to all items in this agreement may forfeit their certification as a Master Gardener volunteer.

I understand that I am trained by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in the field of Horticulture and I am expected to extend research based information to the public on behalf of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. In exchange for the minimum of 50 hours of Master Gardener Training provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, I will:

- Commit to a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer service to the horticultural programming efforts in Grayson County within one year to become a certified Master Gardener.
- I understand that in order to maintain active status as a Master Gardener Volunteer, I must volunteer 15 (varies by county, but must be a minimum 12 hours) hours annually after my intern year and gain 6 (varies by county, but must be a minimum 6 hours) continuing education hours annually.
- Provide a record of this service as directed by the Master Gardener Program Coordinator.
- Comply with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Background Check policy. The background check is to be renewed every three years.

When acting as a Texas Master Gardener volunteer I agree to:

- Consistently exhibit a positive professional manner toward and about Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the Master Gardener Program, the Master Gardener Coordinator, other Master Gardener volunteers and clients.
- Carry out and discharge all duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Avoid conflict of interests
 - Not use my Master Gardener status to promote any commercial activity or private business.
 - Volunteer's efforts for their place of employment will not be considered as volunteer service to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.
- Recommend and use (when functioning as a Master Gardener) only Texas A&M AgriLife approved information for any public pesticide, herbicides, fertilizer or cultural practices.
- Provide my own transportation and pay my own expenses incurred as part of official volunteer activities. (Expenses may be tax deductible with proper documentation.) Some County Master Gardener Associations may assist volunteers with expenses to certain types of events. Check with your local Master Gardener Program Coordinator for more information on specific association policies and procedures.
- Act in accordance with the highest standard of ethics:
 - Not physically, verbally or sexually harass/abuse anyone
 - Refrain from illegal or unsafe behavior
 - Dress appropriately and not use harsh language

In regard to Master Gardener Coordinators, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Recognize the responsibilities of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service staff/ Master Gardener Coordinator in setting program priorities, standards and direction. Specific projects for the performance of the volunteer work are determined locally and should reflect local needs.
- Refer all commercial horticulture inquiries to the Master Gardener Coordinator or other Extension staff.

In regard to Master Gardener Colleagues, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Welcome volunteers from all backgrounds
- Respect and safeguard the individual rights, competencies, safety, and property

In regard to Clients, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Provide quality service to the public without regard to socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

I further understand that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will:

- Provide training, supervision, and direction to Master Gardeners through the local county Extension office.
- Communicate expectations and responsibilities of the program to volunteers.
- Match volunteer skills and interests with volunteer opportunities within the county.
- Support Master Gardener volunteers and the local Master Gardener Association.
- Provide continuing education opportunities.
- Provide access to Extension horticulture reference materials and reasonable access to Extension professionals.
- Uphold and cultivate a trustful relationship between staff and volunteers.
- Reassign and/or terminate, if necessary, any volunteer who does not uphold Texas Master Gardener policies, procedures, guidelines, and/or values.

I understand that, as a volunteer, I will not be acting as a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service employee and will not receive pay or employee benefits. I also understand that I am not covered by workers' compensation laws in connection with my volunteer affiliation. I understand and agree that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and I both have the right to end my volunteer relationship with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at any time, for any reason, and without advance notice.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Information taken from: Purdue, Rutgers, Georgia, Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, California, & Texas (Montgomery Co.) Master Gardener Programs.

GRAYSON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER (GCMG) 2019 INTERN CLASS COURSE SCHEDULE
(Dates and times firm, Class topics and Location might change)

WEDNESDAY, February 20, 2019 Grayson County Courthouse
8:30 - 10:30 **WELCOME AND CLASS ORIENTATION**
 Elizabeth Anne Jones, President GCMG
 Joyce White, Extension Agent

10:30 - 4:00 **SOIL AND COMPOSTING**
 Becky Hogenson, Grayson County Master Gardener

WEDNESDAY February 27, 2019 Grayson County Courthouse
8:30 - 9:00 **GCMG Projects**

9:00 - 12:00 **PLANT PROPAGATION**
 Nancy Taylor, Grayson County Master Gardener

1:00 - 4:00 **SHRUBS**
 Barbara Grisham, Grayson County Master Gardener

WEDNESDAY March 6, 2019 Grayson County Courthouse
8:30 - 9:00 **GCMG Projects**

9:00 - 4:00 **HORTICULTURE BASICS – GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT**

WEDNESDAY March 13, 2019 Grayson County Courthouse
8:30 - 9:00 **GCMG Projects**

9:00 - 12:00 **TREE SELECTION & CARE, INCLUDING FRUITS & NUTS**
 Dr. Greg Church, Arboriological Services Inc.
 The Tree Care Experts

WEDNESDAY March 20, 2019 Grayson County Courthouse
8:30 - 9:30 **GCMG Projects, Tour of GC Extension Office**

9:30 - 4:00 **ENTOMOLOGY**
 Dr. Mike Merchant
 Urban Entomologist
 Texas A&M AgriLife Center at Dallas

THURSDAY March 28, 2019 ***** HAGERMAN REFUGE**
8:30 - 9:00 **GCMG Projects**

9:00 - 12:00 **LANDSCAPE DESIGN**
 Ashley Hartman, Instructor
 North Central Texas College, Horticulture Program

1:00 - 4:00 **TX NATIVE PLANTS & PERENNIALS**
 Sue Abernathy, Grayson Master Gardener

WEDNESDAY April 3, 2019 ***** Denison Community Gardens**
8:30 - 9:00 **GCMG Projects**

9:00 - 4:00 **VEGETABLE AND HERB GARDENING**
 Vickie Gaskins, GCMG Vegetable Specialist
 Debra Felske, Grayson County Master Gardener

Wednesday April 10, 2019 ***** TX AgriLife Dallas Center**
8:30 - 9:00 **GCMG Projects**

9:00 - 4:00 **LAWN MANAGEMENT**
WATER HARVESTING AND CONSERVATION
EARTHKIND PRINCIPLES