



Benton/Franklin County

Master Gardener Program

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Dear Prospective Master Gardener,

Thank you for your interest in the 2018 Master Gardener Program. We are excited to have you join us and we look forward to getting to know you! The purpose of the Washington State University Master Gardener Program is to train volunteers to be effective community educators in gardening and environmental stewardship by providing information to the public generated from research at WSU and other universities. Master Gardeners demonstrate a strong volunteer ethic and a deep sense of commitment, coupled with a willingness to learn and to share what they learn. Last year we had 159 Master Gardeners that volunteered over 14,000 hours furthering their own education, working in plant clinics, local schools, demonstration gardens, community gardens, and they had a terrific time doing it!

Master Gardener training is held once a week on Tuesdays afternoons from 12:00pm until 3:00pm beginning January 23 through April 24, 2018. The training covers a variety of topics educating you on basic plant biology, pathology, common gardening issues in our area, and much more. You do not have to be a great gardener to participate, but you will be a better and more knowledgeable gardener when you complete the program. Homework averages 4 to 6 hours per week, is conducted online, and requires access to a computer with internet and email capability.

Training focuses on familiarization with and learning how to use resources to research, educate, mentor and answer horticulture questions for the public, while working with other Master Gardeners in a collaborative environment. All quizzes and the final exam are taken online and are multiple choice and open book.

Tuition for this extensive training program is \$175 plus a minimum of 50 hours volunteer time working on designated Benton Franklin County Master Gardener projects. To apply to become a Master Gardener Volunteer, please fill out the enclosed application and submit it to our office no later than January 2, 2018. Our original application deadline of November 10, 2017 has been extended. We will have our first orientation session on December 7th for those that have already applied for the 2018 program and a second orientation on January 16th. You only need to attend one orientation session. During orientation, you will learn more about the Master Gardener Program, the commitment you are making to become a Volunteer Master Gardener Community Educator, and to answer any questions you may have. At orientation, you will receive a packet of information about the program along with all the required administrative forms that you will need to complete and submit and instructions for tuition payment and registering for the online portion of the course. **Please do not send payment with your application.**

If you have any questions or to receive more information about the Master Gardener Program, please call the Kennewick WSU Extension office at (509) 735-3551 and speak to either Eileen or Heather.

We look forward to receiving your application!