

## CCEDC Master Gardener Volunteer Position Description

**Title:** Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV)

**Purpose of Position:** To provide home and community gardeners in Dutchess County with unbiased gardening education that is based on research or reliable experience.

### Responsibilities:

- Serve as a horticultural resource as outlined in the plan of work of the sponsoring Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Agrees to respect and adhere to the Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County Volunteer Agreement and CCE Code of Conduct.
- Successfully complete the required MGV training program and remain current through participation in recommended training opportunities throughout the agreed term of volunteer service.
- Abide by the rules set forth in the Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County Master Gardener Guidelines.
- Professionally represent Cornell Cooperative Extension within the community, encourage enrollment in and support the organization.

**Anticipated Audience:** Master Gardener volunteers interact with the public via telephone, email, display gardens, plant sales and information booths. This program serves all members of Dutchess County, and as such, there is the anticipation that volunteers will work with people of all age levels, including minors, individuals over age 65, and/or individuals with disabilities.

**Expected Results:** Dutchess County residents will be better informed of environmentally sound gardening and best management practices and be better able to make decisions based on Cornell and other land-grant research.

### Training and Support:

- Orientation to the Cornell Cooperative Extension System, its mission and that of the Master Gardener Volunteer program.
- Master Gardener training includes a core qualifying course in gardening, as well as refresher classes, field trips, and workshops to enhance expertise and the ability to communicate with the public. In Dutchess County, the fee is \$375.00 for the training, which covers classes, an extensive resource manual and other books required for the training program. Attendance is mandatory for all sessions during the training. If a trainee does not complete all the training, he/she will forfeit the entire training fee.
- Orientation to operational and risk management procedures
- Periodic opportunities for statewide, regional, and national Master Gardener conferences are provided.
- Support from the AG/Horticulture Program Leader, Community Horticulture Program Coordinator
- Connection to Cornell University faculty research and library services, through workshops and seminars.

**Time Commitment:**

A Dutchess County MGV is required to contribute 100 hours of volunteer service over an internship period of 21 months, beginning January 1 after graduation. Once the internship is completed, a MGV is required to contribute a minimum of 34 volunteer hours (as outlined in the CCEDC MGV guidelines) per year thereafter to maintain their “active” status as a Master Gardener.

**Reporting:** All time devoted to MG volunteer activities must be recorded in an MGV service diary and be submitted annually. Volunteers are also required to maintain records for the number of contacts and recommendations given.

**Qualifications:**

- A basic interest and experience in home gardening, indoor plants, landscaping, or natural resources
- Enthusiasm for acquiring and sharing horticultural knowledge and skills
- A sincere interest in educating others
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- A time schedule compatible with program activities
- The willingness to volunteer time on horticultural projects and educational activities that help meet the goals of CCEDC.
- MGV’s that request a transfer from another NYS CCE County in which they are currently an active MGV must apply during an open enrollment period. If accepted, will be subject to a reduced training fee (TBD), and all requirements stated above.

**Benefits:**

- Satisfaction of serving your community to extend the educational mission of Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Interaction with people in your community with similar interests and talents in gardening and landscaping
- A deeper understanding of the science and art of horticulture and its allied sciences.

**Level of Background screening required:**

- **Reference Check** – Required for all enrolled volunteers of CCEDC.
- **Criminal Background Check** – Required for all enrolled volunteers of CCEDC.
- **Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) Check** – Required only if volunteer wishes to use CCEDC Association vehicles or drive others to CCEDC MGV events.