



WSU EXTENSION
Benton/Franklin County

Dear Prospective Master Gardener,

Thank you for your interest in the 2024 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.

The Master Gardener Program is a hybrid of in person training and an online stand-alone course. We will hold in person Master Gardener weekly trainings beginning the end of January through April 2024. 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. 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 40 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 pdf and submit it to our office no later than November 30, 2023. Your application can be emailed to Rachael.dove1@wsu.edu or printed and mailed to WSU Benton County Extension 7102 W. Okanogan Pl., Ste 102, Kennewick, WA 99336. **Please do not send payment with your application.**

We will need to hear back from at least 2 of your references and you will need to complete a background check before you can be accepted into the program. Once we receive your application, we will send you an invitation to complete your background check with Sterling Volunteers.

We will have our orientation session at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, January 16th here at our office in Kennewick. Attendance at orientation is required. At orientation, you will receive a packet of information about the program along with all the required administrative documents and agreement forms that you will need to complete and submit along with instructions for tuition payment and registering for the online portion of the course. We will also ask you to sign up for a getting acquainted interview time spot on Thursday Jan 18th. The purpose of this interview is just to get to know you better and answer any questions you may have about the program. If for some reason you cannot attend orientation, on the 16th please contact me so that we can make alternate arrangements to make sure you receive orientation.

If you have any questions or to receive more information about the Master Gardener Program, please call me at the Kennewick WSU Extension office at (509) 735-3551 or email me at Rachael.dove1@wsu.edu

We look forward to receiving your application!

Sincerely,

Rachael Dove

Master Gardener Program Coordinator
WSU Benton -Franklin County Extension

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension office. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication or program information or reasonable accommodation need to contact Eileen Hewitt at WSU Benton County Extension, 7102 W. Okanogan Pl., Ste. 102, Kennewick, WA 99336 (509) 735-3551 wsuextension@co.benton.wa.us at least 2 weeks prior to the event.