

By-Laws
of
St. Charles County Master Gardeners



Mission Statement

The mission of the St. Charles County Master Gardener program is to provide horticultural information and training to the gardening public based on University of Missouri research that is specific to the local climate, soils and plants. By organizing and participating in St. Charles County gardening projects, members will enhance the beauty of our community and provide benefits to its citizens.

I. Volunteer Status and Program Requirements

- A. The Master Gardener core course is the first level of Master Gardener training. The core course shall consist of at least 30 hours of classroom instruction with topics selected from the core course textbook published by University of Missouri Extension. Additional topics may be selected to meet local needs and presenter availability, which is guided by regional/state coordinator(s).
- B. A Master Gardener Trainee is a person accepted into the Master Gardener core course but not yet finished with the classroom training. Upon completion of the core course the Trainee will be awarded a certificate of completion by the program coordinator. This certificate will signify advancement of the Trainee to the Intern status.
- C. A Master Gardener Intern is a person who has successfully completed the core course and is in the process of completing the required volunteer service, which is a minimum of 30 service hours.
- D. A Master Gardener is someone who has completed his/her annual minimum volunteer commitment to the Master Gardener program. Certification is good for one year. To remain a Master Gardener volunteer activity must remain current with a minimum of 20 service hours and six education hours per year after the first year. A Master Gardener who meets this requirement is a member in good standing.
- E. A Master Gardener Mentor is a Master Gardener who is paired with a Trainee/Intern to guide the new person into a successful Master Gardener experience.
- F. The Advanced Master Gardener Training (Level II) consists of training programs beyond the core course. It could be specialization training such as Master Composter, Urban IPM, Plant Pest Diagnostics, etc. Application, selection, course topics, examinations, absenteeism policy and hours of subsequent volunteer service for Advanced Master Gardener training will be determined by the local program coordinator.
- G. An Advanced Master Gardener is someone who has completed Advanced Master Gardener Training (Level II) and remains current with a minimum of 20 service hours and six education hours per year.

- H. Service hours for Master Gardeners should include a minimum of 5 hours in support of the gardens and grounds of the County Extension Center. Trainees and Interns are required to give a minimum of 20 hours of the 30 hour commitment to the Demonstration Gardens. All levels of Master Gardeners should choose the garden(s) they want to work in and/or help to develop.

II. Master Gardener Title

- A. The title of Master Gardener is to be used only and exclusively in MU Extension Master Gardener activities in which trained and certified Master Gardeners conduct educational programs and answer gardening questions under the auspices of MU Extension.
- B. Certification as a Master Gardener is valid only when an individual is participating in MU Extension sponsored or endorsed programs. Only active individuals continuing in the program may call themselves Master Gardeners.
- C. Official Master Gardener programs must be Extension-related, educational and represent the interests of MU Extension.

III. Program Coordinator and Membership

- A. The Coordinator of the Master Gardener Program will be the University of Missouri Regional Specialist (Agriculture, Horticulture, Natural Resources, etc) headquartered in St. Charles County. The Coordinator shall serve as liaison between the St. Charles County Master Gardeners and the Missouri State Advisory Board.
- B. Membership shall be limited to those who have successfully completed the Master Gardener core course.
- C. Membership automatically occurs when a certificate of successful core course completion is given to a Master Gardener Intern.
- D. Active membership continues after the first year providing the individual member has volunteered a minimum of 20 service hours and six education hours.
- E. All recognized members in good standing are voting members of the organization. A member must be present when a vote is taken.
- F. Motions will be passed with a simple majority of the members present. (An exception is amendments to the By-Laws, which requires a two-thirds majority of members present. See Section X).

IV. Steering Committee, Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

- A. The Steering Committee works with the Program Coordinator to provide leadership on all activities of the Master Gardener Program.
- B. The Steering Committee shall consist of three (3) members elected at large and will have five (5) members serving on the Committee by 2002 and thereafter. Members shall be elected for two (2) year terms, alternating two (2) or three (3) members each year as the rotation dictates.

- C. Steering Committee members present at any scheduled or called board meeting will constitute a quorum. Where votes are considered necessary, a simple majority of votes cast will carry a motion.
- D. The Program Coordinator will:
 - 1. Develop core course training curriculum within standards set by the State Master Gardener Program.
 - 2. Provide core course Training via Regional and State Extension staff, Master Gardeners and other qualified instructors.
 - 3. Compile volunteer hours on a quarterly basis to Master Gardeners. Volunteer hours will be reported annually to the State Master Gardener Coordinator.
 - 4. Determine the status of Master Gardeners as defined by Section I.
 - 5. Oversee and approve all financial, program and volunteer activities to ensure compliance with MU Extension guidelines as well as all local, state and federal laws.
- E. The Steering Committee will:
 - 1. Serve as a primary advisory group to the Program Coordinator by providing recommendations on policies and procedures; listen to general membership's input and communicate needs; work closely to improve overall program and services of Master Gardeners to the community; provide input into Master Gardener educational training.
 - 2. Develop educational and social activities for Master Gardeners.
 - 3. Recognize and honor Master Gardeners.
 - 4. Serve as a leadership group to increase community awareness of the Master Gardener Program and activities.
 - 5. Manage the organization's expenditures and develop plans for income-producing projects that are in compliance with MU Extension guidelines.
- F. The Program Coordinator and Steering Committee will:
 - 1. Recruit potential Master Gardener applicants.
 - 2. Screen and select Master Gardener applicants as per State Master Gardener guidelines.
 - 3. Identify, review and evaluate volunteer opportunities for Master Gardeners.

V. Steering Committee Elections

- A. A Nominating Committee, consisting of at least three (3) members in good standing, will be appointed at the August general meeting of each year.
- B. The Nominating Committee will identify, recruit and publicize a slate of three (3) to five (5) qualified candidates for election to the Steering Committee. A candidate for the Steering Committee must have Master Gardener status, be a member in good standing, and either is present at the meeting or has previously agreed to serve on the Steering Committee.
- C. Nominations and/or self-nominations for Steering Committee candidates can be made to the Nominating Committee.

- D. Steering Committee members shall be elected with a simple majority of votes by open ballot at the October General Meeting. Ballots from the members present at the meeting and absentee ballots received by the start of the October General Meeting from members in good standing will be counted. In the event of a tie vote, a run-off election will be held between the tied candidates based upon a simple majority vote from the ballots of the members present. The elected Steering Committee members will assume duties on January 1 of the following year.

VI. Officers and Duties

- A. Officers of the organization will be elected for a one (1) year term from members of the Steering Committee and voted upon by those who are current members of the Committee.
- B. Officers shall be elected at an organizational meeting presided over by the Program Coordinator at a time designated by the Coordinator.
- C. There is no restriction on the number of terms an officer may serve.
- D. The following officers shall be elected:
 - 1. Chairperson – Presides over all scheduled meetings for general membership and Steering Committee; presents a meeting agenda each month after consulting with the Program Coordinator; reserves facilities for scheduled meetings; other duties as deemed necessary or appropriate.
 - 2. Vice-Chairperson – Assumes duties/responsibilities of Chairperson in his/her absence; other duties as deemed necessary or appropriate.
 - 3. Secretary– Records and keeps minutes of all general and Steering Committee meetings; maintains current roster of membership and attendance at general membership meetings; coordinates organization’s correspondence with the Program Coordinator.
 - 4. Treasurer- Maintains responsibility for all funds received by the organization; pays accounts on behalf of the organization; provides financial reports at all General and Steering Committee meetings; other duties as deemed necessary or appropriate
- E. All minutes and financial records will be published monthly and will be open to all members at all times.

VII. Vacancies

- A. The Chairperson appointing an existing Steering Committee member to assume office for the remainder of the term will fill an Officer vacancy.
- B. A Steering Committee vacancy will be filled by the Chairperson appointing a member in good standing for the remainder of the term.

VIII. Meetings

- A. General meetings will be held monthly except December. The date and time will be proposed by the Steering Committee at the January general meeting and approved by a simple majority of those present.

- B. Steering Committee meetings will be scheduled when determined necessary by the Chairperson and the Program Coordinator.
- C. A meeting may be called or canceled by the Chairperson on the recommendation of the Program Coordinator.
- D. Meetings will be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*.

IX. Committees

- A. Standing Committees shall be established at the discretion of the Steering Committee and the Program Coordinator, as they deem necessary or appropriate. The Standing Committee shall elect a Chairperson by a majority vote of its members. Standing Committee Chairpersons are expected to meet with or report to the Steering Committee, as scheduled by the Steering Committee, regarding committee activity.

X. Amendments to the By-Laws

- A. The general membership is to be notified in writing of any proposed changes not less than thirty (30) days prior to the next general meeting during which the change will be discussed and voted upon.
- B. Passage of motions to amend must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast (members present).

Adopted January 16, 2001

Amended November 17, 2005 – Under Section I, Item H.

Amended September 28, 2006 – Under Section I, Item H.

Amended June 28, 2007 – Under Section I, Item H.

Amended February 1, 2009 - Under Section I, Item G.