

# VOLUNTEERISM GUIDE

Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program



**LEARN  
SERVE  
GROW**





# CREDITS & REVIEWERS

## References:

UGA Cooperative Extension. *Georgia Master Gardener Handbook, Seventh Edition*. Griffin, GA: © 2011

UGA Cooperative Extension. *Program Policies for the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program*. Griffin, GA: © 2018

UGA Cooperative Extension. *Georgia MGEV Program Administrative Manual*. Griffin, GA: © 2018  
(under revision)

---

*The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (working cooperatively with Fort Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the counties of Georgia) offers its educational programs, assistance, and materials to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or protected veteran status and is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action organization.*

*This material has been prepared for the use of a Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer in his or her volunteer experience with UGA Extension. Supplemental information for topics covered in this publication can be found in the Georgia MGEV Program Administrative Manual.*

## Many thanks to the following individuals for their contributions to this document:

Dr. Michael Martin, Director of County Operations, UGA Extension

Dr. Mark McCann, Assistant Dean, UGA Extension

J. Brooke Savage, Assistant General Counsel, UGA Legal Affairs

**Editor:** Sheri Dorn, State Coordinator, Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program

**Editorial Assistance:** Sarah H. Sawyer, Program Assistant, Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program

© 2018

State Program Office, Georgia MGEV Program

Department of Horticulture

University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Athens, GA





# CONTENTS

- v Welcome
- vii Letter from the State Coordinator
- 1 Introduction
- 3 What is a MGEV?
- 3 Program History
- 4 Partnering with Extension
- 5 The Value of Extension Volunteers
- 6 Extension's Program Areas
- 7 Extension's Organizational Structure
- 7 The Extension Office
- 9 MGEV State Program Office
- 11 How does the SPO serve Extension and MGEVs?
- 11 Expectations of MGEVs
- 12 Becoming a MGEV
- 14 The MGEV Title and Name Badge
- 15 Pesticide Recommendations
- 15 Accident/Incident Report
- 16 Recordkeeping & Reporting
- 19 Volunteer Opportunities Available to MGEVs
- 24 Project Criteria
- 22 Planning & Proposals
- 30 Financial Resources for Projects
- 31 Master Gardener Organizations
- 33 After the First Year: Remaining a MGEV
- 35 Local Program Structure
- 35 Leadership Benchmarks for MGEVs
- 36 MGEV Advisory Panel
- 36 Leadership
- 37 Conflict with the Local Program
- 38 Recognizing & Appreciating MGEVs
- 38 Service Awards
- 39 The Star Program
- 39 Expanding Knowledge & Skills
- 40 Continuing Education & Advanced Training
- 45 Long-term Program Results
- 45 Support Provided by UGA Extension







**Dr. Samuel L. Pardue**  
*Academic Dean*



**Dr. Laura Perry  
Johnson**  
*Associate Dean for  
Extension*



**Dr. Mark McCann**  
*Assistant Dean for  
Extension*

***Meet the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) Administrators!***

The Dean and Director of CAES serves as the chief administrative officer of the college and holds direct responsibility for all teaching, research, and extension programs.

**Welcome to the UGA Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program!** So glad to have you onboard. I know you are excited about this great opportunity to learn more about plants and gardening from UGA's finest, so I thought I would share with you why I continue to be excited about being a part of UGA Extension!

***We are a part of one of the greatest systems in the world:*** the U.S. land-grant system. The land-grant system is unique because it integrates teaching, research, and outreach into one mission. When new discoveries are made by our scientists, our applied researchers and Extension specialists hone it, and our Extension agents, professionals, and volunteers disseminate it. Our collaboration among program and topic areas, as well as other colleges and schools, enhances our expertise and potential for influencing the grand challenges of today.

***Extension is pervasive.*** We are located in all 159 counties and are ready to serve the citizens of Georgia. Every county benefits from our services. We have about 400 faculty members and 800 staff. When we add our volunteer base of more than 8,000 people, we dramatically increase our circle of influence and our impact! Spread the word!

***We are valued and responsive at the local level.*** Local communities contribute about 30 percent of Extension's funding, so it is crucial that we are addressing local needs. The increased local funding is a very positive sign that we are relevant and valued at the local level. Never underestimate the value of voicing the impact of the work you do!

***We have the potential to touch all citizens in Georgia and make a real difference in our state.*** Our program areas – Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development – cover just about every issue you can think of.

***We have a network for information delivery that is unparalleled!*** When someone needs to get information to every county in Georgia and do it fast, they come to UGA Extension. We have a reputation for being able to get boots on the ground and information in the hands of people who need it quickly and efficiently. I think this is possibly our greatest strength.

Can you tell that I get really excited about Extension? I hope that you will, too, as you learn more about the Master Gardener experience and the many projects carried out as part of Extension's educational mission. MGEVs enhance the county Extension agents' efforts to fulfill Extension's mission of providing quality, relevant outreach and continuing education programs and services to local citizens. Thank you for joining Extension!

*Dr. Laura Perry Johnson*



# *Welcome!* from the State Program Office

*Congratulations on becoming part of the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer (MGEV) Program! We are so excited to have you with us as we reach out to our communities and help others learn to garden in sustainable ways that protect our environment and natural resources and enhance the places where we live. Volunteers, such as yourself, are essential to Extension's outreach and are part of Extension's philosophy that active citizen participation helps make educational programming successful.*

In the coming weeks, you will be stuffed full of horticulture and gardening information. As the weather warms, you are guaranteed to positively ITCH to be in the garden, experimenting with and trying out what you have learned. It's in your blood – that's why you joined us! Don't worry – that full, overstuffed feeling eventually subsides as the lessons begin to click with experience as you answer the questions of others, share gardening tips, lead youth through gardening activities, play a little horticultural CSI, prepare a presentation, develop a section of a demonstration garden, or any other myriad of projects in which MGEV trainees immerse themselves.

You will meet many people over the course of your training. Thank goodness for our MGEV nametags! Perhaps you are paired with a veteran mentor who can help you remember the people whom you meet. Perhaps your class training activities and field trips will connect you with new friends and potential project partners. Maybe you will have opportunity to travel to a regional or statewide event and meet more MGEVs. There are nearly 3000 of you, after all, and each one is a tremendous resource to and support of Extension's educational outreach.

You will have many opportunities to engage in Extension projects throughout your community. Some opportunities will be simple, one-time events that provide information to people looking for help with their garden or landscape. Some opportunities will be moderate commitments for a specific event, perhaps involving planning, set-up, implementation, and clean-up. Other projects that MGEVs coordinate go on for several years, and you may have opportunity to contribute to development and implementation. Regardless of the level at

which you plug in, your time will be rich with experience and you will gain satisfaction in partnering with Extension in helping others.

While I meet many of you in your first training class, I don't always have opportunity to visit until later on. I look forward to getting to know and work alongside of you. I know your Agent and Program Coordinator will do a great job preparing you for your volunteer experience. In the meantime, I encourage you to engage wholeheartedly in your MGEV training experience. I appreciate all that you bring to the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program and can't wait to hear about your projects!



Sheri Dorn  
State Coordinator, Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program

## Introduction

First launched in 1979, the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer (MGEV) Program is proud of its heritage and commitment to community volunteer service. Under the leadership of the University of Georgia Extension, more than 10,000 Master Gardeners have been trained and certified to help provide horticultural information to the public. For over a quarter of a century, these dedicated gardeners have conducted educational workshops, staffed booths at county fairs and flower shows, hosted plant clinics, developed community gardens, written newsletter/newspaper articles, and operated hotlines at county offices. Georgia MGEVs are invaluable for their assistance to local Extension agents in helping to meet the public demand for gardening information.

Becoming a MGEV is a personal goal that many individuals set for themselves. Perhaps resulting from a lifelong curiosity about plants and gardening, the desire to become a MGEV is rooted in the personal quest for training in horticulture and gardening. By branching out into communities through volunteerism, MGEVs gain satisfaction resulting from helping others learn more about gardening.

The Consumer Horticulture (CH) education program of University of Georgia Extension teaches non-commercial audiences about the selection and care of plants for ornamental value and home food production, such that natural resources

and the environment are protected and that communities and lives are enhanced. The mission of the MGEV program is to assist Extension in providing unbiased horticultural information through volunteer community service and educational gardening projects using applied research and the resources of the University of Georgia. Master Gardener Extension Volunteers are trained community educators acting on behalf of UGA Extension, using horticulture to improve environment, health, and quality of life.

By training individuals to assist with the delivery of educational projects, Extension is able to reach out and serve more citizens than by serving alone. Master Gardener Extension Volunteers complement, enhance, and support on-going Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) educational programs using applied research and the resources of University of Georgia. The Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program is a county-based volunteer program designed as an educational program delivery system. It is a teaching resource to assist Extension with the main goal of addressing non-commercial (consumer) horticulture and gardening issues and needs within Georgia communities.

MGEV projects and programs are for the purpose of teaching others. MGEV projects are divided into five main areas that are referred to as State Initiatives.

These initiatives align with the priorities of Extension's federal stakeholder, USDA National Initiative for Food and Agriculture (NIFA). Georgia MGEV Program state initiatives include:

***Environmental Stewardship*** – Increasing awareness and knowledge of landscape and garden management for the optimum use and protection of the environment, including management of all aspects of the residential landscape (soil, plants, insects, diseases, and wildlife); and understanding and proper use of equipment, pesticides, fertilizers, and other landscaping inputs to have the greatest value with little negative impact on the environment.

***Home Food Production*** – Teaching the benefits of home food production and developing skills and knowledge in growing food, managing community gardens, or contributing to food banks or kitchens.

***Gardening with Youth*** – Increasing young people's awareness and understanding of the value of horticulture and landscaping, using horticulture as a tool to increase responsibility and leadership for youth, and teaching individuals and professionals (i.e., teachers and therapists) how to use horticulture to reach young people.

***Value of Landscapes*** – Developing within communities the knowledge and skill to ensure proper design, installation, and maintenance of sustainable landscapes for economic benefit to residents, state and local government employees and agencies, and professionals in impacted fields, such as tourism and real-estate development.

***Health Benefits of Gardening*** – Teaching the value of the interior and exterior landscape to human health, well-being, and quality of life, transferring knowledge and skills to intended audiences that they might utilize this information for personal health and a healthier workplace and community.

## **Georgia MGEV Mission Statement**

***to assist Extension by training Master Gardeners to provide unbiased and up-to-date horticultural information to the community through volunteer service in educational gardening projects and by using applied research and resources of the University of Georgia***



## **Program Purpose**

*to assist UGA Extension in providing unbiased horticultural information through volunteer community service and educational gardening projects using applied research and the resources of UGA.*



These key initiatives offer a strong foundation for future training and preparation of MGEVs, resource development, and recognition of individual volunteers as well as the Georgia MGEV program. Volunteers benefit from the training, networking with other garden enthusiasts, and the opportunity to serve their communities.

Ultimately, because MGEVs partner with Extension to educate consumers about sustainable horticulture, there are many possible long-term benefits. Projects and educational programs could lead to less yardwaste in landfills, higher values for plants, protection of water quality, higher property values, more jobs in our communities, crime reduction, pride in our community, access to fresh food, or even community development. Any one of these outcomes is possible!

## **What is a MGEV?**

A Master Gardener Extension Volunteer (MGEV) is a volunteer who is trained and supervised by UGA Extension. MGEVs are volunteer educators who represent UGA Extension. Just take a look at your name badge that you deservingly and proudly wear every time you volunteer!

The purpose of the Georgia MGEV program is to assist UGA Extension in providing unbiased horticultural information through volunteer community service and educational gardening projects using applied research and the resources of the University of Georgia. It is important to note that both the mission of the MGEV program and that of Extension is to connect the community with research-based, unbiased information.

## **Program History**

The Master Gardener Program was created in Tacoma, Washington, in 1972, in response to increasing demands for horticultural information by a growing urban population. Innovative Extension agents with Washington State University developed the concept of training volunteers to help them respond to the public's numerous questions about gardening. These two agents were so overwhelmed with gardeners calling for answers regarding their shrubs and vegetables that they could not efficiently dig through this workload. They proposed offering a basic horticulture class in return for a few hours of volunteer time spent answering gardening questions.

The first Washington Master Gardener class took place in 1972/73. These trained volunteers provided answers to many homeowner questions, and their first Master Gardener project was a plant clinic at a local Washington shopping mall. By harnessing this interest of gardening in the community, Extension was able to meet the demand for answers and expand programming. The success of the first MG program initiated the rapid spread of the program into all 50 states, as well as internationally to Canada and South Korea.

In Georgia, the Master Gardener Program concept was introduced by Dr. Butch Ferree in 1979 and was first organized in the Metro-Atlanta area. Led by County Extension Agents Newton Hogg, Gary Peiffer, and Robert Brannen, the first class had 140 participants. Since 1979, thousands of volunteers have been trained and are active in over 60 counties statewide. Volunteers joined together for the first Master Gardener conference in Athens in 1988. Shortly after, a state association was created to connect these volunteers across the state. The state association, Georgia Master Gardener Association (GMGA), held its first official meeting in 1990. Nationally, the U.S. EMG Program is more than 40 years old. Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteers continue to be a valuable connection between Extension and the community.

## UGA Extension Mission Statement

*The mission of UGA Extension is to extend lifelong learning to the people of Georgia through unbiased, research-based education in agriculture, the environment, communities, youth, and families.*

## Partnering with Extension

When MGEVs put on their official name badge, they represent Extension. Extension functions to connect people to the unbiased, research-based information revealed by science at the university level. Very simply, Extension is the link between the land-grant university and the community.

In 1914, Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia and Representative Frank Lever of South Carolina coauthored national legislation that impacted farming as well as rural America. The Smith-Lever Act created the Cooperative Extension Service to serve as a vital link between the United States Department of Agriculture and land grant colleges, and to fulfill the mandate through outreach programs of sharing useful and practical information on agriculture and home economics. In particular, it was to provide agricultural information on innovative practices such as crop rotation, seed selection, land management, and diversification.

During WWII, the Georgia Cooperative Extension Service (now known as “Extension”) assumed a leadership role in the state’s agricultural practices and food production. Over the years, university budgets and human resources were unduly strained due to societal changes in economics, politics and demographics. However, Extension’s vision, purpose, and practice of “putting knowledge to work” have remained strong.

Through innovation and dedication, Extension has adapted its programs in order to maintain the informational dialogue between researchers, educators, extension agents, and community citizens. Today, Extension programming targets a wide range of issues such as rural and community development, food and nutrition education, family and youth development (4-H), natural resources, and crop production.

Extension is also a connection. It is best described as a relationship between land-grant universities and communities. Extension provides outreach to the average citizen by providing the latest information and research. Extension exists in all of Georgia’s 159 counties. A cooperation of local, state, and federal governments pledging funds and support to provide the resources for Extension offices, agents, and staff members results in the success of using knowledge presented by UGA, a land-grant university, to provide answers to everyday people with everyday problems.

## **The Value of Extension Volunteers**

Volunteers are absolutely essential to Extension’s work. Volunteers have necessary energy and passion as well as experiences, talents, skills, and community connections. Volunteers bring to life Extension’s philosophy that active citizen participation in planning and implementation ensures success. As the citizens actively volunteering in the community through the MGEV Program, MGEVs are education partners with UGA Extension. In recognition of the value of MGEVs, liability coverage is extended by UGA Cooperative Extension to active volunteers who are serving on behalf of the University in Extension-approved projects. This liability coverage may protect volunteers from being sued personally (see Program Policies for more information).

As a program with trained volunteers, the MGEV Program has many benefits for Extension. The program provides multiplied expertise in a subject area and builds a strong community support base. The utilization of volunteer educators to address consumer horticulture education allows time for in-depth programming, enables Extension professionals to devote resources to issue-based programs, and offers volunteer hour support to Extension programming.

There are many benefits to the individual who becomes and remains a MGEV. Group affiliation, such as being a part of the

statewide program and local group, and the gain of friendships is important to some. Others are drawn to the ongoing educational opportunities that allow them to learn new skills and sharpen old ones. Some individuals appreciate the opportunities to network with other gardeners and other individuals interested in horticulture. Community involvement and connections to others in the region are also valued benefits of the MGEV experience. Ultimately, the opportunity to participate in training programs in all aspects of basic horticulture and receive basic program materials at minimal cost is highly prized by MGEVs.



UNIVERSITY OF  
**GEORGIA**  
EXTENSION

*Extension works to fulfill the overall objective of planning, carrying out, and evaluating learning experiences that will help people gain the knowledge and skill needed to solve farm, home, and community problems. Extension programming in Georgia is provided through three program areas of expertise: Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), 4-H and Youth (4-H), and Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS).*

## Extension's Program Areas

### ANR

**Agriculture and Natural Resources** programming is focused on the profitability of agricultural and forestry production while protecting and enhancing natural resources. It includes residential/consumer horticulture. The Consumer Horticulture (CH) education program of University of Georgia Extension teaches non-commercial audiences about the selection and care of plants for ornamental value and home food production, such that natural resources and the environment are protected and that communities and lives are enhanced. **MGEVs are trained to assist with consumer horticulture programming.**

### 4-H

**4-H and Youth** programming is focused on developing school-aged young people to become self-directed, productive, and contributing members of society.

### FACS

**Family and Consumer Sciences** programming is targeted at increasing knowledge, influencing attitudes and building skills to improve the quality of individual, family, and community life.



## Extension's Organizational Structure

Georgia's 159 Extension units are divided among four districts (Northwest, Northeast, Southwest and Southeast), based on geographic location (see map, Appendix A). District staff includes a District Extension Director (DED) who manages the faculty and staff of offices within the district, and a Program Development Coordinator (PDC) who essentially coaches the educational outreach of the agents in the district. These four districts are, in turn, responsible to state-level administrators at the land-grant university. The state Extension administrators are liaisons between the state Extension service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which oversees and evaluates state Extension programs. State-level administration for Extension, including all four districts and specialists, is located in Conner Hall on the UGA Athens campus. Dr. Sam Pardue is the Dean and Director of UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Dr. Laura Perry Johnson is the Associate Dean for Extension, and Dr. Mark McCann is the Assistant Dean for Extension as well as the Program Leader for Agriculture and Natural Resources. Local Extension offices, their faculty, staff, and volunteers, are a part of the University of Georgia, and Extension is housed under the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (see organization chart, Appendix B).

## The Extension Office

The local Extension office is the point of contact for the public and houses the local MGEVs. The mix of agents and program assistants in a local office is dictated by funding and local priorities, and this may influence the focus of educational outreach and projects chosen for MGEVs. An Extension agent may be funded by local, state, or federal dollars or a combination of these sources. The Extension agent or program coordinator charged with coordinating the local MGEV program is the first contact for ideas, concerns, and solutions. The local agent/program coordinator will direct the projects and programs extended by MGEVs and oversee the development of individual volunteers.

MGEVs primarily support the programming of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Extension agents, though there are MGEV programs directed or advised by 4-H or FACS agents. MGEVs may also use their horticultural skills to conduct programs in cooperation with FACS and 4-H agents. Coordinating agents (usually ANR) work with MGEVs to start new volunteer projects and oversee existing ones that meet identified local educational needs and priorities. Agent/program coordinators act as coaches for their MGEV groups and are a great resource in project planning and management as well as providing answers to horticultural questions or avenues for further

research. MGEVs form a connection with the local agent and office staff as they spend time volunteering there, consulting with the local agent and support staff, planning a project, or seeking further recommendations for a community member with a challenging gardening issue. MGEVs may also have opportunity to serve as part of the local Extension Leadership System (ELS), which is a community-based advisory group to local offices (more info in Appendix B). This advisory group functions to help the local office identify and prioritize local issues and needs to be addressed through Extension's educational programming.

***What Should You Know?***

County Extension Office

Contact Info

Extension Agent(s)

Support Staff

Available Office Resources

Event Calendar

***Where Can You Find This Info?***

UGA Extension County Office  
webpage:



Office Phone Number:



Office Email Address:



## **MGEV State Program Office**

At the state level, the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer program is coordinated by the State Program Office (SPO). The program has a State Coordinator and a Program Assistant. Together, these positions provide support, guidance, and direction to Extension Agents and MGEVs all over the state of Georgia. The SPO is a part of UGA's Horticulture Department, housed on the UGA Griffin campus in the Cowart Building.

**Contact us at:**  
[masterg@uga.edu](mailto:masterg@uga.edu)  
[gamastergardener.org](http://gamastergardener.org)

## **State Program Coordinator: Sheri Dorn**

Sheri is a Virginia native, born and raised in Newport News. She attended Virginia Tech for her undergraduate and graduate programs, studying under the guidance of Dr. Diane Relf, Emeritus Professor and Extension Specialist for Consumer Horticulture. Sheri believes that environmentally sound gardens enhance and improve the life quality of the entire community and that the key to any successful garden or landscape is choosing the right plant for the right place.

As a manager, Sheri has several philosophies. First, remain sensitive to the needs and philosophies of others. She believes in soliciting participation from staff, volunteers, and superiors to develop solutions that move an organization forward. Additionally, continual education and learning helps keep employees and volunteers engaged, ultimately increasing job satisfaction and performance. Ultimately, Sheri believes that a manager should be creative and resourceful, always thinking “outside the pot.”

Having served as the State Coordinator for the Virginia Master Gardener program as well as an Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent, Sheri has the perspective to “grow” the Georgia Master Gardener program. She also has the horticultural background, having owned a small-scale retail nursery and landscape contracting firm with her husband, Darrell. (She also believes in getting children “dirty” while they are young, so you will often find her twins, Heath and Heather, in the garden with her.) Sheri's Extension Horticulture responsibilities include consumer ornamentals. Look for a lot of materials hammering away at that “right plant, right place” philosophy and the connection between people and plants. She pledges to be a resource for Agents as well as volunteers, offering both volunteer program management resources and guidance as well as horticultural expertise.

## **Program Assistant: Sarah Heape Sawyer**

Sarah has a B.S. in Biology from the University of North Georgia where she was heavily involved in the Honors Program and also as a Lab Assistant for multiple courses. During her time at UNG, she was fortunate to take an Entomology course, and is now the proud owner of a personal bug collection! She also had the amazing opportunity to travel to Sapelo Island, Georgia and Calabash Caye, Belize. After graduating with honors from UNG, Sarah joined the program with enthusiasm in 2016 and continues to be excited about all that Master Gardeners do to positively impact their communities. She is a sunflower and succulent enthusiast and has several container gardens at her home, which she shares with her husband, Josh, two dogs, and one cat. Sarah is grateful for all of the gardening tidbits she has soaked up from Master Gardeners and looks forward to learning more and more about horticulture!



***Sheri Dorn, State Coordinator***



***Sarah Heape Sawyer,  
Program Assistant***



## How does the SPO serve Extension and MGEVs?

The State Program Office (SPO) has several functions. It functions to provide program support to local agents and program coordinators. Providing name badges and certificates for MGEVs; filling book orders for training programs; and developing resources, such as publications, newsletters, and electronic media to be used by local MGEVs and agents, are a few ways in which the SPO provides program support. The SPO also provides training support to both agents and MGEVs. The Advanced Training program for MGEVs is coordinated annually by the SPO. The State Coordinator often contributes to or hosts in-service training for Agents as they grow their MGEV programs.

Charged with creating the vision for the MGEV program, the State Coordinator provides assistance to Extension Agents for building solid volunteer programs and solid consumer horticulture educational programs that are enhanced by or implemented through the work of MGEVs. The State Coordinator also supports local MGEVs programs in refining their educational focus and efforts. Program guidance, such as development of program policies and procedures, also falls to the SPO for development, with ultimate approval by higher levels of administration.

To keep in touch with local program perspectives and developments, the State Coordinator meets quarterly with the MGEV Advisory Panel. Input from this panel is important to the work of the State Program Office, providing a sounding board for ideas and resources. Panelists are asked to contribute to topics relating to the future direction of the program or asked for ideas or feedback on projects in development. Panelists sometimes see and discuss topics long before they are shared with agents or volunteers. Comprised of Agents and/or Program Assistants, MGEVs, and the State Coordinator, the Advisory Panel meets once per quarter at a location convenient to all.

## Expectations of MGEVs

Being a MGEV is a big deal. MGEVs are asked to partner with local county Extension offices to deliver educational programs about gardening. Not everyone is cut out for this experience. There are high expectations of the individuals who are selected to be a part of the program.

***Preparation for Service.*** UGA requires all MGEVs to successfully complete a background investigation and maintain a current University of Georgia Volunteer Agreement. MGEVs are expected to participate in appropriate orientation, training, planning, and evaluation sessions. In subsequent years, continuing education and advanced training keep MGEVs up-to-date on the latest horticulture information.

**Representing UGA Extension.** MGEVs are expected to support the local Extension agent by conducting educational programs with an identified goal, uphold the Georgia MGEV Program policies (link), and follow the procedures of the UGA MGEV Program. UGA MGEVs provide reliable, unbiased information in accordance with published Extension resources through participation in approved UGA Extension projects. In doing so, an awareness of Extension is promoted. MGEVs should follow through with completion of educational programs/projects, communicating to Extension any problems as well as successes. MGEVs can help to identify needs for training and participate as a team member of UGA Extension.

**Uphold Program Standards.** Georgia MGEVs strive to uphold the program standards, policies, and protocols associated with the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program. In turn, the Georgia Program strives to meet the national mission and standards for Extension Master Gardener Programs (link). MGEVs are highly respected volunteers known for their knowledge, dedication, and skill. It is expected that each MGEV exercises personal integrity as a volunteer.



## **Becoming A MGEV**

**Initially, the MGEV commitment is nearly one hundred hours in the course of a year. It begins with a selection process, includes a training period, and ends with a hands-on service component. Within a year of completing the classroom training, individuals are expected to volunteer 50 hours (about 4-5 hours per month) on Extension-approved projects.**

**Application and selection.** Application and selection is the first step to becoming a Master Gardener. This process is handled by local Extension offices because local offices conduct the Master Gardener training course. Each county Extension program is expected to comply with statewide policies and guidelines, but is allowed the flexibility to address local needs.

Because of the level and responsibility associated with the MGEV title, background screening, reference checking, and interview sessions precede acceptance into the program. The interview functions to match potential volunteers with the available project opportunities. In accordance with UGA policies, the MGEV Program provides training and assistance to its citizens without regard to race, color, nationality, age, disability, or gender. Participants are selected on the basis of a variety of factors. The applicant's availability and willingness to volunteer, suitability for volunteer assignments, previous volunteer experience, and specific skills

are all important factors in the selection process. Also a part of the application and selection process is the signing of a few forms, like the UGA Volunteer Agreement (see Appendix C). After completing the application process and being selected for the program, the individual is recognized as a MGEV Trainee.

**Training and Exams.** Trainees, or individuals selected for the program, are then prepared for their volunteer role. They go through substantial training designed to equip them with the necessary knowledge and resources to carry out the MGEV mission. This basic horticulture training is the second step in becoming a volunteer educator. The training of MGEVs is a serious and thoughtful process in accordance with the higher education standards of UGA. The emphasis of training is to prepare volunteers to respond to the demand for horticulture information by a rapidly growing population. As representatives of UGA, MGEVs provide the public with the latest research-based information using a variety of programs and projects.

Extension offices plan and carry out MGEV training classes in the spring and fall on an annual or biannual basis. For example, some counties will train volunteers in odd or even-numbered years. Training and schedule format are determined by the agent/coordinator and the local office and are carried out to best coincide with available time, need, and

resources. In some cases, training is offered on an individual county basis, while other counties may choose to work together based on geographical location. The class instructors can include UGA faculty and/or specialists, Extension agents, veteran MGEVs, industry experts, and teachers from local colleges. Classes typically meet once or twice weekly for 12 weeks. Attending training classes is extremely important, and there is a policy that limits absenteeism to no more than 20 percent of classes. To track attendance, Trainees are asked to sign in on the class roster for each session. MGEVs are responsible for all material on the exams. Participants are required to pass two written exams with a score of 70 percent or better on each. The training curriculum undergoes periodic redevelopment to meet changes in content, technology, and informational delivery.

The *Georgia Master Gardener Handbook* is the official reference text produced by UGA. This handbook is developed specifically for use by MGEVs of Georgia during training and is a great resource for future reference. Evolved from a simple group of allied publications, the handbook is now organized as a book of more specialized thematic chapters. Each of the previous State Master Gardener Program Coordinators merit appreciation for their accomplishments in developing the *Georgia Master Gardener Handbook*. Contributors to editions one through six include Dr. Gary Wade (first and second),

Dr. Wayne J. McLaurin (third), Dr. “Butch” Ferree (fourth and fifth), and Mr. Marco Fonseca (sixth and seventh). The *Georgia Master Gardener Handbook* is a valuable reference tool for all MGEVs who, as representatives of UGA, must provide clients with reliable, up-to-date, unbiased, and research-tested horticultural information.

During the initial training and each subsequent July that a MGEV is active, he/she will update knowledge of working with youth by completing the online risk management training module, titled “Georgia 4-H: Working with Youth, Managing Risk.” This module is accessed through the MGEV’s MGLOG account and consists of a short video and quiz. This training will increase awareness of the unique population with whom MGEVs may work and the special considerations for working with this audience. Even if a MGEV does not choose to work with youth projects, he/she is required to be aware of Extension’s policies for working with youth. Additional information is included in the Gardening with Youth unit.

**Volunteer Service.** Within the first year after training, the MGEV Trainee must complete 50 hours of volunteer service. For example, if an individual completes the training class in April 2016, he/she has until April 2017 to complete the first 50 volunteer hours. However, most find that with all of the excitement of getting started, it takes no time to earn

these hours! Typically, the volunteer service in the training year is in support roles for projects, rather than leadership experience. Working with veteran MGEVs offers the opportunity to gain experience on core projects, such as Help Desk, Plant Clinics, and Speakers’ Bureau. After completing 50 hours in Extension-approved projects (see Figure 1 for volunteer tips) that support MGEV program initiatives, the Trainee is recognized as an official MGEV.

## The MGEV Title and Name Badge

MGEV Trainees are distinguished with a temporary name tag to identify themselves as a Georgia MGEV in training. When the training period is successfully finished, including exams and first 50 hours of volunteer time, the Trainee will earn the title of Master Gardener Extension Volunteer, receiving a special program certificate and a permanent name badge. Proudly wear the Georgia MGEV nametag at UGA-approved events!

When a MGEV wears UGA MGEV name badge (permanent or temporary), he/she is representing UGA Extension. Wearing the MGEV name badge helps to establish credibility with the audience as well as identify MGEVs. Take care to use only in conjunction with UGA-approved activities and to provide research-based, unbiased information.

*As MGEVs are teaching and working with others, it is understood that no implied or direct endorsement of products or services will be made. The official MGEV title is used only in conjunction with UGA-approved activities.*

## **Pesticide**

### **Recommendations**

Occasionally, MGEVs will be asked for pesticide recommendations. Active MGEVs may make non-commercial cultural and pesticide recommendations, provided that the recommendations are consistent with published UGA Extension recommendations. Any recommendations that MGEVs give must come from the *Georgia Pest Management Handbook* (link). Remember that MGEVs have been trained in *consumer horticulture*, and any questions pertaining to *commercial horticulture* should be passed along to the county Extension agent.

### **Accident/Incident Report**

With good planning and preparation, MGEV projects and events go off without a hitch. In the event that something unintended should happen, UGA Extension needs to know about it immediately. MGEVs should report any accident or incident that occurs during MGEV activities to Extension staff, who will then advise the Extension administration following Extension protocol. Incident reports are submitted for accident, illness, injury requiring professional medical attention, theft, abuse, harassment, and/or

discrimination. Online injury reports ([https://busfin1.busfin.uga.edu/hr/injury\\_report\\_login.cfm](https://busfin1.busfin.uga.edu/hr/injury_report_login.cfm)) are used to document any injury that occurs to non-employees (adults or youth) while an Extension activity is going on.

#### **FIGURE 1. TIPS FOR THE FIRST 50 HOURS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE:**

*Have a successful and rewarding experience!*

*Take time to explore the projects that are being conducted locally.* There is a project list within MGLOG that includes the MGEV in charge of the project. Find out what projects align with your skills and/or interests.

*Find a buddy.* Having a partner with whom you volunteer, such as a classmate or a mentor, could make you more comfortable when volunteering on a project. You can encourage each other, ask questions, and share the experience.

*Consider volunteering on several different projects.* You'll most likely meet and get to know more MGEVs by volunteering on multiple projects. Larger projects may offer more hours for volunteering, while smaller projects offer defined times, locations, and tasks.

*Set goals and monitor progress.* It seems like a year is plenty of time to complete 50 hours of service, but it can slip past you! Consider setting goals, such as completing 10 hours by May 1, 20 hours in June, or even 3 hours this week. Then, find volunteer opportunities that help you meet that goal. Don't forget to record your hours in MGLOG!

*Remember that your agent or coordinator is there for support. If you have questions or concerns, give them a call or send them an email. They'll be glad to help!*



## **Recordkeeping & Reporting**

MGEVs are expected to maintain records of volunteer service as well as to report key pieces of information about the events, projects, and activities in which they participate. A combination of online reporting and paper forms facilitates this process. MGEVs primarily use an online, internet-based recordkeeping system, known as MGLOG, for most online reporting. If a MGEV does not have access to a computer, Internet, or MGLOG, he or she should make alternate arrangements with the agent/coordinator.

### **Volunteer Service Information**

Information about the individual MGEV, such as hours volunteered in support of projects and training completed, is recorded in MGLOG and is used to verify completion of requirements for MGEV status. Local coordinators help create the initial login ID at the start of the volunteer experience, and from there, the Trainee or MGEV can keep his/her profile updated. Volunteer service hours should be entered monthly by MGEVs. Paper log sheets are also available and helpful for tracking hours prior to entry in MGLOG (see the supporting materials at the end of this document for a copy).

***Volunteer Service Hours*** – Volunteer service credit is given when time is spent in support of Extension-approved projects, events, and programs that are focused on the Georgia MGEV Program Initiatives or in support of Extension's educational mission. Only time

volunteered on Extension-approved projects will be counted toward volunteer service requirements. Any activity for which an MGEV receives payment is not volunteer service and should not be reported.

Volunteer service at other events, including events in other Extension program areas (i.e., 4-H or Family and Consumer Sciences), may count at the local County Extension Staff/MGEV Coordinator's discretion. The service should be educational in nature (i.e. teaching or leading activities) and must have prior approval.

On occasion, when cross-county collaborations have been approved for educational programs/projects, volunteer service should be credited wherever it occurs.

Individuals are expected to volunteer in the county in which they train, unless prior communication and arrangements have been made by agents or coordinators. Volunteers residing in any county without a formal MGEV program or without a county agent or the support staff required to manage a MGEV program should be notified that volunteer service is expected to be performed within a participating county.

Service hours in support of Master Gardener organizations for which a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is on file under "SPO Support" within MGLOG.

**Continuing Education Hours** – Hours where the MGEV is learning more about sustainable horticulture are reported as “continuing education” (CE) hours within MGLOG. One hour of training or presentation attended is equal to one hour of CE.

## Events

Extension is a partnership between local, state, and federal resources. To share with stakeholders Extension's progress towards local goals and to document availability and public participation in Extension programs, several important records are kept for events with a public audience or a piece of a larger project with a public audience. Details about the event are shared with Extension. MGEVs use a form known as the Educational Activity Report (EAR), either the online form or a paper version, to collect the needed information (see Figure 2). EARs should be completed and returned to the Extension office within 7 days of an event or activity as agents pull information from MGLOG and EARs to include in their monthly reports.

MGEVs who are designated as project coordinators have the responsibility for completing the EAR. All MGEVs are responsible for timely reporting in MGLOG so that the project coordinator can summarize it for EAR completion and the agent has necessary information for local reports that can be critical at obtaining and maintaining support for Extension programs. If MGEVs do not

record this information, the event cannot be included in local reports. It is as if the event has never happened, and that shortchanges Extension and MGEVs.

**Sign-in Sheets** – A sign-in sheet is used for every event to which the public is invited to make a reasonable effort at capturing race, ethnicity, and gender of the event's participants or contacts. To show the extent of participation in Extension events and activities, contacts (the people whom MGEVs teach or serve) are tracked for events, projects, and activities (see Figure 3 for more information).

**Documentation** – Publicity about an event or activity is retained with other event reports. In the case of youth events, registration forms, Codes of Conduct, Medical Release forms, and sign-in sheets are required and are retained in Extension files until the youngest participant turns 21 years old. Occasionally, additional records may be requested by the agent, coordinator, or other supervisor.

## Figure 2. EAR Information

- **Information about participants (contacts)** — number of people attending, demographic information
- **Information about the event** — length of the event, time spent teaching, number of volunteers assisting
- **Value of contributions and support for the event**
- **Rosters, registration forms, medical information forms, and code of conducts for any events involving youth**

## Figure 3. Contacts

**Phone** — When horticulture or other Extension information is provided over the phone, the numbers of people assisted are recorded. The Extension office may use a logbook to record contacts received through Help Desks or Ask-a-Master-Gardener hours at the office.

**Personal (or face-to-face)** — These are people with whom MGEVs speak directly and in person, providing horticulture or other Extension information. For example, a MGEV may be working at a demonstration garden site when someone approaches him/her and engages in a discussion over summer perennials. Contacts and other details from volunteering in support of an educational event for the public, such as a workshop, demonstration, or JMG session, should be entered as an event.

**Written** — When information is emailed, faxed, or mailed, the individual recipients are considered written contacts.

**Media Outreach** — Some MGEVs prepare or distribute newsletters or columns for newspapers. This type of contact is considered media contact. Be sure the agent knows about this so that he/she can assist with a media form.

Projects, such as MG SPROUTS, have outcomes that need to be collected during the project and reported at the end. Periodically, records of vegetable harvests may be necessary to convey impact. Projects involving youth sometimes require that forms be retained for many years following the event. These pieces of information can be critical at obtaining and maintaining support for Extension and its programs. MGEVs are expected to regularly report on progress toward reaching project goals and educational impact within the community or county.

Together, records of volunteer service hours, contacts, and educational activity reports help agents as well as the State Program Office capture the magnitude of MGEV assistance with Extension programming. These reports help show how MGEVs expand Extension's outreach into communities. They also are an indicator of how well Extension is using the resources it is provided. It is extremely important to be familiar with these details and to make every effort to capture them when recording volunteer service!

### Annual Reports

The Annual Report for the Georgia MGEV Program is essentially the 30-second elevator speech for the program. It conveys in a concise way the heart of the program — the contributions of thousands of people to Extension's educational mission. Past versions are archived here. Most years, the annual

report follows a short form, though a longer version is occasionally produced to share more information.

The Georgia MGEV Annual Report is generated from MGLOG. MGEVs should verify in MGLOG all volunteer hours for the preceding year by the last Friday in January. Once MGEVs report their information in MGLOG, agents and program coordinators can generate a county-level annual report. Likewise, at the state level, once everything is up-to-date in MGLOG, the calculations quickly show the result of MGEVs across the state. It is best if MGEVs report hours on a monthly basis.

**Questions about using MGLOG?**  
*Refer to the MGEV Quick Reference Guide.*

## **Volunteer Opportunities Available to MGEVs**

Volunteer service is the essence of the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program. Plant enthusiasts are recruited to assist Extension in delivering educational programs covering sustainable gardening concepts to public audiences of all ages. MGEVs find their project experiences very rewarding. The project is, in essence, the identity of the local MGEV program and should reflect the mission and goals of Extension. Traditional projects for MGEVs include:

**Extension Help Desk.** MGEVs greet the public in the Extension office to solve client issues and provide solutions for consumer horticulture and gardening questions. As MGEVs provide assistance to others by researching answers or sharing knowledge learned in training, his/her skills and knowledge will also increase. Answering the question on the phone or speaking with someone who has come to the office may involve research. MGEVs who provide office assistance learn new skills and technologies that can be used for problem solving. MGEVs are trained to analyze samples and offer a diagnosis, becoming knowledgeable about insect, disease, and cultural problems that affect home landscapes and gardens. A designated space in the Extension office for resource materials, a microscope, phone, and computer with internet connection sets up an official Help Desk center. Posted hours for the Help Desk vary with local demand and can be as few as one morning a week or as many as five days a week. To help answer questions and diagnose plant problems, there are many resources available to MGEVs within the office, including many UGA publications (see Appendix D) and an Advanced Training series.

**Plant Clinics.** A plant clinic is a mobile help desk that is set up out in the community at locations, like a farmers market or retail store. MGEVs organize and staff the plant clinic. Usually held at a public

venue, such as a library, farmers' market, or local retail store, Plant Clinics allow MGEVs to go into the community and help solve gardening questions and issues. These clinics represent Extension in very public places. During the event time, MGEVs answer questions, diagnose homeowner plant problems, accept soil samples, and provide UGA Extension resources. Through this service opportunity, MGEVs represent the University and share environmentally sound horticulture practices with the community.

***Presentations and Demonstrations.*** MGEVs prepare and deliver Extension presentations on select gardening topics. They respond to public requests for short presentations on gardening topics. MGEVs who enjoy speaking in front of groups can provide outreach to the community through educational presentations and demonstrations. MGEVs have opportunity to share knowledge with community groups, teach training classes of the MG Program, or teach gardening classes in the community on a variety of topics, such as how to take a soil sample, take care of turf, or prune a shrub. PowerPoint presentations and Extension publications provide support. Extension must approve any new presentations prior to use.

***Gardens.*** A landscape or garden planting designed and maintained under the supervision of an Extension agent can be used to teach horticultural principles and

practices as part of an Extension education program. It could be a single bed planted with one specific theme or a series of gardens designed to teach about many different ideas or practices. These gardens are used to model gardening techniques or plant choices that are part of Extension recommendations. The teaching value of demonstration gardens is greatly expanded when combined with workshops and presentations for the public. These gardens provide a great opportunity to show people how plants will grow and perform in Georgia landscapes (see Figure 4 for garden type descriptions).

***Horticultural shows*** are events designed to allow both expert and beginner gardeners to showcase their gardening ability in a friendly, yet competitive setting. By participating in the event, gardeners will study their own plants and vegetables more closely and learn to be better gardeners through study of entries and discussion with experienced growers. MGEVs can plan, organize, and sponsor horticultural shows to promote horticultural awareness and skill in their communities.

***Exhibits*** offer an opportunity to bring Extension's resources and the MGEV program to the public. An exhibit is usually part of a community or regional event. MGEVs prepare/present information about horticultural/environmental topics, often building on the event's theme or the season. Stand-alone



displays capture key points of the theme or topic, and MGEVs provide Extension publications, brochures, and other event information to share with guests. Supplemental materials dedicated to specific exhibits can be gathered ahead of time and kept with other materials necessary for public venues, such as reference books, handouts, contact tally sheets, and educational activity reports. Every exhibit staffed by MGEVs is clearly identified as an event sponsored by UGA Extension and MGEVs.

**Prepare written materials** for Extension about gardening topics. MGEVs research, write, and edit materials for homeowner audiences. These materials may be used for printed resources, such as a local newspaper column, magazine articles, or newsletters, or could be used on Extension's website or social media sites. Materials may also be considered for fact sheets, brochures, and PowerPoint presentations. Extension must approve these materials prior to release and distribution.



## FIGURE 4. GARDEN TYPES

**Community gardens** are usually thought of as a place for growing fresh food and can provide a great place to increase fresh food access and teach about health, nutrition, and exercise. These gardens can benefit senior citizens, needy families, children, neighborhoods, or community centers. These gardens can also provide green space in urban areas, offering opportunity to build community. Community gardens are a great asset to a community because they bring together its people. MGEVs are often active in community garden leadership because they have a lot of connections in the community and can bring the pieces together to build a community garden. They also have the gardening know-how to teach gardeners who come to community gardens and can instruct them how to grow their fruits and vegetables there.

**Historic gardens** give MGEVs a place to provide horticultural expertise. Activities include creating botanical signage, advising historically appropriate garden design, making plant recommendations, and guiding maintenance activities. Often, MGEVs are knowledgeable and important guides for tours given to garden visitors. These gardens often have local cultural and economic importance and can be powerful partnership builders.

**Demonstration gardens** can be defined as "...a landscape or garden planting designed and maintained under the supervision of a horticulture Extension agent for the purpose of teaching horticultural principles and practices as part of an Extension education program and could refer to a single bed planted with one specific theme or a series of gardens designed to teach about many different ideas or practices" (<https://www.joe.org/jo-e/2013april/rb8.php>). These gardens offer a great way for people learn through observation. MGEVs are very actively involved all over the state in demonstration gardens, which are probably the most popular project choice for MGEVs across the state. To maintain an educational focus, be sure to develop interpretive materials or tours.

**Create TV & Radio Programs.** MGEVs are instrumental in providing timely information on horticultural topics that is broadcast through regular radio programs, podcasts, and even television programs. Extension must approve these materials prior to release and distribution.

**Community projects.** MGEVs use their skills to improve their communities through gardening. Improvement and beautification projects are opportunities to involve other community members or groups in gardening activities that can be used to teach and educate about sustainable horticulture. For example, MGEVs partner with Habitat for Humanity to educate new homeowners about the installation and care for their new landscape, teaching skills in gardening, landscaping, and composting. These projects are great opportunity to showcase Extension's skills, knowledge, and resources.

**Therapeutic and enabled gardening.** Programs that are operated in conjunction with therapists at hospitals, rehabilitative facilities, and personal care homes allow patients to relearn lost motor skills, stimulate senses, and provide pleasure through adaptive gardening. MGEVs are called upon to lend their horticulture knowledge and provide leadership to these types of gardening projects. By leading, taking part in, or providing consultation for therapeutic or enabled gardening projects, MGEVs are

providing those who cannot garden in the traditional sense with access to horticulture.

**Youth horticulture projects.** MGEVs are involved in projects that teach youth about horticulture and gardening, or projects that use horticulture and gardening concepts to teach about food production, nurturing, care of the environment, and many more lessons. When conducting youth horticulture projects, MGEVs provide the horticultural knowledge, but look to the 4-H/Youth Development program for expertise in youth programs as well as youth-specific protocols. MGEVs share a love of growing things with young people and plant the seeds that may inspire a young person to pursue agricultural or horticultural science in school or as a career. There are several types of youth horticulture projects (see Figure 5 for examples).



# FIGURE 5. YOUTH HORTICULTURE PROJECTS

*Junior Master Gardener (JMG)*, is by far the most popular youth horticulture materials, probably because of the name! JMG is a youth horticulture series developed by Texas A&M University. The resources are for purchase at their website. The activities are well developed and lesson plans complete. MGEVs who have used the JMG materials are often overwhelmed by the extensive requirements to offer a true JMG program. Many volunteers and considerable resources and organization are needed to implement a successful JMG program. <http://jmgk-ids.us/>

*MG SPROUTS*, a MGEV-led horticulture project, endeavors to excite youth in kindergarten through third grades about gardening, establish a relationship with a caring adult, and allow for some self-exploration of the plant world. Popular children's literature provides a base for each session, including active and creative exploration of related gardening topics. As sessions are explored, connections will be made between gardening practices and taking care of the environment. Available online at <http://mgsprouts.org>

MGEVs present *plant-oriented lessons* that supplement lessons in the classroom.

MGEVs can *advise teachers and parents in creating gardens to teach children about gardening and the environment*. Butterfly gardens, alphabet gardens, pizza gardens, and native plant gardens are a few examples of projects that bring creativity and love of gardening to children. MGEVs also encourage and assist teachers in starting and maintaining gardens at their respective schools.

*Day camps* are offered as more intensive opportunities to share horticulture and gardening with youth. Children spend 3 to 4 hours a day with MGEVs over a period of several days to explore topics and experience the joy of gardening.

## Project Criteria

Extension is an educational organization, so MGEV projects should be designed to educate the public about consumer horticulture and sustainable gardening. While MGEVs will expand personal knowledge in the course of a project, personal education is not the focus of MGEV-led projects. It is important to understand that projects are selected based on local criteria, so projects approved in one county may differ from projects approved in another.

The state initiatives (see page 2 for definitions), or priorities, create a framework for activities that teach, model, and share information and education. The majority of projects and outreach fall under the Environmental Stewardship category. MGEVs teach citizens about sustainable landscape management practices through educational exhibits and displays, demonstration gardens, and presentations on gardening topics. Table 1 provides the definitions of the state initiatives along with examples of projects that meet that initiative. As projects are developed, consider the following in determining the public value of and need for the project under consideration.

## Planning & Proposals

In week-to-week volunteering within Georgia communities, MGEVs come up with many ideas for volunteer projects (see Figure 6 for project examples). They see needs for educational programming

*Ask yourself, does the project...*

- Communicate information or advice based on principles of environmentally sound horticulture that can result in the protection of water quality and natural resources?
- Provide horticultural education or information that engages youth or professionals who work with youth?
- Develop awareness of the benefits of home food production and developing gardening knowledge and skills?
- Increase awareness of the value of interior and exterior landscapes to human health and quality of life?

and devise ways to meet those needs. MGEVs are also approached by people or organizations in the community about new projects or ways MGEVs can help them with a gardening project. Project planning is the key to converting these ideas into successful, rewarding Extension projects that honor the local unit's educational focus and Extension's mission.

Project planning helps to focus and direct the project. First, the local planning team, usually comprised of the agent and/or program coordinator and team leaders, decides if the project meets local criteria. Does the project address Extension's educational goals set for the time frame of the project? Is the project truly a local need? Are there enough volunteers available to address the project in addition to ongoing commitments? If the

idea seems to be a good fit, the team can proceed. If the project does not fit the scope of Extension outreach, then a polite decline will suffice.

To facilitate the planning process, the MGEV program uses a Project Proposal form, either the paper version (see Appendix E) or the electronic form in MGLOG, to add a project to the local project list. This is a five-part form that develops an outline of the project. After discussing the project with the agent, MGEVs complete the form and send to agents/coordinators for review and final approval. Discussion about the proposals can occur at a regular team leader meeting when everyone can contribute. This helps to keep project teams and leaders engaged and excited about MGEV-led programming. Any MGEV can develop and submit projects through the project proposal process, though no hours can be volunteered in support of a project or reported against a project until it has been proposed in MGLOG and approved by the Extension agent or program coordinator.

To further ensure that MGEV projects are appropriate and maintain a strong educational focus, the Project Evaluation Rubric (see Appendix F) can be used. By working through the categories of ownership, purpose, focus, volunteer satisfaction, audience, and commitment, agents and MGEVs can design projects that address local needs and represent Extension appropriately while also

respecting the energy and enthusiasm of MGEVs. Choosing projects that best suit local issues and needs helps to prevent volunteer burnout and mission drift.

Project planning also helps avoid volunteer burnout. It is very easy to say “yes!” when a project is verbally proposed. MGEVs get caught up in the excitement of plants and soil and people. By the time the “what was I thinking?!” thought happens, the group is committed and someone may be stuck with more than they can or want to do. It is helpful to have a process in place to think through and review the projects at the proposal stage before over-commitment occurs.

Projects will come and go at any time in a MGEV program. Created to meet a need, the project may be a one-time event or continue for years to come. MGEVs are encouraged to review projects on a periodic basis. As Trainees become veteran volunteers and project leaders, they will become involved in this process. Project review looks at volunteer engagement, such as project leadership, volunteers supporting the project, and the number of hours required each year, and makes decisions made about the level of commitment to the project.

Additionally, project review takes into account the educational activity reports, event summaries, and team notes about a project to see if the educational need for the project has been met. Once again, the



Project Evaluation Rubric (see Appendix F) can be used to make sure that projects best suit local issues and needs, Extension is represented appropriately, and the energy and enthusiasm of MGEVs is respected.

***Remember,***

A **Project List** specific to the county in which you volunteer can be found in MGLOG.

If you would like to start a new project, discuss it with your Extension Agent/Program Coordinator and then complete a **Project Proposal form**. Planning is one of the most important steps.

Use the **resources** available to you through **UGA Extension** when planning and carrying out projects.

***Things to Know:***

What projects are actively worked on in your county?

Who are the Project Coordinators?

How can you best contribute to projects?

# FIGURE 6: PROJECT EXAMPLES BY STATE INITIATIVE

*The state initiatives, or priorities, create a framework for activities that teach, model, and share information and education. The majority of projects and outreach fall under the Environmental Stewardship category. MGEVs teach citizens about sustainable landscape management practices through educational exhibits and displays, demonstration gardens, and presentations on gardening topics.*

## INITIATIVE

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

Increasing awareness and knowledge of landscape and garden management for the optimum use and protection of the environment, including management of all aspects of the residential landscape (soil, plants, insects, diseases, and wildlife), understanding and proper use of equipment, pesticides, fertilizers, and other landscaping inputs to have the greatest value with little negative impact on the environment.

### **VALUE OF LANDSCAPES**

Developing within communities the knowledge and skill to ensure proper design, installation, and maintenance of sustainable landscapes for economic benefit to residents, state and local government employees and agencies, and professionals in impacted fields, such as tourism and real-estate development.

## EXAMPLE PROJECT

- Help Desk
- Pruning workshop
- Ask-a-MGEV
- Lunch-n-Learn series
- Themed demonstration gardens, such as, native plant use; right plant, right place; or water-wise landscaping
- In-school environmental education lessons for youth
- Exhibits

- Habitat for Humanity
- Historic and public gardens
- Horticultural shows
- Leading Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts in plant beautification projects

# INITIATIVE

## **GARDENING WITH YOUTH**

Increasing young people's awareness and understanding of the value of horticulture and landscaping, using horticulture as a tool to increase responsibility and leadership for youth, and teaching individuals and professionals (i.e., teachers and therapists) how to use horticulture to reach young people. *This initiative is unique in that it addresses a specific audience. Horticulture and landscaping are used to change attitude, behavior, knowledge, and the skills of youth. In this priority area, there is a partnership with the Extension youth program area, 4-H, to provide youth development expertise to coincide with the horticultural lessons and demonstrations offered by MGEVs to youth.*

## **HEALTH BENEFITS OF GARDENING**

Teaching the value of the interior and exterior landscape for human health, well-being, and quality of life, transferring knowledge and skills to intended audiences so that they might utilize this information for personal health and a healthier workplace and community.

# EXAMPLE PROJECT

- Interactive gardens
- Garden tours
- Food gardens
- Garden clubs
- Junior Master Gardener (JMG)
- MG SPOUTS  
Day camps
- Intergenerational projects connecting community youth and elders
- Environmental education entrepreneurial projects

- Increasing exercise through garden activities
- Day camps for special-needs youth
- Gardening programs at assisted living communities
- Expanding knowledge of approaches to enabled gardening
- Landscape/gardening safety workshop

## INITIATIVE

### **HOME FOOD PRODUCTION**

Teaching the benefits of home food production and developing skills and knowledge in growing food, managing community gardens, or contributing to food banks or kitchens.

## EXAMPLE PROJECT

**Produce food in private and community gardens to improve nutrition and food security**

**Coordinate a community-wide Plant-A-Row effort, including pick-up and delivery to a local food program or pantry**

**Community gardens, workshops, and presentations on how to grow fruits and vegetables**

**MGEVs called upon to help community members interest-ed in growing their own fruits and vegetables**

**Partnership with FACS experts for additional resources on food preservation and preparation**

**Coordinate a community garden**

**Coach community partners in establishing community gardens**

## Financial Resources for Projects

As projects are developed, it may become apparent that supplies or other resources are needed. Before launching a fund-raising campaign, first consider the reasons MGEVs need money. As non-profit, education-based representatives of UGA, funds can be raised for specific, identified items. What sorts of things do MGEVs spend money on?

**Projects.** Is there a need for tools, supplies, and marketing for MGEV-led Extension projects?

**Good will.** Do MGEVs need to make donations to other organizations? Memorials? Sponsor a student scholarship?

**Resources.** Are new reference books needed for the Help Desk? Is there a training coming up for which local MGEVs attendance should be covered so that volunteers are better equipped for their role?

**Long-term projects.** Is there a bigger-picture project, something that will take several years, perhaps, to save funds? Make sure the next year's savings contribution is planned for.

Next, think about ways these expenses and needs can be met. Is there already enough money raised to cover the year's expenses? Will seeking donations eliminate or reduce the need for cash? Is there a community partner for whom

sponsorship would be strategic? If it is decided that there is a need for cash, outline the plan for raising it and how the funds will be handled. When the expenses and income plans are laid out, typically in the form of a budget, it provides a good financial road map for the year. **Several good rules of thumb for monies raised in Extension's name:**

- **Raise only what is needed for specific, identified purposes and projects.**
- **Spend what is raised in the year that it is raised.**
- **If there is an undesignated surplus, carry forward no more than half the amount of the annual budget into the next year.**

With a little bit of regular assessment and planning, fundraising and finances can help achieve project goals without becoming a distraction to the focus of MGEV efforts. Fundraising should not dominate MGEV hours or efforts!

As always, remember that the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program is administered by the University of Georgia through the local Extension offices. UGA is a public tax-supported institution of higher learning. All monies received by UGA in support of local MGEV programs are considered public funds and are to be handled according to UGA policies. MGEV programs follow UGA's County Operations County Funds Policy ([link](#)) for the handling and management of funds. Additional guidance can be found in the Financial Management section of the Program Policies publication.



## Master Gardener Organizations

Master Gardener organizations (MGOs) often form at the county level as a means of connecting people within the program. MGOs can vary in size and structure, from the simple to the complex. They can be informal groups of volunteers or even non-profit corporations. With each type of organizations comes specific responsibilities and privileges that are discussed with and approved by Extension at the county level prior to action. The leadership structure of MGOs can provide the framework to delegate project responsibilities and tasks as well as create a communication network between the Agent, coordinators, and volunteers. Though not required for the MGEV experience, participation in organizations can enhance camaraderie among volunteers. Regular meetings provide an opportunity to connect with Extension as well as other MGEVs. Often included in meeting time is a guest speaker covering a horticultural topic. This can provide opportunity for continuing education.

A state organization of MGEVs, Georgia Master Gardener Association (GMGA), connects MGEVs across the state of Georgia. They offer an annual conference and a grant program to support educational projects. (<https://georgia-mastergardeners.org/>)

MGOs serve the purpose of supporting Extension and the Master Gardener Extension Volunteer experience. Master Gardener Organizations do not substitute for Extension oversight and approval of MGEV projects and volunteer activities. MGOs may suggest and make recommendations for, but not give final approval to, projects that count for MGEV service.

Successful MGEV programs are built on good leadership and communication, not a formal MGO. In fact, a more nimble team structure is encouraged so that Extension and MGEVs can remain responsive to changes in local issues and needs.

Chapter 29 of the *Georgia Master Gardener Handbook*, Leadership and Communication, goes into depth about group dynamics and working with people. It offers practical advice that can be applied to working with other MGEVs, as well as working with the public. Additionally, leadership training is periodically offered as part of the Advanced Training program.

All groups of MGEVs, whether part of a structured MGO or just an informal group of volunteers, will experience the delights and challenges of working together as a diverse group of people. By practicing good communication and exhibiting respect for each other, the experience can be quite enjoyable. In fact, many indivi-

duals enjoy the MGEV experience so much that they want to continue their volunteer experience.

Within the first year of the MGEV experience, the training year, individuals are encouraged to seek and explore experiences that will build confidence and skill. By completing the required training, an MGEV gains knowledge. By completing required volunteer time, an MGEV gains experience and perspective. MGEV Trainees are encouraged to attend planning meetings regularly and stay informed about the local program through emails, newsletters, and group meetings.

## **Let's Recap!**

*The first year in the MGEV program is intense!* More than 100 hours have been committed to classroom learning, examination, and hands-on training through volunteer service. The local extension office has invested a lot of time, energy, and knowledge in this first year! MGEV Trainees have learned to work with Extension, a new and complex organization. MGEV Trainees have met a lot of people, developed relationships, and been involved in many projects. As the first year concludes, the MGEV Trainee is recognized with official MGEV status and has the opportunity to commit to another year of service.

## **How do you stay connected and informed?**

**Georgia MGEV Program Website**  
([www.gamastergardener.org](http://www.gamastergardener.org))

**Facebook**  
([www.facebook.com/UGAMasterGardener](http://www.facebook.com/UGAMasterGardener))

**Trellis Blog**  
(<http://blog.extension.uga.edu/mgevp>)

A blog to generate conversation & to stimulate thought and discussion about the Georgia MGEV program

**Congrats on  
becoming a Master  
Gardener Extension  
Volunteer!  
What's next?**

## **After the First Year: Remaining a MGEV**

MGEVs are amazing people. They volunteer tirelessly on projects of all kinds. They always know where to find plants for this project or that. They help other gardeners solve problems and find the resources they need. MGEVs introduce hundreds of youth to the wonder and excitement of gardening. MGEVs answer thousands of phone calls each year about plants and gardening. Though most individuals come to the program with the initial training and that first year in mind, MGEVs are often active for many years. MGEVs who have been active for multiple years are collectively referred to as “veterans.” To remain an active MGEV, program criteria must be met annually (see Figure 7 for program criteria details).

MGEVs communicate with agents/program coordinators at the end of each year so that their intent to volunteer is clear for the next year. If an individual is a MGEV in good standing, having met annual criteria, intends to volunteer as a MGEV the next year, then a simple check of "Yes, I intend to renew" is all the individual has to do.

**Inactive status.** Occasionally, extenuating personal circumstances may arise when an individual needs to take off a year from the MGEV experience. Family members get sick and need care, employment situations change, or any number of scenarios occur. The individual wants to

reactivate once the circumstances change, so they may request inactive status. This status can be requested one year at a time for a maximum of two consecutive years before the volunteer is considered an alumni of the MGEV program. In years with inactive status, the MGEV is not required to meet the volunteer service requirements or complete continuing education. In order to reactivate, the individual contacts the Extension office in the county where he/she volunteers. The MGEV coordinator will work with the individual to identify steps necessary for return to active status, such as updates to background screening, UGA Volunteer Agreement, risk management training, and any necessary horticultural training.

**Alumnus/a status.** When an individual is no longer interested in volunteering or meeting the annual requirements for active MGEV status, they become a program alumnus/alumna. This indicates that, while the individual once met program requirements and served as a MGEV, he/she is no longer actively connected with the program. It is not appropriate for program alumni to continue wearing MGEV name badges or to otherwise represent themselves as UGA MGEVs.

**To request inactive or alumni status or to return to active status, contact your local Extension agent or program coordinator.**

## FIGURE 7. ANNUAL CRITERIA FOR CURRENT, ACTIVE MGEV STATUS:

**Screening.** Veteran MGEVs must maintain a current, approved background screening and UGA Volunteer Agreement on file with the Extension office in the county in which they are actively volunteering. Background screening will be renewed periodically, with permission from the MGEV.

**Service.** Veteran MGEVs are required to complete 25 hours of volunteer service on approved projects each year. It is the responsibility of the individual to accurately and punctually report volunteer service time within MGLOG. The annual submission of individual MGEV activities through MGLOG is used to verify completion of yearly requirements to maintain active status. Membership in any MG organization is not required and does not substitute for the service requirement for active MGEV status.

**Training.** Annually, veteran MGEVs are required to update knowledge of working with youth by completing the online Risk Management Training (RMT) module, titled “Georgia 4-H: Working with Youth, Managing Risk.” This module is accessed through the MGLOG account and consists of a short video and quiz. This training will help maintain awareness of the unique population with whom Extension is working and be aware of the special considerations for working with this audience. Training is updated between July 1 and August 1 each year.

**Continuing Education.** Veteran MGEVs are encouraged to seek at least 6 hours of continuing education each year and report it within MGLOG. Continuing education is informal instruction on a gardening or related topic that keeps the MGEV informed and knowledgeable on the latest gardening topics and research.

## **Local Program Structure**

Successful Georgia MGEV programs function under the direction of a local Extension agent, a local Program Coordinator or program assistant, and a team-based organizational structure. The local Extension agent or program coordinator guides and directs the educational programming conducted by MGEVs and approves all projects to be conducted under the auspices of Extension.

A team-based structure, based on projects, activities, and programming, provides a tier of project/team coordinators and supporting team members who collaborate with UGA Extension to develop educational programming. Team leaders participate in regular planning sessions with the Extension agent/program coordinator to ensure MGEV-led projects and programming continue to meet local issues and needs and can be served by the existing volunteer corps. Project leaders are eligible for special training opportunities and recognition. This team structure contributes to the strength and longevity of Extension programming within a community.

Good leadership and structure within the MGEV program will increase effectiveness, ability to accomplish goals, and credibility within the local community. Effectiveness as a group depends on the ability to build strong teams that share in accomplishing the goals of the whole organization and the

development of a system of transitional leadership so that no one person develops sole “ownership” of the group. Most tasks require the expertise and energy of a group working together. No one person can do all the work alone. Effective teamwork helps build commitment and loyalty to the group, and being a part of a group or team fills a need for camaraderie and support, insuring that members feel needed and important to the group. Decisions made by groups tend to be more effective, well thought out, and creative than those made by one person. Team members are available to help assume project responsibility if one person must be out for health or other reasons. Team development is important, then, to group success and depends on the effort and commitment of each leader and team member.

## **Leadership Benchmarks for MGEVs**

Engagement in the MGEV program varies from year to year, with individual, and from project to project. The first year, trainees gain as much experience as possible and often fill support roles. During the second year, MGEVs are encouraged to fill teaching positions or other front-line volunteer roles. To gain MGEV experience, they can serve as understudy for project coordinators. To keep skills sharp and enthusiasm high, second-year MGEVs should seek continuing education opportunities that match their interests. They may plan a recreational activity for other MGEVs to build relationships and camaraderie.



In the third year, a MGEV has the knowledge gained in the classroom and from continuing education, as well as some experience and perspectives of those support and understudy roles in projects. Now, MGEVs begin to feel more confident, they may serve as project coordinators and team leaders or propose projects for MGEV delivery. They become more comfortable mentoring and even recruiting new trainees. It is important to continue learning through continuing education and Advanced Training.

By the fourth year, MGEVs have knowledge, experience, and confidence. In addition to serving as project leaders, they are able to provide administrative leadership support to the Agent or Program Coordinator. They may be asked to serve as part of the local Extension Leadership Committee. Fourth-year MGEVs mentor rising second and third year leaders and, with Agent/Coordinator direction, speak publicly for the local MGEV program and its projects. Continuing education and Advanced Training continue to satisfy the curiosity and intellect of MGEVs!

As the MGEV experience continues, Extension values the programmatic planning support and leadership that experienced MGEVs can provide. These volunteers have opportunity to contribute to state-level projects, perhaps even serving on the state-level MGEV Advisory Panel. The MGEV experience can continue as long as the individual is willing and able to meet program criteria.

## **MGEV Advisory Panel**

Veteran MGEVs have the opportunity to contribute directly to the development of the Georgia MGEV program through participation in the MGEV Advisory Panel (more information found on page 11). The State Coordinator selects panelists so that the panel is representative of Georgia MGEV programs and includes volunteers, agents, and program assistants representing small, medium, and large programs in rural, suburban, and rural areas. Positions on the Advisory Panel are based on nomination and approval. Individuals can self-nominate by sending an email to the State Coordinator. To be appointed to the panel, MGEVs will need approval of their agent/coordinator, and Agents will need the approval of their District Director. Participants in the MGEV Advisory Panel must be able to travel to the quarterly meetings without reimbursement. Panelists serve a two year term, running from September of one year to June of the second year. Half of the panel rotates each year to provide continuity. If you are interested in serving on the panel, please contact the State Program Office at [masterg@uga.edu](mailto:masterg@uga.edu).

## **Leadership**

Agents/coordinators ask for leaders to run projects, MGs look for leaders to organize the plant sale, and it seems like everyone's looking for a leader.

**Leadership** - what image does that word bring to mind for a Master Gardener? Is it scary? Indeed, it shouldn't be! Is it rigid and militaristic, like that square hedge on

your neighbor's side? Is leadership as prickly as Chinese holly? Is it something distinctive that you are born with? No, leadership can be learned, just like the fine art of pruning or growing beautiful roses.

No, leadership is not any of these things. Instead, think of leadership like the beauty of a well-landscaped garden. It takes time to develop, mistakes learned from can improve it, it takes good soil and strong roots (though both can be made), and when it is good, everyone feels contented and peaceful. In fact, **really good leadership shares five practices**<sup>†</sup>.

***MGs by nature are leaders because you are willing to come together with a common passion, pledge time and resources, and join hands with fellow gardeners to nurture our local communities. That is, after all, what we do.***

<sup>†</sup>Adapted from Kouzes, James M. and B.Z. Posner. 2008. "The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership," Chapter 3 in *Business Leadership*, Joan V. Gallos, ed. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, California.

**Model the Way.** Do you set a good example? Is your horticultural house in order? Are you showing the community around you what sustainable garden practices look like? Similarly, do you attend MG planning meetings regularly? Do you stay informed? Do you contribute to the process? Do you step up to the plate, even if for small tasks?

**Inspire a Vision.** Do you have a passion for your community? Do you see how horticulture can make your community a better place to live? Does your passion for that vision nudge others into action? Do you see potential in your fellow MGs? Can you encourage others to model the way?

**Challenge the Process.** Okay, within reason, please! Kouzes and Posner (2008) tell us that "innovation comes more from listening than from telling." Are you listening? What is your community asking for? Do you recognize good ideas and try them, challenge your neighbors and others in your community to try something different? Don't forget to learn from your experiences along the way. Remember, we are like the garden. Sometimes we are more improved by learning from what doesn't work.

**Enable Others to Act.** Are you fostering collaboration? Building trust? Are you giving others a chance to bloom or are you shading them or crowding them out?

**Encourage the Heart.** Remember that we are a volunteer body. When one hurts, we all hurt. Sometimes we are the light for another. Appreciate and celebrate each other. Remember that deep roots sustain you in times of drought.

## **Conflict within the Local Program**

Exemplary behavior is the norm for MGEVs, but difficult circumstances can arise. Though they strive to uphold pro-

gram standards and exercise personal integrity, conflicts can happen. MGEVs are people. Individual personalities may clash, leadership styles may differ, and ideas may not mesh. MGEVs are encouraged but not required to first deal reasonably and directly with the person involved. If resolution is not reached, MGEVs should contact the Extension agent or program coordinator. If necessary, Extension staff will inform the State Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program Coordinator (State Program Coordinator) about the matter and seek direction for the ultimate resolution.

If a MGEV demonstrates actions that are in conflict with the mission and goals of UGA Extension, a MGEV can be relieved of his/her title and privileges at any time, at the discretion of the local coordinator, Extension Agent, County Extension Coordinator, and the District Extension Director. Grounds for dismissal of a MGEV may include, but are not limited, to the following:

- *Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing a volunteer assignment*
- *Theft of property*
- *Misuse of funds, equipment, or materials*
- *Illegal, violent, or unsafe acts*
- *Inappropriate use of the MG Extension Volunteer Title or Badge*
- *Harassment, abuse, or mistreatment of clients or coworkers (this includes fellow volunteers as well as Extension employees)*
- *Not following Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program policies and procedures*

According to the UGA Volunteer Agreement, both UGA and the volunteer have the right to end the volunteer relationship at any time for any reason, and without advance notice.

The MGEV experience should be positive for volunteers, agents, and Extension administrators. When situations or circumstances need resolution, Extension will assist. Additional procedures are outlined in the Program Policies. Every effort is made to achieve prompt and effective problem resolution at the lowest level possible with respect and consideration for all involved.

## **Recognizing & Appreciating MGEVs**

We celebrate the achievements of MGEVs and their mission-critical support of Extension annually during Volunteer Appreciation Week (usually in April). MGEVs are also recognized with awards for service and learning.

## **Service Awards**

For those MGEVs who remain in good standing and active with the program, the State Program Office offers service awards to recognize years of service. Service awards begin at 5 years and continue in five-year increments to 35+. In addition to classic certificates, individuals receive a specially-imprinted sleeve in which the MGEV name badge is worn. The sleeve displays the number of years of service the individual has actively volunteered. Additional recognitions are

available at the discretion of the State Master Gardener Coordinator and the local program coordinator. While recognizing years of service is only one way to say “thank you” for the hundreds of hours volunteered in support of Extension outreach, it is an important opportunity to shine the light on the individuals who make the Georgia MGEV Program the outstanding program that it is.

## **The Star Program**

The Star Program offers recognition for individuals who want to achieve higher levels of learning. It includes two levels of recognition, Silver Star and Gold Star, for volunteers who meet specific AT criteria. There is a five-year window for completing a star, so AT courses taken with the intent to gain a star should be completed within five years.

**Silver Star Level.** This is a generalist-level recognition for those volunteers who have completed AT in a variety of subjects. It is earned by successfully completing four elective sessions (1 session or certificate is 6 hours of class time) and one required session, such as Creative Teaching Techniques or Leadership: Building a Dynamic MG Network.

**Gold Star Level.** The Gold Star is specialist-level recognition for training concentrated in one AT category or subject area. MGEVs are required to select one specialty area and successfully complete three sessions within specialty subject area. Additionally, they must

successfully complete two elective sessions from any other subject area, one required (R) session, and successfully complete an approved educational project that is related to the specialty subject area.

Developing an educational project that demonstrates application of learning is a key component of Gold Star recognition. Suggested projects include teaching a series of classes, preparing lesson plans, writing fact sheets, and preparing multimedia presentations. Project approval by the County Extension agent is required before and after project completion. MGEVs who earn the Gold Star agree to be a resource to the local Extension office for the chosen specialty subject area. NOTE: Silver Star is NOT required prior to earning a Gold Star. Prior to beginning the Gold Star, MGEVs should complete the Gold Star Project package application ([link](#)) to their Extension Agent or Program Coordinator. Approval for the project is required in advance of it being completed.

## **Expanding Knowledge & Skills**

MGEVs are MGEVs because of their desire to learn. They come to the MGEV program with questions, wanting to know more, wanting to do more. Continuous learning keeps MGEVs engaged, informed, and excited about their role as a MGEV. It helps them to keep up with the latest horticultural information. It might even present an opportunity to travel to new places. Undeniably, expanding know-

ledge and skills is fun! A quick glance in MGLOG shows that MGEVs are learning about many topics, including vegetables, shrubs, vines, trees, and perennials, in many different ways, such as conferences, meetings, webinars, and workshops.

The Georgia MGEV Program, through the State Program Office (SPO), continually strives to meet its basic goal of preparing volunteers at all levels to assist UGA Extension with program delivery. MGEVs are encouraged to expand/update their horticultural knowledge through professional development opportunities, such as advanced training, workshops, classes, and seminars. In Georgia, Continuing Education (CE) and Advanced Training (AT) for veteran MGEVs help meet those needs (see Figure 8 for examples).

## **Continuing Education**

*Continuing education (CE) is informal instruction on a gardening or related topic. It keeps the MGEV informed and knowledgeable about the latest gardening topics and research.*

Continuing education tends to be informal educational events, such as an organized class, workshop, or seminar, where the MGEV is the student. The event should have some structure, like a speaker, defined time and place, and a specific topic. Examples include presentations given by speakers at the meetings of horticultural organizations, including MGEV organizations; national and international conferences; Extension

workshops and presentations; and classes at Georgia public gardens. Just meeting someone for coffee and talking about a horticultural topic is not considered continuing education. The best CE opportunities cover subjects that are new to the MGEV and benefit their role as a Master Gardener Extension Volunteer educator.

There are lots of topics for continuing education. Some topics are horticulturally focused, like how to prune Japanese maples, the “good bugs/bad bugs” series, or presentations about conifers. Other training topics may be more specific to the MGEV role, such as how to use MGLOG or about risk management training for working with youth. All of these topics are legitimate for expanding the MGEV knowledge base and staying up-to-date.

Sometimes, continuing education aligns with state program initiatives. This is the approach for the 4-hour Grow Strong! update offered by Extension in odd-numbered years. Presentation topics are related to current or emerging topics in Environmental Stewardship, Gardening with Youth, Home Food Production, Value of Landscapes, and Health Benefits of Gardening. Research updates offer another way to help MGEVs stay updated on current research and trends related to the five program initiatives.

You are encouraged to seek at least 6 hours of continuing education each year. You can track continuing education by



entering training hours in MGLOG. The number of hours spent learning is entered as number of hours CE credit under “Report Training Hours.” Travel to/from training is not included as CE, but there is a specific place to report this on the same page. Lunch breaks are not included as CE. Attendance at events where the MGEV is the student does not qualify as volunteer service.

## **Advanced Training**

*Advanced Training (AT) is horticultural and related training for current, active Georgia MGEVs that goes above and beyond the initial 42-hour, core horticulture training.*

Advanced Training is organized by Extension specifically for MGEVs and is a series of workshops designed to teach Master Gardeners advanced information in specialty subject areas of expertise. Advanced Training expands MGEV knowledge of a topic while also including skill-building and programmatic elements. It answers the statement, “As a result of attending Advanced Training, MGEVs will be able to do XXX for/in partnership with Extension.” After training, MGEVs are called upon to develop, contribute to, and lead projects at community centers, garden demonstrations, local schools, Master Gardener training classes, and more.

Advanced Training topics are chosen from existing approved training criteria or new training criteria is proposed to and approved by the SPO. Georgia’s MGEV Advanced Training program offers day-

long intensive training sessions in specific topics that fall under five categories of training, including:

***Sustainable Gardens and Landscapes (SGL)*** – Investigation of gardening techniques, methods, and crops for the consumer/ residential gardener. Topics include organic gardening practices, plant expert series, vegetable gardening, and selection and use of ornamental plants.

***Water Quality and Management (WQM)*** – Investigation of the impact of gardening and landscaping techniques and methods on water quality and management. Topics include fertilizer applications, septic system management, rain gardens, water-wise landscaping, etc.

***Urban Forestry and Ecology (UFE)*** – Study of the urban forest and related ecology. Topics include tree selection, cultural issues, urban tree issues, plant protection, etc.

***Diagnostics and Technology (DT)*** – In-depth study of factors affecting plant growth and development, such as diseases, insects and cultural phenomenon, and the use of technology to identify and find solutions to these factors.

***Youth and Community Gardening (YCG)*** – Study of gardening with special populations, including youth, elderly, disabled, and at-risk. Topics include gardening methods, project management, MGEV leadership for

community vegetable gardens, adaptive tools, and demonstration gardens.

**Required (R)** - Training in teaching techniques, leadership, or communication that provides support to MGEV projects. Topics include creative teaching techniques, making great presentations, financial resources development and management, etc.

The AT program utilizes multiple training formats and locations. The most popular is a six-hour, in-person training at sites throughout the state. Some ATs are offered as a distance hybrid, where webinars are used to transmit the lecture portion of the training and hands-on activities at host sites reinforce the learning concepts. Several trainings have been offered purely at a distance using web conferencing technology. Training fees/costs range from \$30.00 to \$50.00 per participant per session.

To be eligible for AT, MGEVs must have completed the initial training and 50-hour volunteer service requirement, and have current, active status. In some cases, Extension approval is required. AT is coded separately for recognition purposes, such as participating in the Star Program. Advanced Training course credits are entered in MGLOG by the State Program Office. Training credits are valid toward gold or silver star recognition for a period of 5 years from the training date. A MGEV can take as many or as few Advanced Training courses as he/she wants to and continue to increase personal knowledge and skill.

To see what Advanced Trainings are being offered throughout the state, check out the SPO website!  
[www.gamastergardener.org](http://www.gamastergardener.org)



# FIGURE 8: UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CE AND AT

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

- Informal instruction on all things gardening
- Keeps MGEVs informed and up-to-date on gardening topics and the latest research

- Usually 30 minutes or an hour at a time

- Trainees and MGEVs can attend
- May be open to the public

### Examples Include:

- Speakers at the meetings of horticultural organizations, including MGEV organizations
- State, regional, national, or international MGEV or Extension conferences
- Extension workshops and presentations on horticulture or related topics
- Horticulture classes offered by botanical gardens
- College-level horticulture seminars and courses

## ADVANCED TRAINING

- Limited to 6 categories of training
- Builds skills and develops educational programming for the public

- Certificates awarded in 6-hour increments

- Organized by UGA Extension specifically for MGEVs
- only available to MGEVs who have completed initial 50 hours of volunteer time and who meet current, active MGEV criteria

### Examples Include:

- Sustainability in the Garden: Understanding the Spectrum of Conventional and Organic Approaches
- Secrets of Turf Success
- Woody Plant Identification
- Teaching with Demonstration Gardens
- Backyard Watersheds: Rain Gardens at Work
- Cleanscapes: Landscapes, Septic Systems, and You

# CONTINUING EDUCATION

## Examples Include:

- Extension webinars
- annual events offered by State Program Office
- Any event PRE-approved by local Agent or coordinator
- MGEV lunch and learn events
- Agent-delivered continuing education at MGEV association meetings
- Advanced MG classes

## Events appropriate for MGEV continuing education WITH PRIOR APPROVAL:

- Non-Extension speakers at MGEV organizational meetings
- Presentations by local gardening experts
- Non-Extension webinars
- Research to prepare approved newsletter articles

# ADVANCED TRAINING

## Examples Include:

Water-wise Landscapes  
Urban Trees  
Native Trees  
Diagnosing Ornamental Problems:  
From the Landscape to the Lab  
Vegetable Diagnostics  
Get Kids Gardening!  
Kids in Bloom  
MG SPROUTS  
From Dreams to Reality: Putting  
“Community” in Community Gardens

*Advanced Training counts as Continuing Education, HOWEVER Continuing Education is not necessarily Advanced Training.*

## **Long-term Program Results**

Averaging 58 hours of service per active volunteer each year, or a little more than 1 hour per volunteer per week, MGEVs are enthusiastic volunteers who answer thousands of telephone calls, and give guidance to homeowners on a wide range of horticultural topics from turf problems to planting home vegetable gardens. MGEVs also contribute to gardens and public landscapes used as outdoor classrooms for demonstrating the latest in sustainable gardening practices. MGEVs are often seen as the public faces of Extension in their communities, reaching out to educate over 365,000 Georgians usually at fairs and plant clinics and through civic club presentations and home garden visits.

As a result of educational activities offered by MGEVs, Georgians are able to make environmentally sound gardening decisions. Because MGEVs work with Georgians to answer questions and solve problems, insects and diseases can be treated with appropriate controls, plant choices can be made to enhance landscapes and property values, individuals can grow their own fruits and vegetables, and youth gain exposure to the joy and wonder of gardening. As a result of MGEV efforts, agents are able to devote time to developing targeted educational programs that address local issues and needs. MGEVs ultimately help Extension achieve its mission of helping Georgians become healthier, more productive, financially independent and environmentally responsible.

Ultimately, because MGEVs partner with Extension to educate consumers about sustainable horticulture, there are many possible long-term benefits. People participating in MGEV-led events will report increased knowledge, skills, awareness, and/or empowerment following MGEV consultations. Projects and educational programs could lead to less yardwaste in landfills, higher values for plants, protection of water quality, higher property values, more jobs in our communities, crime reduction, pride in our community, access to fresh food, or even community development. Any one of these outcomes is possible!

## **Support Provided by UGA Extension**

Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer programs receive many forms of support. Extension agents and program coordinators throughout the state administer and direct local programs. They contribute to the ongoing training and continued education of MGEVs throughout the state. Extension specialists on three campuses throughout the state support training and preparation of MGEVs by sharing their collective expertise. Traveling hundreds of miles and lecturing for hours, these faculty help ensure the best possible preparation of MGEVs.

All MGEV programs are supported by the efforts and direction of the State Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program Office (State Program Office) in the



Department of Horticulture, University of Georgia, Griffin campus. The State Program Office (SPO) provides developmental support for new MGEV programs, including management materials, training, planning assistance, and guidance.

For additional information, contact the MGEV State Program Office.

**Georgia MGEV Program  
State Program Office  
University of Georgia  
1109 Experiment Street,  
Cowart Building  
Griffin, GA 30223  
masterg@uga.edu  
770-228-7243**



# SUMMARY OF THE MGEV EXPERIENCE

## BECOMING A TRAINEE

Application + Forms  
Interview  
Completion of Training Course  
and Exams  
Receive MGEV Trainee name badge  
Access MGLOG Account  
Complete RMT

## RETIRING YOUR MGEV CAREER

Show off your service recognition sleeve and/or Advanced Training stars  
Become a MGEV Alum  
*Thank you for your service to your community and UGA Extension!*

## BECOMING A MGEV

Volunteer in the county in which you trained  
Volunteer 50 hours on approved projects in your first year as a MGEV Trainee and record hours in MGLOG  
Receive official, permanent MGEV badge and recognition certificate

## SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

If you move, complete transfer paperwork to relocate to your new, local MGEV program  
If needed, notify your agent of inactive status during move  
Audit training class if you move to GA from another state's MGEV program, or if you spend more than 2 years as an inactive volunteer

*Transferring and re-activating volunteers must meet all program requirements prior to volunteering.*

## MAINTAINING ACTIVE MGEV STATUS

Continue to volunteer at least 25 hours each year on UGA Extension approved projects  
Update forms and trainings annually/as required  
Participate in CE + AT opportunities and record CE hours in MGLOG





# **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK APPENDIX**

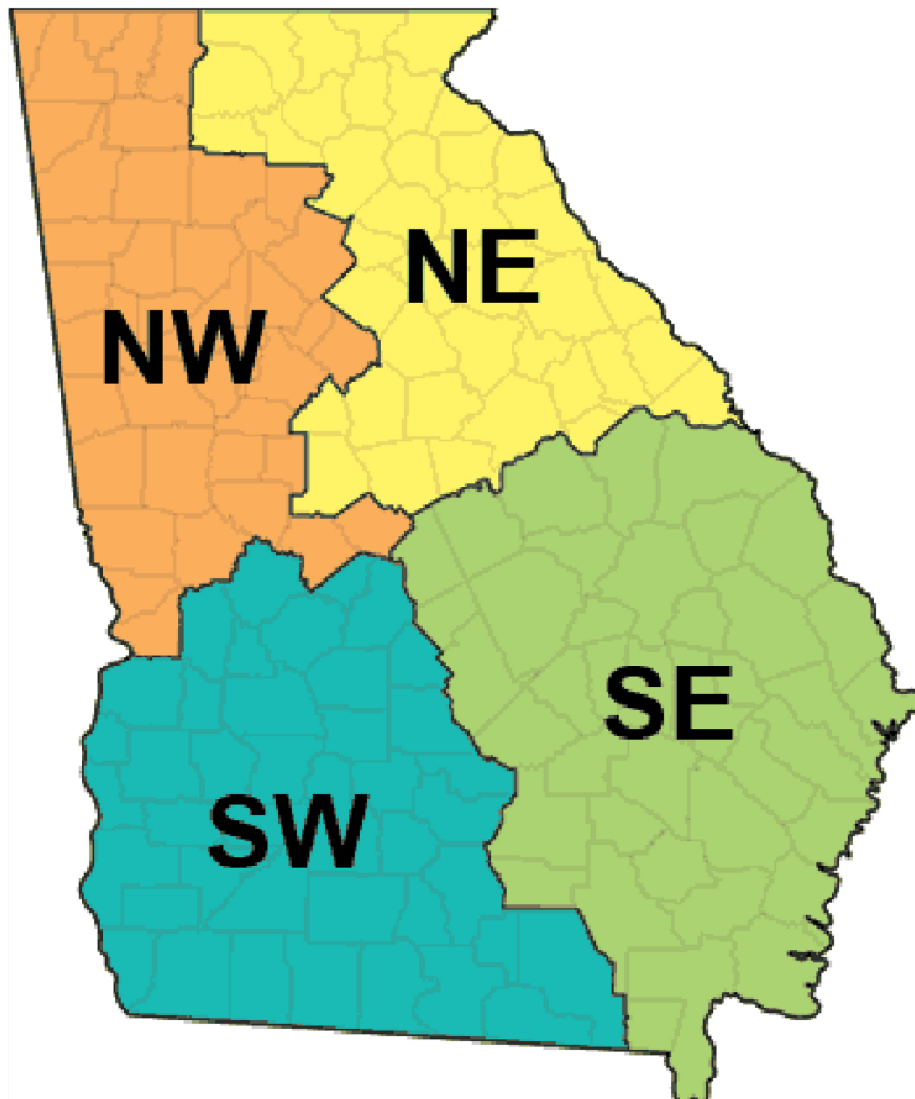
- A. Extension District Map**
- B. Organization of UGA Extension**
- C. Volunteer Forms**
- D. UGA Publication Resources**
- E. Project Reporting**
- F. MGLOG Resources**
- G. Media Usage**
- H. Working with Youth**





# APPENDIX A: EXTENSION DISTRICT MAP

UGA Extension is organized into four geographical districts through the county delivery system.



# APPENDIX B: ORGANIZATION OF UGA EXTENSION

## STATE

University of Georgia (UGA)

College of Agricultural  
and Environmental  
Sciences  
(CAES)

State-level Administration:  
CAES Dean & Director and  
Associate Dean of Extension

Department of  
Horticulture

Horticulture  
Department Head

MGEV State  
Program Office  
(SPO): State  
Program  
Coordinator and  
Program Assistant

## DISTRICT

### Four Districts

**District Staff:** District Extension Director (DED) and  
Program Development Coordinator (PDC)

County Extension offices are grouped into four  
districts, (Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, and  
Southeast) and each district has a layer of  
management.

## COUNTY

### County Extension Offices

**Extension Staff:** County Extension Coordinator (CEC),  
Extension agent, program assistants(s), and office  
support staff

**Extension Leadership System (ELS):** community-  
based advisory group to local offices

**UGA Extension Volunteers:** Georgia Master Gardener  
Extension Volunteers

# APPENDIX B: ORGANIZATION OF UGA EXTENSION

## Extension Leadership System (ELS):

### *What Is ELS?*

The Extension Leadership System (ELS) in Georgia is a statewide network of county-based volunteers working to support and advocate for Extension programming at all levels. All County Extension Agents assemble and work with a Program Development Team (PDT) designed to support the work they do in their respective Extension program area (4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, and/or Agriculture and Natural Resources). In addition to the PDT's, an overall county council serves to coordinate efforts for advocacy and support of the total county Cooperative Extension program.

### *Philosophy and Purpose*

Social, economic, and environmental forces are constantly in motion and challenging communities to respond in order to maintain a quality of life that a community's citizens have come to expect. The Extension Leadership System is designed to help focus the resources of the University of Georgia on a county's most critical needs and opportunities. PDT's provide guidance, assistance, and leadership for the designated program area.

Extension's educational programs are based on the needs identified in communities and emerging issues of the surrounding area. It is the purpose of the PDT to make sure these local, regional, and national needs are reflected in programs, and that educational resources to address the needs are identified and mobilized. More specifically, the purposes of the Program Development Team are to:

- Determine general program direction and goals
- Review current program efforts and evaluate their progress and effectiveness
- Provide leadership and counsel in development of countywide programs
- Advise program development by establishing priorities based on countywide needs
- Encourage, coordinate, and recognize Extension volunteer efforts
- Coordinate and/or support the efforts of the working groups and/or issue teams
- Link Extension programs with other groups and agencies
- Identify and target Extension programs for historically under-represented populations
- Communicate the Extension program to the community

# APPENDIX B: ORGANIZATION OF UGA EXTENSION

## Extension Leadership System (ELS):

### *How Does It Work?*

Cooperative Extension professionals set goals for their program areas at the local level and select PDT and County Council members with the skills to help achieve those goals. Each team/council is comprised of stakeholders who are involved in the community and committed to improving the quality of life for the people who live there. Program Development Teams help identify key needs and opportunities in the county, set priorities for UGA Cooperative Extension programs to address those issues, conduct those programs and evaluate their effectiveness. Teams/councils meet a minimum of 3-5 times per year, and each meeting features a review of accomplishments and goals, an educational session, planning for future programming including team member involvement. Members are asked to serve a three-year term of service.

### *What Does Success Look Like?*

For numerous examples of how ELS has positively impacted Extension programming across Georgia, please visit the 'Success Stories' section of our Website at: <http://www.caes.uga.edu/intranet/coextopr/progdevelop/ELSsuccess.html>

# APPENDIX C: VOLUNTEER FORMS

## ***UGA Volunteer Agreement with Adult Behavior Guidelines***

The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Volunteer Agreement can be accessed at this link: <https://secure.georgia4h.org/documents/VolunteerAgreement.pdf>. The form is revised regularly, and the up-to-date version is available through Georgia 4-H's resources. A UGA Volunteer Agreement is signed when a volunteer joins Extension. A copy of the signed form is retained in the county Extension office. Transferring volunteers and re-activating volunteers with need to complete a UGA Volunteer Agreement upon becoming active in any Georgia MGEV program.

## ***UGA Screening Application & Character Reference form (NOTE: The Screening Application is not needed if the Standard Georgia MGEV Program application, released in 2018, is used by program applicants.)***

The Screening Application is used to collect reference contact information from the applicant. The Character Reference form is used by the Extension Office to gather character references on the applicant from the 3 individuals indicated by the applicant.

## ***Background Request form***

The Background Investigation Request Form for CAES Extension Volunteers is used by Extension office staff to submit requests for Georgia MGEV Program applicant background investigations to Human Resources at the CAES Business Office. Fifteen applicants can be submitted on one form.

## ***Trainee Role Description***

The Trainee Role Description is a signed agreement between the MGEV Trainee and Extension agent/program coordinator confirming that both parties understand program requirements during the first year of the MGEV experience.

## ***Annual Intent to Renew form***

This form is signed annually by MGEVs to indicate their volunteer status for the next year. Volunteers use this form to communicate with the agent/program coordinator that they will maintain current, active status or request inactive or alumnus/a status. A copy of this form is to be kept in MGEV's folder in the Extension office. The annual intent to renew process will become electronic through MGLOG and completion of this form will no be required.

## ***Application for Transfer and Reactivation***

This form is completed by individuals moving to a Georgia MGEV program from out-of-state, in-state, or re-activating to current, active status after a period of inactivity. A copy of the completed form is to be kept on file at the Extension office with which the volunteer works.







## The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Volunteer Agreement

Thank you for agreeing to volunteer with the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension program. In signing this agreement you are confirming your acceptance for a volunteer role.

1. I agree to serve as a volunteer with UGA under the primary direction of \_\_\_\_\_ Cooperative Extension. (*fill in county or unit name*) I understand that if my role involves supervising youth, I will be required to complete a UGA background check and that some duties may include additional training and orientation.
2. I agree that my participation in the activities is not in exchange for any consideration (e.g., pay, benefits, the promise of future employment). I acknowledge that, in exchange for my service as a volunteer, I have neither been promised any consideration nor do I expect to receive any consideration. I understand that additional duties may be assigned or specific duties expanded.
3. I agree that as a volunteer I am under the primary direction of the unit, county office or department but may be asked to participate in activities that include direction from others within Cooperative Extension and/or other departments in the University of Georgia.
4. I agree that, if approved to serve as a volunteer, I will not be acting as a UGA employee or student. I understand and agree that UGA and I both have the right to decline or end my volunteer relationship with UGA at any time, for any reason, and without advance notice.
5. I understand that UGA is self-insured through the Department of Administrative Services against state tort claims. This coverage is provided for volunteers in programs organized, controlled and directed by UGA for the purposes of carrying out the functions of UGA.  
**I UNDERSTAND THAT COVERAGE DOES NOT APPLY WHEN I DEVIATE FROM THE COURSE OF MY VOLUNTEER DUTIES.**
6. I understand that, as a volunteer, I will not be entitled to any employee benefits. I understand that UGA may not provide me with any accident, medical, or workers' compensation insurance, and therefore may not be responsible for any accident or medical expenses that I incur in the course of volunteering. If I am an employee of the UGA serving as a volunteer, I understand that I am not covered by workers' compensation laws while acting as a volunteer outside of my normal employment.
7. If I utilize my personal vehicle during the course of volunteering, I understand that UGA does not provide comprehensive or collision insurance for my personal vehicle.
8. I understand that if my volunteer service involves youth work, I am required to abide by the UGA Cooperative Extension Behavior Guidelines for Adults working with Youth and may be discharged from my duties as a volunteer should I fail to follow these expectations. These guidelines are printed on the reverse of this page and are initialed by me.
9. I understand that my participation as a volunteer may involve certain risks. In addition; I understand that I may be exposed to other risks which may not be foreseeable. I voluntarily accept these risks.
10. I agree to abide by all applicable rules and regulations of UGA and any of the department or units where I engage in volunteer activities. I also agree not to disclose any confidential information concerning youth program participants, research subjects, unpublished research data, and other confidential information of which I may learn in the course of my volunteer service. I acknowledge and agree that any intellectual property I may create in the course of my activities at UGA shall be the property of UGA.
11. I understand that as a volunteer I must self-report any arrest, charge, or criminal conviction occurring after the date of my background check to my program/activity administrator prior to returning for service.
12. I hereby grant permission for my images, likeness, and voice to be recorded in any media and to be used by the University of Georgia and Georgia 4-H on behalf of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia in any publications, media or technology now known of or hereafter developed in the future for any lawful purpose whatsoever without further permission from me. I understand I will not be compensated further for use of these recordings.

Volunteer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer's Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's Address \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer's Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Extension Faculty Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Extension Office location \_\_\_\_\_

Extension Faculty Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Adult Behavior Guidelines when Working with Youth

The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension program establishes the following guidelines for adults working with youth in programming. These are general behavioral expectations for any adult including both paid staff and volunteers working or volunteering in a capacity which includes working with children under the age of eighteen and/or youth considered program participants.

Adults are expected to:

- Work cooperatively with youth, families, University of Georgia faculty, staff, volunteers, community members and others in a courteous, respectful manner demonstrating behaviors appropriate for a positive role model.
- Represent the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences' Cooperative Extension programs with pride and dignity, behave appropriately, exhibit good sportsmanship, and demonstrate reasonable conflict management skills.
- Respect, adhere, and enforce the 4-H Code of Conduct as well as other rules, policies and guidelines established by UGA Extension and event coordinators including state laws and regulations.
- Recognize that physical punishment is not an appropriate form of discipline and will not be allowed. Physical punishment includes physical actions that may not be expected of an individual during the program and are assigned to a young person as a consequence for misbehavior.
- Recognize that verbal abuse, physical abuse, or committing criminal acts may be grounds for termination as an Extension volunteer. Abusive behavior towards youth or other adults including failure to provide adequate health and safety measures, inadequate care or supervision, emotional mistreatment of members, or verbal or physical abuse will not be tolerated.
- Under Georgia law, report any mistreatment of youth to the proper authorities. Adults should immediately contact the person coordinating the Extension program/event, UGA Police, and the Division of Family and Children services if the adult believes a child is being abused. Failure to report child abuse is grounds for criminal charges.
- Comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws and policies. The University of Georgia prohibits harassment of or discrimination against any person because of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status.
- Treat animals humanely and encourage youth and adults to provide appropriate and ethical care.
- Strive for a minimum of two adults at any activity involving youth. Adults, in most cases, should not be left alone with a single child unless the adult is the parent/guardian of that child.
- To be housed in overnight settings in separate sleeping areas from children when possible. When this is not possible, parent/guardians should be furnished a letter explaining the situation and informing the parent/guardian that his/her child will be housed with an adult in the same room.
- Under no circumstances, to condone others use of or personally consume, or be under the influence of, or demonstrate any impairment from alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs/controlled substances during Extension youth programs, events and/or activities.
- Operate machinery, vehicles, and other equipment in a safe and responsible manner.
- Accept responsibility to promote, conduct, and support 4-H in order to develop an effective local, county, district and state program.
- Recognize the following behaviors are inappropriate and will not be tolerated in the presence of youth during Extension youth activities or events:
  - consumption of alcohol, illegal drugs, and controlled substances
  - promotion of religious or political preferences
  - theft, pilfering, or fraud
  - use of tobacco products and e-cigarettes
  - sexual advances or activities involving youth
  - willful damaging of property
  - permitting passengers to ride in motor vehicles without seatbelts
  - permitting youth or adults to ride in the back of trucks
  - behaviors that are illegal under law

Revised 05/2017

I have reviewed and understand the Adult Behavior Guidelines.	
_____	_____
Volunteer's Initials	Date

# SCREENING APPLICATION

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

### Information Collected for Reporting Purposes Only:

Birthdate:	Gender:
Race ( <i>select all that apply</i> ): <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> African American or Black <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Residence ( <i>select one</i> ): <input type="checkbox"/> Farm <input type="checkbox"/> Rural (Under 10,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Town (10,000 – 50,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban (50,000+) <input type="checkbox"/> City (50,000+) Check all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Military Family

### Contact Information:

Phone:	Work Phone:
Cell Phone:	Email:

**References:** Provide 3 references who are not immediate family members and who reside outside of your home address. They should be familiar with your skills and abilities related to potential duties associated with volunteering. Local CAES or Extension staff should not serve as references.

Name of Reference:	Title:	Company:	Phone No:
Address:			Email:
How do you know this reference?		How long have you known this reference?	

Name of Reference:	Title:	Company:	Phone No:
Address:			Email:
How do you know this reference?		How long have you known this reference?	

Name of Reference:	Title:	Company:	Phone No:
Address:			Email:
How do you know this reference?		How long have you known this reference?	

Thank you for your interest in serving with UGA CAES and Extension! Please look over your application prior to submitting it to your local office to ensure you are leaving no required boxes or blanks empty.







**For Office Use Only:**  
 Date reference form sent: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
 Date reference form received: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
 ---OR---  
 Reference called by: \_\_\_\_\_  
 on date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ at time: \_\_\_\_\_AM/PM  
 phone # dialed from: (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_  
 phone # dialed to: (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

**Character Reference Form for UGA Extension Programs**

**Applicant's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

*The above named applicant is applying to do volunteer work with a UGA Extension Program and has given your name as a reference. UGA Extension seeks your assistance in selecting the best qualified people to serve and will appreciate your completion of this form. Please feel free to add additional pages of comments or information. Return this form and any attachments to:*

How long have you known the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

In what capacity have you known the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

Does the applicant have a positive and pleasant attitude toward volunteer work? \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe the applicant's ability to handle records and/or money? \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the checklist to evaluate the applicant's qualities. Use the following marking system:

<b>E = Excellent</b>	<b>G = Good</b>	<b>F = Fair</b>	<b>N = Not Known</b>
Ability to Organize	_____	Leadership Skills	_____
Ability to Work with Others	_____	Resourcefulness	_____
Communication Skills	_____	Respected by Others	_____
Dependability	_____	Sense of Fairness	_____
Flexibility	_____	Sense of Humor	_____
Initiative	_____	Supervisory Skills	_____

What additional skills, abilities, and attributes does the applicant have that would be helpful in this position? \_\_\_\_\_

**~ PLEASE CONTINUE ON TO PAGE 2 ~**



Do you know any reason why this person should not be considered for the position? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

Name of Reference \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

*Please also complete the following section if the applicant is applying to work with youth in their role as a volunteer.*



How well does the applicant interact and work with children/youth? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to place your child, or any other child for whom you are responsible under his/her leadership and supervision? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think are the applicant's greatest strengths and weaknesses as they relate to working with young people and leading a group?

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>

Please use the checklist to evaluate the applicant's qualities. Use the following marking system:

**E = Excellent**

**G = Good**

**F = Fair**

**N = Not Known**

Enthusiasm \_\_\_\_\_

Patience \_\_\_\_\_

Role Model for Youth \_\_\_\_\_

Understanding of Children \_\_\_\_\_

## Background Investigation Request Form for CAES Extension Volunteers

This form should only be used when needing to complete a background investigation on employees or applicants outside of the applicant tracking system (iPAWS and FacultyJobs). View the Background Investigation policy:

<http://policies.uga.edu/Human-Resources/Employment/Employment-processes/Background-investigations/>

**To Be Completed by UGA Department**

UGA Department \_\_\_\_\_

UGA Dept. Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

UGA Dept. Contact Email \_\_\_\_\_ UGA Dept. Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Select one:  PCard  Volunteer  Student  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*NOTE: All parts of this form must be completed. Missing information can delay processing. If an individual does not have an email address, please contact the CAES Business Office at [caeso hr@uga.edu](mailto:caeso hr@uga.edu) or 706-542-2373.**

First Name	Last Name	Email Address	Phone Number	Motor Vehicle	Credit
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Please return this form to:**  
The University of Georgia  
CAES Business Office  
Email: [caeso hr@uga.edu](mailto:caeso hr@uga.edu)





## Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer General Role Description (Trainee)

(Must be included as part of the volunteer application and Volunteer Agreement)

**ROLE TITLE:** Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Trainee

**SUPERVISOR:** [INSERT LOCAL AGENT NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION]

**LOCATION:** [INSERT LOCAL EXTENSION OFFICE INFORMATION]

### GOAL OF MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM:

The Master Gardener program in Georgia is a volunteer training program designed to help University of Georgia Cooperative Extension staff transfer research-based information about gardening and related subjects to the public by training home gardeners. Through this program, Cooperative Extension is able to reach out and serve more citizens with educational programming and demonstrations. Master Gardener Extension Volunteers complement, enhance, and support on-going Agriculture and Natural Resources educational programs using applied research and the resources of University of Georgia. The Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program is a county-based volunteer program designed as an educational program delivery system and teaching resource to assist Cooperative Extension with the main goal of addressing community non-commercial, horticulture and gardening issues and needs.

### VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS:

- Available 92 hours in the first year for training and project implementation (25 hours each year thereafter)
- Interest in teaching Georgians about horticulture and gardening
- Basic knowledge of gardening and horticulture preferred
- Enthusiasm
- Ability to communicate with others
- Knowledge of community resources
- Previous volunteer experience a plus

### VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Participate in appropriate orientation, training, planning, and evaluation sessions (completing the required 42 hours of classroom training before volunteering), and keep up-to-date on the latest horticulture information, including annual completion of Risk Management Training (RMT).
- Complete a University of Georgia Volunteer Agreement and background screening.
- Provide reliable, unbiased information in accordance with published Cooperative Extension resources.
- Promote awareness of Cooperative Extension.



Any County Cooperative Extension  
123 Main Street  
Your Town, Ga 30000

- Maintain records of volunteer service, including hours volunteered, contributions, and results. Report records to the Agent, coordinator, or other supervisor as directed.
- Wear an official UGA Master Gardener Extension Volunteer nametag while volunteering on behalf of UGA.
- Exercise personal integrity as a volunteer.
- Uphold the policies and follow the procedures of the UGA CAES MG Extension Volunteer Program.
- Follow through with completion of educational programs/projects, communicating about problems and successes.
- Identify needs for training and participate as a team member of UGA CAES Extension.
- Participate in approved UGA Extension projects. Indicate on the attached sheet the projects/teams in which you are interested in volunteering.

**TRAINING AND/OR RESOURCES TO BE PROVIDED:**

- Master Gardener Extension Volunteer training sessions (42 hours)
- Periodic organizational/ educational meetings
- Master Gardener Extension Volunteer reference manuals available for use in office
- Horticulture library in office
- Consultations with Cooperative Extension staff

**TIME ESTIMATE:**

- Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Training: 42 hours
- Volunteer Service: 50 hours (about 4-5 hours per month) minimum during the first year after training
- Periodic organizational/ educational meetings: 1-2 hours per month

**BENEFITS:**

- Participate in training programs in all aspects of basic horticulture.
- Learn new skills and sharpen old ones.
- Meet and work with other individuals interested in horticulture.
- Receive basic program materials at minimal cost.

**INTENT TO VOLUNTEER**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, commit to at least 42 hours of training and 50 hours of volunteer time as a UGA Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Trainee, following program policies and procedures, within one year of the date on this role description.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MGEV Trainee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





## Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer [INSERT YEAR] Annual Intent to Renew

(To be completed annually with the UGA Volunteer Agreement)

**ROLE TITLE:** Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer (Veteran)

**SUPERVISOR:** [INSERT LOCAL AGENT NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION]

**LOCATION:** [INSERT LOCAL EXTENSION OFFICE INFORMATION]

### GOAL OF MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM:

The Master Gardener program in Georgia is a volunteer training program designed to help University of Georgia Cooperative Extension staff transfer research-based information about gardening and related subjects to the public by training home gardeners. Through this program, Cooperative Extension is able to reach out and serve more citizens with educational programming and demonstrations. Master Gardener Extension Volunteers complement, enhance, and support on-going Agriculture and Natural Resources educational programs using applied research and the resources of University of Georgia. The Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program is a county-based volunteer program designed as an educational program delivery system and teaching resource to assist Cooperative Extension with the main goal of addressing community non-commercial, horticulture and gardening issues and needs.

### VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS:

- Available 25 hours during the year for project implementation
- Willingness to complete at least 6 hours of continuing education annually
- Prior completion of the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program Training, examination, and initial 50 hours of volunteer work
- Interest in teaching Georgians about horticulture and gardening
- Basic knowledge of gardening and horticulture preferred
- Enthusiasm
- Ability to communicate with others
- Knowledge of community resources
- Previous volunteer experience a plus

### VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Participate in appropriate training, planning, and evaluation sessions, and keep up-to-date on the latest horticulture information, including annual completion of Risk Management Training (RMT)
- Complete a University of Georgia Volunteer Agreement and background screening.
- Provide reliable, unbiased information in accordance with published Cooperative Extension resources.
- Promote awareness of Cooperative Extension.
- Maintain records of volunteer service, including hours volunteered, contributions, and results. Report records to the Agent, coordinator, or other supervisor as directed.



Any County Cooperative Extension  
123 Main Street  
Your Town, Ga 30000

- Wear an official UGA Master Gardener Extension Volunteer nametag while volunteering on behalf of UGA.
- Exercise personal integrity as a volunteer.
- Uphold the policies and follow procedures of the UGA MGEV Program.
- Follow through with completion of educational programs/projects, communicating about problems and successes.
- Identify needs for training and participate as a team member of UGA Extension.
- Participate in approved UGA Extension projects.

**TRAINING AND/OR RESOURCES TO BE PROVIDED:**

- Master Gardener Extension Volunteer training sessions
- Periodic organizational/educational meetings
- Master Gardener Extension Volunteer reference manuals available for use in office
- Horticulture library in office
- Consultations with Extension staff

**TIME ESTIMATE:**

- Volunteer Service: 25 hours
- Periodic organizational/educational meetings: 1-2 hours per month
- Training: 6 hours

**BENEFITS:**

- Participate in training programs in all aspects of basic horticulture.
- Learn new skills and sharpen old ones.
- Meet and work with other individuals interested in horticulture.
- Receive basic program materials at minimal cost.

**ANNUAL INTENT TO VOLUNTEER**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am requesting the following status for the \_\_\_\_\_ year.

\_\_\_\_ active status (I intend to volunteer at least 25 hours during this calendar year)

\_\_\_\_ inactive status, year 1 (I understand that if I am inactive for a year or more, I will need to complete a new Application for Background Screening.)

\_\_\_\_ inactive status, year 2 (I understand that I need to return to active status next year or become alumnus)

\_\_\_\_ alumnus/a (I do not wish to continue volunteering as a MGEV.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
MGEV

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*MGEV will indicate preferred project participation on attached list of Extension-approved projects.*



**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**  
**EXTENSION**



**Application for Transfer and Reactivation**  
**Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program**

Dear Prospective MGEV,

Thank you for your interest in transferring to the Master Gardener Extension Volunteer program in \_\_\_\_\_ County! We consider each applicant to our program carefully so that individuals can be successfully matched with the volunteer opportunities we have available. Because there can be some differences between MGEV programs, we want to make sure we start out with a good understanding of who you are as a volunteer and what you love about being a Master Gardener Extension Volunteer! Please complete the following information to help us get to know you. I will review your application and you will receive a written response regarding your status and any additional steps of preparation that need to be completed. Thanks, again, for your interest in the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program!

Sincerely,

County Extension Agent

I AM REQUESTING:

- TRANSFER WITHIN GA
- TRANSFER FROM ANOTHER STATE
- REACTIVATION

If transferring or reactivating:

- Yes, I have a MGLOG account. My volunteer service hours are recorded.
- Yes, I have a MGLOG account, but my volunteer service hours are **not** up-to-date.
- No, I do not have a MGLOG account.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE & EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**MG VOLUNTEER SERVICE HISTORY**

Initial training date, location (including state) \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Agent/MG Coordinator name, county, office phone \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving original program \_\_\_\_\_

Number of service hours accumulated this year to date \_\_\_\_\_



**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**  
**EXTENSION**



I have completed initial training and initial volunteer service requirements (attach copy of MGEV certificate).

\_\_\_ YES – I completed my training in \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ NO – explain your status \_\_\_\_\_

I am in good standing with my previous program (current, active; having volunteered actively each year since training, etc.)

\_\_\_ YES – I have met all requirements to maintain active status through the end of the previous calendar year.

\_\_\_ NO – Explain your status. \_\_\_\_\_

If no, how long has it been since you completed the requirements for active MGEV status?

\_\_\_ 1 year \_\_\_ 2-5 years \_\_\_ 5 or more years

**MG Extension Volunteer Experience**

- \_\_\_ Speakers' Bureau
- \_\_\_ Project leadership (explain \_\_\_\_\_)
- \_\_\_ Diagnostics
- \_\_\_ Youth Horticulture programs
- \_\_\_ Garden Hotline Volunteer
- \_\_\_ Plant Clinic
- \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**VOLUNTEER STATEMENT**

I understand that if my application for transfer is approved, \_\_\_\_\_ County will be my host county for my role as a Georgia MGEV. I understand that my initial experiences and trainings may be different from those in the new host county, but I am willing to abide by the operating procedures in the \_\_\_\_\_ County program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Transfer Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**FOR EXTENSION PROGRAM USE**

**VOLUNTEER SCREENING**

\_\_\_ UGA Volunteer Agreement on file

\_\_\_ Selected role descriptions on file

\_\_\_ Application for Background Screening:

\_\_\_ submitted \_\_\_ pending \_\_\_ approved \_\_\_ not approved

\_\_\_\_\_ date of Risk Management Training (RMT) completion

- Volunteer has a current copy of the Georgia Master Gardener Handbook
  - If no, transfer should order a copy from the State Program Office via the online ordering link at [https://estore.uga.edu/C27063\\_ustores/web/product\\_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=4523&SINGLESTORE=true](https://estore.uga.edu/C27063_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=4523&SINGLESTORE=true)
- Volunteer is knowledgeable about the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program and its policies and procedures.
  - If no, transfer should participate in an orientation training (online or in person)
- Volunteer is knowledgeable about plants and environmentally sound horticulture practices for this area of the state
  - If no, transfer should audit \_\_\_\_\_
- Volunteer is knowledgeable about the requirements, policies, and procedures for the UGA MGEV program.
  - If no, transfer should audit \_\_\_\_\_

**AGENT NOTES:**

Prior agent contacted \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: (suggested questions include: What was this volunteer’s track record? What skills and abilities does he/she have? Where does he/she excel? What types of projects and roles did this volunteer choose? Is he/she an active MGEV, a good representative of Cooperative Extension?)

Transfer application \_\_\_ accepted \_\_\_ denied (if denied, indicate brief explanation)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Extension Agent or Sponsor, \_\_\_\_\_ county

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Agent Reminder: Contact the SPO to have a MGEV transferee with a current MGLOG account transferred in MGLOG. Contact the SPO for assistance with creating a MGLOG account for a transferring or reactivating MGEV. New name badges with the appropriate host county can be ordered in the spring or fall. If a handbook is purchased for a transferring or reactivating MGEV, the cost of a new badge is included with the handbook purchase. Otherwise, there is a small fee for a new name badge.*





# APPENDIX D: UGA PUBLICATION RESOURCES

<http://extension.uga.edu/publications.html>

## **Plant Propagation**

Home Garden Series: Starting Plants From Seed for the Home Gardener

## **Weeds**

Weed Wizard Series: Controlling Poison Ivy in the Landscape

Weed Wizard Series: Controlling Florida Betony in the Landscape

Weed Wizard Series: Controlling Greenbrier

Weed Wizard Series: Weed Control in Iris

## **Ornamentals**

Care of Ornamental Plants in the Landscape

Pruning Ornamental Plants in the Landscape

Ornamental Plantings on Septic Drainfields

Environmental Enhancement with Ornamental Plants: Butterfly Gardening

Selecting and Growing Azaleas

Roses in Georgia: Selecting and Growing Techniques

Growing Ferns

Think Outside the Boxwood: Alternative Plants for Gardens and Landscapes

## **Herbaceous Plants: Annuals and Perennials**

Success with Mixed Containers Using Perennial and Woody Plants

Flowering Perennials for Georgia Gardens

Flowering Annuals for Georgia Gardens

Growing Bigleaf Hydrangea

Growing Hostas

Pampas Grass

Dahlias

Growing African Violets

## **Woody Plants and Trees**

Basic Principles of Pruning Woody Plants

Tree Planting Details

Shade and Street Tree Care

Shade Trees for Georgia

Growing Dogwoods

Crape Myrtle Culture

Growing Southern Magnolia

# APPENDIX D: UGA PUBLICATION RESOURCES

<http://extension.uga.edu/publications.html>

Junipers

Is My Tree Dying?

Diseases of Leyland Cypress in the Landscape

Fireblight: Symptoms, Causes, and Treatment

## **Vegetable and Herb Gardening**

2014 University of Georgia Vidalia Onion Extension and Research Report

2014/2015 Vegetable Crop Variety Trial and Research Report

Growing Vegetables Organically

Vegetable Gardening in Georgia

Conserving Water in the Vegetable Garden

Home Garden Series: Georgia Home Grown Tomatoes

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Peppers

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Green Beans

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Potatoes

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Sweet Potatoes

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Lettuce

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Broccoli

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Cauliflower

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Asparagus

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Eggplant

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Swiss Chard

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Brussels Sprouts

Home Garden Series: Growing Home Garden Sweet Corn

Home Garden Series: Using Cover Crops in the Home Garden

Home Garden Series: Garlic Production for the Gardener

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Okra

Home Garden Series: Growing Rutabagas in the Home Garden

Home Garden Series: Vegetable Garden Calendar

Production and Management of Garlic, Elephant Garlic and Leek

Blossom-End Rot and Calcium Nutrition of Pepper and Tomato

Troubleshooting Vegetable Production Problems in the Southeast

Pollination of Vegetable Crops

When to Harvest Vegetables

Herbs in Southern Gardens

Geraniums

How to Convert an Inorganic Fertilizer Recommendation to an Organic One

# APPENDIX D: UGA PUBLICATION RESOURCES

<http://extension.uga.edu/publications.html>

## **Fruits and Nuts**

Minor Fruits and Nuts in Georgia

Home Fruit Orchard Pruning Techniques

Southeastern Pecan Growers' Handbook

Pecan Trees for the Home or Backyard Orchard

Mouse Ear of Pecan

Pecan Water Requirements and Irrigation Scheduling

Citrus Fruit for Southern and Coastal Georgia

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Bunch Grapes

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Watermelon

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Peaches

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Apples

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Pears

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Raspberries and Blackberries

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Persimmons

Home Garden Series: Plums for Georgia Home Gardens

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Strawberries

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Figs

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Blueberries

Home Garden Series: Home Garden Muscadines

Sampling Irrigation Water for Blueberry Production

Considerations for the Small Market Producer

## **Landscapes**

Common Landscape Diseases in Georgia

Landscape Basics: Color Theory

Best Management Practices in the Landscape

Environmentally Friendly Landscape Practices

Poisonous Plants in the Landscape

The Importance of Preserving Biodiversity in the Urban Landscape and How We Can Help

Landscape Plants for Georgia

Landscape Design Series: Choosing a Landscape Design Professional

Landscape Design Series: Working with a Garden Designer

Landscape Design Series: Drawing a Landscape Plan, The Base Map

Landscape Design Series: Drawing a Landscape Plan - Site Analysis

Flowering Bulbs for Georgia Gardens

Great Plants Under 20 Feet for Small Spaces

# APPENDIX D: UGA PUBLICATION RESOURCES

<http://extension.uga.edu/publications.html>

Attracting Birds to Your Backyard  
Managing Imported Fire Ants in Urban Areas

## **Turfgrass**

Turfgrass Diseases in Georgia: Identification and Control  
Turfgrass Pest Control Recommendations for Professionals  
Turfgrass Fertility: Understanding Fertilizer Labels, Macronutrients, and Micronutrients  
Gray Leaf Spot in Georgia Turfgrass: Identification and Control  
Dollar Spot of Turfgrasses in Georgia: Identification and Control  
Grasscycling: Let the Clippings Fall Where They May  
Bermudagrass in Georgia  
Controlling Moss and Algae in Turf  
Annual Bluegrass Control Programs for Georgia Lawns  
Turfgrass Management Calendar for Georgia

## **Water Conservation and Irrigation**

Water-Wise Landscape Guide for the Georgia Piedmont  
Irrigation for Lawns and Gardens  
Tips for Saving Water in the Landscape  
Drip Irrigation Check List: Start-Up  
Drip Irrigation Check List: Winterization  
Drip Irrigation in the Home Vegetable Garden  
Make Every Drop Count: Xeriscape - Seven Steps to a Water-Wise Landscape  
Make Every Drop Count: Proper Planting Results in Healthy, Water-Efficient Plants  
Make Every Drop Count: Managing a Water-Wise Landscape

## **Indoor Plants, Tropical Plants, and Container Gardens**

Growing Indoor Plants with Success  
Diagnostic Guide to Common Home Orchard Diseases  
Care of Holiday and Gift Plants  
Tropical Plants Offer New Possibilities for Georgia Gardens  
Gardening in Containers Using Tropical Plants  
New Trial Tropical Container Gardens  
Growing Bamboo in Georgia  
Gardening in Containers

# APPENDIX D: UGA PUBLICATION RESOURCES

<http://extension.uga.edu/publications.html>

## **Soils and Composting**

Soil Preparation and Planting Procedures for Ornamental Plants in the Landscape

Composting and Mulching

Composting: Recycling Landscape Trimmings

## **Seasonal**

Fall Gardening: A Collection of Information and Resources

Winterizing Motorized Garden Equipment

Winter Protection of Ornamental Plants

## **Natives**

Native Plants of North Georgia: A Photo Guide for Plant Enthusiasts

Native Plants for Georgia Part I: Trees, Shrubs and Woody Vines

Native Plants for Georgia Part II: Ferns

Native Plants for Georgia Part III: Wildflowers

Native Plants for Georgia Part IV: Grasses and Sedges

## **Community and School Gardens**

How to Start a Community Garden: Getting People Involved

Steps in Starting a School Garden

Community and School Gardens Series: Planning an Edible Garden

Community and School Gardens Series: Growing Fruits

Community and School Gardens Series: Sources of Water for the Garden

Community and School Gardens Series: Irrigation

Community and School Gardens Series: Weed Control

Community and School Gardens Series: Extending the Crop Season: Unheated Spaces

Community and School Gardens Series: Siting a Garden

Community and School Gardens Series: Raised Beds vs. In-Ground Gardens

Community and School Gardens Series: Raised Garden Bed Dimensions

Community and School Gardens Series: Raised Bed Materials

Community and School Gardens Series: Less Expensive Sources of Plant Material, Amendments and Tools

Community and School Gardens Series: Garden Sheds

Community and School Gardens Series: Stocking the Toolshed: Hand Tools

Community and School Gardens Series: Garden Fencing

# APPENDIX D: UGA PUBLICATION RESOURCES

<http://extension.uga.edu/publications.html>

## **Pollinators**

Eco-Friendly Garden: Attracting Pollinators, Beneficial Insects, and Other Natural Predators

## **Spanish Series**

Spanish Series: La Importancia de Preservar la Biodiversidad en el Paisaje y cÌmo Podemos Ayudar

Spanish Series: Construyendo Huertos Caseros

Spanish Series: Enfermedades MÌAs Comunes de Plantas Ornamentales en Georgia

Spanish Series: Enfermedades de los CÌspedes en Georgia: Identificaci3n y Control



# APPENDIX E: PROJECT REPORTING

## ***Project Proposal Form***

To facilitate the planning process, the MGEV program uses a Project Proposal form, either the paper version or the form used in MGLOG, to add a project to the local project list. This is a five-part form that develops an outline of the project. It is helpful for MGEVs to complete the form and send to Agents/Coordinators for review and final approval on projects.

## ***Project Evaluation Rubric***

Volunteer service is the essence of the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program. Individuals are recruited to assist Extension in delivering educational programs for home gardeners covering sustainable gardening concepts. MGEVs have a passion for plants and people that inspires and energizes Extension programming. MGEVs also have many connections to the community that, when multiplied by the number of MGEVs, greatly expand Extension's spheres of influence. MGEVs find their project experiences very rewarding. MGEV projects are, in essence, the identity of the local MGEV program and should reflect the mission and goals of Extension. Projects should be educational in nature (i.e. teaching, leading activities) for the public, not just the MGEV.

When project choices and programming decisions are made, MGEVs can influence the direction of Extension's educational outreach. MGEVs have the vision to see outcomes that non-plant people do not see. MGEVs get excited about making a difference in their communities, knowing that plants and landscapes make our communities better places to live, work, and raise families. This passion and energy can carry Extension right on into the heart of projects or programs that are great, but that may not be the best choice for the situation, or that may over commit Extension or MGEVs, which is why it is important to use this rubric to evaluate proposed projects. This tool can also be used for project review, to ensure that educational projects continue to meet local needs over time.

## ***Educational Activity Report***

When MGEVs complete an event with a public audience or a piece of a larger project with a public audience, details about the event must be shared with Extension for inclusion in monthly reports. MGEVs use a form, known as the Educational Activity Report (EAR), to collect and report the needed information.





## Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Project Proposal Form

Date Proposed:

*The mission of the GA MGEV Program is to assist Cooperative Extension by training Master Gardener Extension Volunteers to provide unbiased horticultural information to Georgians through volunteer community service and educational gardening projects using applied research and the resources of the University of Georgia.*

### 1. Basic Project Information:

Project Title:

Estimated Project Start + End Dates:

Person(s) Proposing/Requesting Project:

Contact Info of person(s) proposing/requesting project (phone numbers and email addresses):

Purpose of Project:

Project Audience:

a. Adults     b. Youth (ages 6-8) (ages 9 -18)     c. Adults & Youth

*\*if b or c is checked, project must also be reviewed by 4-H staff.*



2. Project Resource Requirements:

Estimated number of Volunteers needed to make the project a success:

Estimated number of Hours needed:

Training needed:

Funding Needed/Financial Source:

Other groups or organizations involved:

3. Anticipated Effects and Values:

Anticipated effect project will have on the community it serves:

Educational value of project:



Any County Cooperative Extension  
123 Main Street  
Your Town, GA 30000

**Procedures required for implementing the project + Required 4-H documentation if applicable:**

**Projected sustainability and maintenance plan:**

**Annual evaluation and measurable impact of project:**

MGEV Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

County Extension Agent Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

County Extension 4-H Reviewer for youth projects: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Projects are not officially approved for MGEV volunteer service credit until proposal is signed by Extension Agent. Continued on reverse.*



Choose the MGEV Program State Initiative that this project satisfies:

- **Environmental Stewardship** – Increasing awareness and knowledge of landscape and garden management for the optimum use and protection of the environment, including management of all aspects of the residential landscape (soil, plants, insects, diseases, and wildlife); and understanding and proper use of equipment, pesticides, fertilizers, and other landscaping inputs to have the greatest value with little negative impact on the environment.
- **Home Food Production** – Teaching the benefits of home food production and developing skills and knowledge in growing food, managing community gardens, or contributing to food banks or kitchens.
- **Gardening with Youth** – Increasing young people’s awareness and understanding of the value of horticulture and landscaping, using horticulture as a tool to increase responsibility and leadership for youth, and teaching individuals and professionals (i.e., teachers and therapists) how to use horticulture to reach young people.
- **Value of Landscapes** – Developing within communities the knowledge and skill to ensure proper design, installation, and maintenance of sustainable landscapes for economic benefit to residents, state and local government employees and agencies, and professionals in impacted fields, such as tourism and real-estate development.
- **Health Benefits of Gardening** – Teaching the value of the interior and exterior landscape to human health, well-being, and quality of life, transferring knowledge and skills to intended audiences that they might utilize this information for personal health and a healthier workplace and community.

Choose any key words that relate to this project:

- |   |   |                                     |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| — Entomology                                | — Junior Master Gardener programs                 | — Community-based program           |
| — Entrepreneurship                          | — School garden                                   | — Adult class                       |
| — Integrated Pest Management                | — After school program                            | — Judge                             |
| — 'Master' Series                           | — Increased exercise                              | — Exhibits                          |
| — Landscape                                 | — Saving money on food                            | — Civic or Garden Club              |
| — Nuts                                      | — Community gardens                               | — Presentations (Speaker’s Bureau)  |
| — Ornamentals                               | — Food preparation (fresh fruits and vegetables)  | — Demonstration Gardens             |
| — Turf                                      | — Food preservation (fresh fruits and vegetables) | — Conducted or Judged Flower Shows  |
| — Plant Pathology                           | — Childhood overweight prevention project         | — Extension Office                  |
| — Small Fruit                               | — Dietary guidelines                              | — Habitat for Humanity              |
| — Tree Fruit                                | — Healthy eating                                  | — Home Garden Visits                |
| — Vegetables                                | — Agricultural literacy                           | — Newsletters                       |
| — Water Banner Program                      | — Community service                               | — Newspaper or Magazine Articles    |
| — Water conservation                        | — Environmental stewardship                       | — Website content (for public)      |
| — Water quality                             | — Gardening with Youth                            | — Social Media content (for public) |
| — Waste management (part of septic project) | — Health Benefits of Gardening                    | — Plant Clinics                     |
| — 4-H/Youth Development                     | — Home Food Production                            | — Research and or Writing           |
| — Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS)       | — Value of Landscaping                            | — Teaching Adult Classes            |
| — EFNEP                                     | — Workforce preparation                           | — TV & Radio Programs               |
| — At-risk population                        | — Garden tour                                     | — Advisory Committees               |
| — Special population                        |   | — GMGA Committees                   |
| — In-school program                         |   | — Local MG Program Administration   |



# Project Evaluation Rubric

---

## What is the purpose of MGEV projects?

Volunteer service is the essence of the Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program. Individuals are recruited to assist Extension in delivering educational programs for home gardeners covering sustainable gardening concepts. MGEVs have a passion for plants and people that inspires and energizes Extension programming. MGEVs also have many connections to the community that, when multiplied by the number of MGEVs, greatly expand Extension's spheres of influence. MGEVs find their project experiences very rewarding. MGEV projects are, in essence, the identity of the local MGEV program and should reflect the mission and goals of Extension. Projects should be educational in nature (i.e. teaching, leading activities) for the public, not just the MGEV.

When project choices and programming decisions are made, MGEVs can influence the direction of Extension's educational outreach. MGEVs have the vision to see outcomes that non-plant people do not see. MGEVs get excited about making a difference in their communities, knowing that plants and landscapes make our communities better places to live, work, and raise families. This passion and energy can carry Extension right on into the heart of projects or programs that are great, but that may not be the best choice for the situation, or that may over commit Extension or MGEVs, which is why it is important to use this rubric to evaluate proposed projects. This tool can also be used for project review, to ensure that educational projects continue to meet local needs over time.

	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Ownership<sup>a</sup></b>	<p>Another organization is in charge of the project or event</p> <p>Extension has no voice in the event details</p> <p>Carries logos and signage from another organization</p>	<p>UGA Extension has a support/labor role in an event or project that is organized by another organization(s)</p>	<p>UGA Extension has a designated educational part in an event or project and is working with other participating organizations</p>	<p>UGA Extension is the responsible party</p> <p>The project sports UGA logos and signage</p> <p>Decisions are made by UGA Extension with input from Agent and MGEVs</p>	
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>To educate or increase the knowledge of MGEVs only</p>	<p>Building relationship with community stakeholders</p> <p>Horticultural in nature</p>	<p>To teach, model, or share information with the general public</p> <p>Contributing to Extension's mission</p>	<p>To teach, model, or share information with the general public</p> <p>Documenting behavior change in program participants</p>	
<b>Focus</b>	<p>Does not focus on Extension goals</p> <p>Garden maintenance without education of public</p> <p>Focus of project serves MGEV interests only</p>	<p>Primarily focused on MGEV interests, with some occasional outreach</p> <p>Based on one volunteer's interests or skills rather than overall mission or local needs</p>	<p>Garden planting and maintenance is a portion of the project</p> <p>Outreach efforts, such as tours or workshops, are a regular part of the project</p>	<p>Addresses a locally based educational need</p> <p>Meets an Extension goal</p> <p>Falls within a Georgia MGEV Program State Initiative</p>	
<b>Volunteer Satisfaction</b>	<p>Volunteers have no input on project</p>	<p>Volunteers have minimal input on project</p>	<p>MGEVs actively involved in shaping and delivering the project</p>	<p>MGEVs actively involved in shaping and delivering the project</p> <p>MGEVs report exciting things happening in the community as a result of the project</p>	
<b>Audience</b>	<p>MGEVs are the audience</p>	<p>Mostly MGEVs participating, with some public participants</p>	<p>Mix of public participants and MGEVs</p>	<p>Primarily public participation</p>	
<b>Commitment<sup>b</sup></b>	<p>Exceeds resources available</p> <p>Not enough or too many hours for interested MGEVs</p>	<p>Is a burden to resources available</p>	<p>Taps many resources available</p> <p>MGEVs are comfortable serving the number of hours that the project requires</p>	<p>Can be met without using all resources available</p> <p>MGEVs are comfortable serving the number of hours that the project requires</p>	

**Total Score:**

*<sup>a</sup>Some projects, such as school gardens, should NOT have a high ownership score.*

*<sup>b</sup>Consider start-up commitment as well as commitment needed to continue the project.*

Score Chart	
12-18	Project appropriate for Extension approval, appropriate for MGEV involvement and leadership
11-6	Project marginally appropriate for Extension approval. Consider ways to strengthen educational priorities or Extension representation
5-0	Project not appropriate for Extension approval at this time

**Comments:**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for requesting gardening assistance from UGA Extension, \_\_\_\_\_ County and Master Gardeners. We wish we could say yes to every application. However, at this time all volunteers are involved in ongoing projects. If you would like to submit your request again at a later date, we will be happy to reconsider it.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, Agent

UGA Extension, \_\_\_\_\_ County

---

#### Example Project Acceptance Letter

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

We are happy to announce that the project for the \_\_\_\_\_ has been reviewed by our Project Committee and was approved by UGA Extension, \_\_\_\_\_ County. It will become one of our Master Gardener Extension Volunteer projects.

We look forward to working together and will be in contact with you soon.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, Agent

UGA Extension, \_\_\_\_\_ County



## Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Educational Activity Report

(To be completed by committee chair or project coordinator only)

### I. BASIC INFORMATION

Program/Activity/Event Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair/Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Lecture Title(s): \_\_\_\_\_

(if a presentation was given)

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### II. GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Audience Demographics (if known):

	Male	Female
Asian		
Black or African American		
Native American Indian or Alaska Native		
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		
Two or more races		
White		
Hispanic		
TOTAL		

Audience Totals	
Youth	
Homeowner	
Total Contacts Face-to-Face	

Phone Contacts	
Written Contacts	

### III. PROGRAM LENGTHS

Hours of instruction per participant (formal teaching time):	
Number of sessions or classes taught	
Total length of program (teaching & non-teaching time)	
Total adult volunteers participating in activity	
Total volunteer hours worked (all volunteer hours combined)	



Any County Cooperative Extension  
123 Main Street  
Your Town, Ga 30000

**IV. VALUE AND COMMENTS**

In-Kind support (\$ value, if known):	Funds Donated (\$ value, if any):

Comments:

**V. Volunteers involved with activity & hours worked (use another sheet if more space is needed):**

NAME	HOURS	NAME	HOURS

Return to Extension office a copy of this EAR form and any of the following (check what you have included):

- Publicity for the program i.e. copy of news articles, letters sent, promo brochures, etc.
- Sign-in sheet
- Evaluation forms
- Copies of materials distributed
- Follow up articles or reports
- Other supporting information \_\_\_\_\_
- Comments that will be helpful in future programs

**\*\*For Office Use Only:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Entered in MGLOG on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Entered in Georgia Counts on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

# APPENDIX F: MGLOG RESOURCES

## *Georgia MGEV Quick Reference Guide for using MGLOG*

<http://extension.uga.edu/programs-services/georgia-master-gardener-extension-volunteer-program/volunteer/current-mgev-volunteers/mglog.html>

This pdf file provides step-by-step directions on navigating MGLOG. Use this document for guidance in entering volunteer service hours, recording and tracking volunteering and training entries, submitting a project proposal, making changing to MGEV Profile information, and other functions available through MGLOG.

## *Introductory Video Tutorials*

<http://extension.uga.edu/programs-services/georgia-master-gardener-extension-volunteer-program/volunteer/current-mgev-volunteers/mglog.html>

Access these YouTube video tutorials to familiarize yourself with the recordkeeping system or learn how to recover login credentials and enter the system.

## **Nickel Tour of MGLOG video**

## **Password Recovery video**

## *Trellis Blog Posts about MGLOG*

The Trellis Blog is managed by the Georgia MGEV State Program Office (SPO). Trellis provides support to Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteers through discussion of topics related to volunteerism and the MGEV experience. These Trellis Blog posts provide helpful information on the use of MGLOG by MGEVs.

**Introduction:** <http://blog.extension.uga.edu/mgevp/2014/05/its-a-new-day/?cat=8>

**Entering Volunteer Time:** <http://blog.extension.uga.edu/mgevp/2014/05/entering-volunteer-time/?cat=8>

**Proposing a Project:** <http://blog.extension.uga.edu/mgevp/2014/08/mglog-so-you-want-to-propose-a-mgev-project/>

**State initiatives for Projects:** <http://blog.extension.uga.edu/mgevp/2014/09/mglog-which-state-initiative-should-i-use/>

**Keywords for Projects:** <http://blog.extension.uga.edu/mgevp/2014/09/mglog-what-key-words-will-you-choose/>

**Reporting Reference:** <https://site.extension.uga.edu/mgevp/2017/12/reporting-reference/>



# APPENDIX G: MEDIA USAGE

## ***Communication Guidelines for MGEVs (<https://brand.uga.edu/social-media>)***

Do you write gardening articles as a MGEV? Have you put together handouts that summarize a topic that you are sharing about, maybe at a plant clinic or a presentation? Are your articles published in local papers, newsletters, or on websites? Do you prepare presentations about gardening topics to share with groups in the community? These are all great ways to get University of Georgia Cooperative Extension's research-based gardening information out there to the gardening public. Here are a few tips to make sure we are all staying on the same page.

### ***Communication Tips:***

- When you are preparing material for an article, publication, or presentation, it is acceptable to use information published by other states' Extension programs. However, do not include pesticide recommendations from other states as those recommendations may not be legal in Georgia.
- All material should be original work or should properly reference sources when appropriate and provide proper credit for non-original photos, images, and content. The UGA CAES Web Style Guide provides guidance ([https://brand.uga.edu/styleguide/university\\_of\\_georgia\\_cooperative\\_extension](https://brand.uga.edu/styleguide/university_of_georgia_cooperative_extension)) for image use.
- By-lines for MGEVs should read, "John Brown, Master Gardener Extension Volunteer, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, Pecan County."
- ***Materials should be reviewed by an Extension agent, a sponsor, or a UGA Specialist prior to release to public or media.*** This keeps everyone informed if questions arise. It is always a great practice to have a "second set of eyes" review your work before sending on for publication. Follow University guidelines for logo and trademark use. (<https://brand.uga.edu/trademarks>)

# APPENDIX H: WORKING WITH YOUTH

*Materials providing guidance for working with youth are available through Georgia 4-H.*  
<http://georgia4h.org/>

*Overview of Volunteer Policies*

<https://secure.georgia4h.org/documents/OverviewofVolunteerPolicies.pdf>

*The Handbook for Working with Youth*

<https://secure.georgia4h.org/documents/TheHandbook.pdf>







UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA  
EXTENSION



**Georgia MGEV Program**  
**State Program Office | University of Georgia | 1109 Experiment Street, Cowart**  
**Building, Griffin, GA 30223**  
**770-228-7243**