About the
MASTER GARDENER
Program

The Chowan, Gates and Perquimans County Master Gardener Program was established in 2004. New classes are currently held in the fall of odd years, but dates are subject to change. (Call for the most current information.)

The N.C. Extension Master Gardener program is an educational program designed to enhance public education in consumer horticulture. It provides educational assistance to the citizens of the county concerning lawns, fruits, vegetables, trees, and ornamentals through the utilization of a trained and supervised volunteer staff.

Under the guidance and support of Extension agents, selected residents of a county enter a specially designed training program in horticulture. Participants in the program must complete the training program, pass an examination, and volunteer a minimum of 40 hours per year (20 hours in subsequent years) through the local Cooperative Extension Center.

The N.C. Extension Master Gardener program allows the local Extension office to extend education to an ever-increasing gardening audience. It also provides the local office with a highly visible way to meet the public demand for information and to develop a strong clientele support group. There are currently over 3,000 active NC Master Gardener volunteers.

Master Gardener volunteers are members of the local community who take an active interest in their lawns, trees, shrubs, and gardens. They are enthusiastic, willing to learn and help others.

What really sets Master Gardener volunteers apart from other home gardeners is their special training in horticulture and their willingness to educate others. In exchange for their training, Master Gardeners contribute time as volunteers by working through their Cooperative Extension Center to provide horticulture-related information to the public.

MG Volunteer Opportunities
The opportunities for volunteer services are limitless. Examples include: diagnosing plant, insect, and disease problems; establishing plant clinics and educational exhibits; designing demonstration and/or community gardens; lecturing on various gardening topics or bringing the joy of gardening to senior citizens or young children through various community projects.

For Information Contact:
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North Carolina Cooperative Extension
MASTER GARDENER
PROGRAM
CHOWAN, GATES, PERQUIMANS
HOW TO BECOME A MASTER GARDENER

Application Process:
Applications are currently accepted the first business day in July of odd years for the upcoming fall class. The applications are available at the extension office or online at www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/masgar

Volunteer Training:
If you are accepted into the N.C. Extension Master Gardener Program in your county, you will attend a training course. Classes are taught by Extension staff, local experts, and Master Gardeners. The fee for the training is currently $65.00. Prices are subject to change.

The program offers a minimum of 40 hours of instruction on horticulture topics including: lawns; ornamental trees and shrubs; insect, disease, and weed management; soils and plant nutrition; vegetable gardening; home fruit production; garden flowers; and water conservation.

You will receive a comprehensive, North Carolina Master Gardener training manual. It will be a valuable tool in answering homeowner’s plant questions.

Volunteer Commitment
Once you successfully complete the training program and pass the final exam, you will begin a 40 hour minimum volunteer internship, when you will learn even more about plants and people.

Since, Master Gardeners function as resource individuals for horticultural questions that come in to their local Extension office, their efforts multiply the capabilities of county Extension Agents.

Why Should I become a Master Gardener Volunteer?
Ask yourself these questions:
• Do I want to learn more about the culture of many types of plants?
• Am I eager to participate in and commit to a practical and intense training program?
• Do I look forward to sharing my knowledge with people in my community?
• Do I have enough time to attend training sessions and to serve as a committed volunteer?
If you answered yes to these questions, the Extension Master Gardener program could be for you!

Some of the MG Responsibilities
Volunteers perform their duties as representatives of NC State University, follow university policies, and work under the supervision of a NC State employee. Master Gardeners are representatives of North Carolina Cooperative Extension and follow the research-based recommendations of the NC Cooperative Extension. The title "Master Gardener Volunteer" can be used by volunteers only when engaged in Extension sponsored activities.

Further, MG Volunteers provide only unbiased, research based information consistent with NC State University recommendations.

MG Volunteers are not expected to answer questions outside their expertise or training such as not answering questions concerning household pests, commercial horticulture, hazardous tree evaluation, medical or legal questions, and determining if a questionable plant or mushroom is edible.

NCCE COUNTY CENTERS:
Chowan County, (252) 482-6585
http://chowan.ces.ncsu.edu

Gates County, (252) 357-1400
http://gates.ces.ncsu.edu

Perquimans County, (252) 426-5428
http://perquimsans.ces.ncsu.edu

www.ces.ncsu.edu
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