



Georgia Master Gardeners help backyard gardeners across the state grow. And the service they provide is literally worth a fortune. To celebrate the programs' contributions, the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension will celebrate Master Gardener Day in Georgia March 19.

"This time of year we present our annual report, and we represent the amount of the Master Gardener volunteers' service in dollars. It helps people comprehend the value of that service," said Marco Fonseca, the state Master Gardener coordinator.

Last year, Master Gardeners in Georgia worked 221,184 hours and travelled 945,375 miles, donating the equivalent of \$4.8 million through the volunteer service.

The Master Gardener program idea sprouted in 1972 at Washington State University. Overwhelmed with requests for help with plant problems, WSU Extension horticulture agents began to use well-trained volunteers to help them answer backyard gardeners' questions. They called these volunteers Master Gardeners from the German word Gartenmeister, which means "having a top proficiency level in horticulture." The program has grown worldwide.

UGA Extension brought the program to Atlanta in 1979. More than 3,000 Volunteers in 69 counties now participate in the program. Though many volunteers help clients in the UGA Extension offices, the Master Gardeners conduct projects outside the office, too.

Projects include teaching classes on home vegetable gardening, plant clinics, establishing demonstration gardens and water conservation methods. They teach at schools, parks, camps, hospitals, prisons, nursing homes and community gardens, all voluntarily to help Georgia gardeners of all ages be successful, Fonseca said.

Reaching Out



Connecting Communities

ANNUAL SUMMARY OF MASTER GARDENER ACTIVITIES 2010

Georgia Master Gardener Program Report

- 498 New Master Gardeners (completed training this year)
- 2619 Number of Veteran Master Gardeners returning.
- 1. Total # of volunteer hours this year $221,184 \times (*19.75 \text{ per hour}) = \$4,368,376$.
- 2. Total # of in person contacts 458,573.
- 3. Total # of telephone contacts 52,287.
- 4. Total # of miles traveled $945,3745 \times (**.50 \text{ per mile}) = $472,687$
- 5. Master Gardeners participated in the following volunteer activities:

EDUCATIONAL

| 5,481 | Children's Programs (Project code #1) |
|--------|--|
| 2,717 | Civic or Garden Club Presentations (Project code #2) |
| 20,182 | Community or Demonstration Gardens (Project code #3 |
| 658 | Conducted or Judged Flower Shows (Project code #4) |
| 1,178 | Exhibits (Project code #5) |
| 8,907 | Extension Office (Project code #6) |
| 477 | Habitat for Humanity (Project code #7) |
| 3,505 | Home Garden Visits (Project code #8) |
| 1,121 | Newsletters (Project code #9) |
| 628 | Newspaper or Magazine Articles (Project code #10) |
| 2,954 | Plant Clinics or Fairs (Project code #11) |
| 1,199 | Research or Writing (Project code #12) |
| 891 | Teaching Adult Classes (Project code #13) |
| 143 | TV & Radio Programs (Project code #14) |
| | |

ADMINISTRATIVE

| 1,171 | Advisory Committees (Project code #15) |
|--------|---|
| 905 | GMGA Committees (Project code #16) |
| 11,916 | Local MG Program Administration (Project code #17) |
| 6,565 | Other (describe in Special Project Reports)(Project code #18) |

Figures 1-4 adjusted to reflect 5% under reporting

Data collected as of February 16, 2011. Includes late reports and error corrections.

Estimated value of volunteer service further validated by May 2008 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates BLS May 2008 Farm and Home Management Advisors; \$19.97 median hourly wages.

^{*}The wage rate of \$19.75 per hour was used. The value of volunteer time is based on the average hourly earnings of all production and non supervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls for state of Georgia (as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics) increased by 12 percent to estimate for fringe benefits. This information was supplied by the Independent Sector (1200 18th St., NW, Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20036; 202/223-8100), an organization that "serves as a national forum to encourage giving. On the web at: http://www.independentsector.org

^{**}The mileage rate is based on \$0.50 per mile.

A Brief Explanation of Master Gardener Projects

2 Activities listed as ADMINISTRATIVE may include **3** assisting the Cooperative Extension Agent with local volunteer program **4** reporting, setting up local Master Gardener training, serving in 5 advisory capacity at community meetings or representing their local **6** program at the statewide Master Gardener association. 7

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Master Gardeners work in the EXTENSION OFFICE answering gardening questions by phone or e-mail, and helping walk-in clients. They also assist with general office duties such as answering phones, greeting clients and sending information out by mail. They may sometimes provide support for 4-H and FACS programs.

Master Gardeners set up PLANT CLINICS to answer to general gardening questions, teach about proper plant selection, identify and make recommendations for plant problems or accept soil samples.

Master Gardeners plan and maintain **DEMONSTRATION GARDENS and** conduct educational tours at gardens. **Demonstration gardens teach gardening** techniques and principles and often provide much needed garden or green space in a paved landscape. Many Master Gardeners assist with COMMUNITY **GARDENS** creating opportunities for recreation, exercise, therapy and education among community residents. Produce gleaned from demonstration and community gardens is donated to local shelters, senior centers, food banks and soup kitchens. Master Gardeners view community beautification projects as a catalyst for neighborhood and community development as well as an opportunity to teach good landscaping

Many Master Gardeners perform SITE VISITS to homeowner gardens or landscapes when the question or problem to be solved cannot be brought to the Extension Office.

Master Gardeners conduct CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS at 4-H clubs, libraries, schools, gardens, and camps. They introduce youngsters to gardening, encourage an interest in horticulture and use handson gardening activities to teach math, science, and reading.

principles.

Georgia Master Gardener

What is the Georgia Master Gardener Program?

As the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension's largest volunteer program, Georgia Master Gardener connects gardeners with their communities. Since 1979, Extension agents have trained volunteers to help fulfill UGA Cooperative Extension's mission of helping Georgians become healthier, more productive, financially independent and environmentally responsible.

Who are the Master Gardeners?

Representing a variety of personalities, professions and talents, Georgia Master Gardeners are trained volunteers with unique skills and abilities who share a passion for gardening. Young and old, these dedicated men and women are motivated by a desire to serve their communities, and are eager to reach out share their experiences and knowledge with each other and their neighbors.

What do Master Gardeners do?

Georgia Master Gardeners enthusiastically extend the reach of Cooperative Extension by providing practical advice and information about gardening. Each certified Master Gardener provides at least 25 hours of volunteer service annually to their local Cooperative Extension office or affiliated partners like the State Botanical Garden of Georgia. Master Gardeners are educators rather than a source of physical labor. Still, many Master Gardeners love to dig in the dirt and use a variety of methods to teach about good gardening practices including hands-on demonstrations and maintaining educational display gardens as well as encouraging community gardening efforts.

What is Expected of Master Gardeners?

After successfully completing the classroom portion, which involves regular attendance and passing a final exam, participants volunteer 50 hours of service to the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension within the first year. Upon completion, they become Georgia Master Gardeners, receiving a certificate and official name badge. To remain active, Georgia Master Gardeners are expected to volunteer a minimum of 25 hours of service each year thereafter.

How can I become a Georgia Master Gardener?

If you have the time and commitment to learn and want to put your knowledge and skills to work through volunteer service, apply for admission through your local participating UGA Cooperative Extension office.

1-800-ASK-UGA1

www.ugaextension.com





The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State University. the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating. Cooperative Extension, the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender or disability.