

## **Cornell Cooperative Extension Volunteer Position – Ulster County**

**Title:** Master Gardener Volunteer

**Purpose of Position:** The Master Gardener Program is a community service program established to provide home and community gardeners with unbiased, gardening information that is based on research or reliable experience, through a “neighbors-teaching neighbors” educational program.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. Successfully complete the required Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program and remain current through participation in recommended training opportunities throughout the agreed term of volunteer service.
2. Serve as a horticultural resource as outlined in the plan of work of the sponsoring Cornell Cooperative County Association.
3. Represent Cornell Cooperative Extension within the Community; encourage enrollment in and support for the organization.

**Anticipated Audience:** Home gardeners, Nursing home residents, Youth, Physically and mentally challenged, Community gardeners, Consumers of horticultural products

**Expected Results:** The resident and communities will be better informed of environmentally sound gardening practices and be better able to make decisions based on the counsel and advice of Master Gardener Volunteers.

### **Training and Support:**

- Orientation to the Cornell Cooperative Extension System, its mission and that of the Master Gardener Volunteer Program
- Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program includes a core qualifying course in gardening, as well as refresher classes, field trips and workshops to enhance expertise and ability to communicate information related to ecological gardening and related topics to the public. In Ulster County, there is a registration fee of \$250 which a portion is refunded upon completion of 100 volunteer hours within 2 years.
- Orientation to the operational and risk management procedures
- Periodic opportunities for statewide, regional, and national conferences; participation is encouraged to expand your knowledge and remain current.
- Extension Educators with knowledge of horticultural sciences as well as Veteran Master Gardener Volunteers active in the program provide support
- Master Gardener Coordinator

**Reporting:** Each Master Gardener Volunteer is expected to maintain records of program contacts, recommendations and time devoted to volunteer activities.

**Time Commitment:** An Ulster County Master Gardener Volunteer is expected to contribute a minimum of 100 hours within a period of 24 months, in exchange for the training period. **Of these 100 hours, at least 30 will be on the hotline/lab and 20 at one of the Master Gardener Demonstration Gardens.**

**Qualifications:**

- A basic interest in and knowledge about landscape and food gardening
- Enthusiasm for acquiring and sharing horticultural knowledge and skills
- Interest in teaching others
- Verbal and written communication skills
- A time schedule compatible with program activities
- Willingness to volunteer time on horticultural projects and educational activities that help meet the goals of the county's Cornell Cooperative Extension Program

**Level of Background screening required:**

- Reference Check
- Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) Check- If responsibilities involve use of CCE Association vehicles
- Criminal Background Check

**Benefits:**

- Satisfaction of serving your community to extend the educational mission of Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Interaction with people in your community with similar interests and talents in gardening and landscaping
- A deeper understanding of the science and art of horticulture and its allied sciences