

Cornell Cooperative Extension Volunteer Position – Oswego County

Title: Master Gardener Volunteer

Purpose of Position: Master Gardener Volunteers are trained educators that help provide garden-based education in our local community. Master Gardeners provide education by integrating practical garden skills and experience with research-based knowledge so residents of Oswego County are better equipped to manage gardens, lawns, and landscapes with an emphasis on food security and environmental stewardship.

Responsibilities:

1. Successfully complete the required Master Gardener Volunteer Training Course.
2. Serve as an active Master Gardener Volunteer peer educator as outlined in the MGV Expectation Guidelines.
3. Represent Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County within the local community, including encouraging enrollment in and support for the MGV Program.
4. Abide by the CCE Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Expected Results: children, youth and adults who engage in our educational programs not only expand their learning and skills in garden, lawn and landscapes, but also contribute to greater community resilience. Our education programs will help to enhance health and wellness, food security, ecological literacy, environmental stewardship, and a greater appreciation for food and agriculture.

Training and Support:

- Orientation to the Cornell Cooperative Extension System, its mission and that of the Master Gardener Volunteer Program.
- Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program includes a core qualifying course in gardening, as well as refresher classes, field trips and workshops to enhance expertise and ability to communicate garden-based information to the public. There is a registration fee of \$275 paid to CCE of Oswego County after completion of application process.
- Orientation to the operational and risk management procedures of CCE of Oswego County.
- Periodic opportunities to participate in regional events and programs; participation is encouraged to expand your knowledge and professional development.
- Extension Educators and seasoned Master Gardener Volunteers can also help provide ongoing support for each other.
- Supervision and support for all Master Gardener Volunteers will be provided by Joshua Vrooman, Agriculture Educator for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County.

Reporting: Master Gardener Volunteers are required to maintain records of volunteer hours and program data.

Time Commitment: Master Gardener Volunteers are required to contribute a minimum of 50 hours annually over a period of 12 months. We allow 10 hours per year to be used for continued education. We also grant volunteer hours when you come to our quarterly meetings!

Qualifications:

- Basic gardening knowledge and experience, which qualifies them to train to become MGVS.
- Ability to relate to the public with unbiased, research-based information in a courteous and professional manner.
- Ability to work well with others and contribute positively to our team
- Ability to learn new information, some of which is practical knowledge and some that comes from soft and hard sciences
- Ability to pass Knowledge Checks, showing mastery of a wide range of gardening topics required to be a MGV.
- Ability to educate people from diverse backgrounds with a lens of diversity, equity and inclusiveness.
- Having the willingness and time to volunteer.
- Ability to communicate effectively with others, both written and verbal.
- Interest in helping others and making new friends.

Benefits:

- Receive horticulture training that is research-based information carried out through Cornell University and Cornell Cooperative Extension.
- Receive continuing education through quarterly meetings, seminars and other Cornell/CCE educational activities.
- Have fun while learning and helping others. Following core instruction, you can concentrate your horticultural interests in a variety of garden areas.
- Meet and make new friends with similar interests in gardening. Exchange information and learn new gardening ideas.
- Develop new skills such as public speaking, teaching skills, servant leadership, creating pamphlets, etc.