Colorado Master Gardener℠ Handbook
GardenNotes #014
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- Colorado Master Gardener GardenNotes are available online at www.cmg.colostate.edu.
- Colorado Master Gardener training is made possible, in part, by a grant from the Colorado Garden Show, Inc.
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Revised August 2018
Section A: About the Colorado Master Gardener Program and CSU Extension

History of the Master Gardener program
The Master Gardener program began in 1973, when it was founded in the state of Washington. With its success, it quickly spread to other states. In Colorado, the program began in 1975-76 in Denver, Boulder, Jefferson and El Paso counties. Today there are programs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, 9 Canadian provinces and South Korea.

Volunteers in the Colorado program support gardeners from the plains to the highest elevations of the state. They support Colorado State University Extension staff through their participation in educational activities that expand the reach of local horticultural experts. Their journey begins with a rigorous 10 weeks of training on topics including everything from soils to plant diseases and insects. They then give back to communities through various activities. Volunteers might teach public classes, respond to public phone calls and emails, staff booths at farmer’s markets and other events, teach youth and community gardening, maintain public research and demonstration gardens, write blogs and develop videos. In 2016, 1408 volunteers from 34 counties donated 53,610 hours, worth about 1.3 million dollars.

What is Colorado State University Extension?

Colorado State University Extension is a joint agency between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) (federal partner), Colorado State University (state partner), and Colorado counties (local partner). It is a nationwide system delivering research-based education at the county level with resources from the federal and county partners and the state’s land-grant university.

When referring to the organization, use the full name, Colorado State University Extension. After the initial use of the term, repeated referrals may be shortened to Extension.

County identification may be added as Colorado State University, _____ County Extension or Colorado State University, _____ County Office.
What is meant by “Extension program” as in the Colorado Master Gardener program?

A program refers to a set of activities with an educational component. They are intended to effect certain outcomes among targeted clients. Outcomes include knowledge gained, skills learned and intention to change behavior, among others.

CSU Extension Funding

Current Colorado State University Extension funding sources include:

- 47% Colorado State University
- 16% federal funds (USDA budget)
- 31% state funds (Colorado State University budget)
- 41% County funds
- 12% other sources (sales, fees and program grants)

Funding Targets Issues

Funding at the federal, state, and county levels is provided in support of issues. Issues are identified areas of community concerns and needs where research and educational efforts are concentrated.

For administrative purposes, Extension programs are organized into six Core Competency Areas including Community Resource Development, Competitive and Sustainable Agricultural Systems, Natural Resources and the Environment, Nutrition, Health and Food Safety, Strong Families, Healthy Homes and 4-H and Youth Development.

County and university-based staff work together to plan and implement educational programs on a multi-county, regional, or statewide basis. These teams are the primary subject matter programming unit. The Colorado Master Gardener Program is part of the Environmental Horticulture Program Reporting Unit.

Staffing

Staff - The county is the basic program delivery unit for CSU Extension and is staffed around locally identified needs. County level staff includes Extension Agents, a County Extension Director, (an Extension agent leading the local team), program coordinators and assistants and support staff. In Colorado, county-based educators may work across county lines in multi-county clusters.

The County Extension Advisory Committee provides input on current and emerging issues that need attention. Local citizens serving on the committee play a key role in helping staff identify and prioritize program needs at the local level.

University-based faculty also support the local Extension program behind the scenes by providing leadership and research and by assisting with program delivery. Depending on assignment, Colorado State University campus-based, departmental faculty may split time between research, teaching, and Extension activities. Campus-based faculty with Extension
appointments are known as Extension Specialists. Extension programs also work closely with Agricultural Experiment Stations, located around the state.

Accountability
With increased demands for accountability of government-funded programs, Extension program planning focuses on outcomes, the “so what” of activities. Examples of outcomes of the Colorado Master Gardener Program include the following:

- Empowering Colorado gardeners with knowledge-based information to foster successful gardening;
- Protecting and enhancing the home landscape environment (including water wise gardening and responsible use of pest management options);
- Gardening for nutrition and health;
- Gardening to teach life skills, developing individuals, strengthening families, and building communities.

Colorado Master Gardener Program℠ Mission Statement
The Colorado State University, Colorado Master Gardener Program volunteer network strives to enhance Coloradans’ quality of life by:

- Extending knowledge-based education throughout Colorado communities to foster successful gardeners;
- Helping individuals make informed decisions about plants to protect neighborhood environments.

We are committed to using horticulture to empower gardeners, develop partnerships and build stronger communities.

Colorado Master Gardener Program Vision Statement
The Colorado State University, Colorado Master Gardener Program strives to lead educational efforts to nurture Colorado’s natural environment and communities by:

- Collaborating with the green industry, public agencies and nonprofits to provide current research-based information to the public;
- Developing educational programs for local needs such as water issues, alternative pest management and ecosystem characteristics, to encourage environmentally sound horticultural practices;
- Reaching out to new audiences through a variety of technologies;
- Providing lifelong learning opportunities and a variety of meaningful volunteer options for Colorado Master Gardeners, resulting in a committed, active network of horticultural educators who serve communities across the state;
Cultivating long-term support and securing abundant resources from diverse constituencies for the Colorado Master Gardener Program by showing the differences that this program makes in Coloradans’ quality of life.

Colorado Master Gardener service mark
Colorado Master Gardener is a registered service mark of Colorado State University Extension and is used to identify volunteers as representatives of CSU Extension. It may be used ONLY in connection with official CSU Extension activities.

In print materials, the first use of the title Colorado Master Gardener™ should be followed with a small “sm” after Gardener.

When CMG volunteers are not officially representing Colorado State University Extension, the general term “master gardener” (without any verbal connection to the CSU Extension System) can be used.

Colorado Master Gardener program funding
At the state level, the Colorado Master Gardener program is completely self-funded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>What it supports</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado Master Gardener program fees</td>
<td>On full-time state coordinator position, operational expenses for program such as travel for instructors, telephone, printing, postage, IT support and educational materials production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified Gardener fees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado Garden and Home Show Foundation</td>
<td>Supplies and materials for training Annual VMS lease fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified Gardener online badging program</td>
<td>Course revisions and development; support staff for short term projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is the Colorado Master Gardener product and audience?

Colorado Master Gardeners assist Colorado State University Extension staff in delivering research-based gardening information to foster successful gardening in Colorado communities. Activities should focus on education. CMGs do not provide garden labor or consultant services. The Colorado Master Gardener program is neutral and unbiased toward specific commercial products, services and other groups.

1. Audience

The CMG Volunteer's audience is exclusively non-commercial, home gardeners. Green Industry or commercial growers are referred to Extension agents.

2. Educational products

   a. Transfer of technical knowledge and development of decision-making skills: Our role is to provide Coloradans with research-based information and relevant options, empowering them to make informed decisions customized to their situations and needs. These decisions can have economic, environmental and health related impacts. The product delivered by CMG volunteers is education through the transfer of knowledge and skills. Most CMG outreach falls into this type of activity.

   b. Restorative gardening: This is the purposeful production, maintenance and harvest of plants for individual and community resilience. Our educational product is life skills. The intended impacts are increased health and stability for individuals, families and communities relative to their emotional, psychological and physical well-being.

Colorado Master Gardener Program Titles

Apprentice Master Gardener

- Applicants, 18 years of age or older, that have been accepted into the program or who has not yet completed basic training, their first 50 hours of volunteer service, final assessment and paperwork.
- Receive the Colorado Master Gardener training at a reduced fee in partial exchange for their volunteer service (i.e., unpaid work). The volunteer service is considered part of the training received by Colorado Master Gardeners.
- Receive the Colorado Master Gardener certificate upon completion of the required training, service and reporting.
• May also receive the Colorado Gardener Certificate upon completion of the CMG certificate requirements. This certificate may be used to market their expertise.

**Colorado Gardener Certificate**

• Adults, 18 years of age and older, who desire the classroom training only, without a volunteer commitment.
• Pay state and county program fees (the same as CMG volunteers) PLUS tuition (in lieu of the return service).
• Receive the *Colorado Gardener Certificate* upon completion of the class work. They do not become Colorado Master Gardeners.
• Certificate may be used to establish training credentials and market expertise.

**Colorado Master Gardener**

• Has successfully completed his/her apprenticeship
• Renews his/her appointment and pays annual fees each year
• Completes 12 hours of continuing education each year
• Volunteers a minimum of 24 hours each year
• Completes reporting requirements each year
• Is eligible for all volunteer activities

**Limited Activity/Inactive CMG**

• Are CMGs granted this status by the local coordinator following a consultation with him/her (Based on personal situation)
• Hold this status for up to 12 months.
• Continue to receive emails, mailings and printed materials
• Pay CMG fees
• May attend meetings and participate in outreach activities
• Reports volunteer and continuing education hours completed (if any)
• May reactivate after consulting with local coordinator
• May not request this status at the end of the CMG year due to incompletion of commitments
• Note: *Years in inactive status do not count toward years of CMG service*

**Released**

• Are no longer active or affiliated with the Colorado State University Extension CMG program.
• May not identify themselves as affiliated with Colorado State University Extension or use the term “Colorado Master Gardener.”
• Will be removed from the county VMS roster.
• May re-apply for admission *within 3 years* if they left at their request.

**Affiliate Colorado Master Gardener**

• Are CMG volunteers whose role has evolved from traditional CMG activities but continue to serve valuable roles in the program as community contact or collaborator
• Have completed basic CMG requirements
• May be a CMG who speaks for the CMG program interests on an advisory board
• May be a CMG in a green industry role who supports the program as a consultant, collaborator or instructor
• May be a CMG whose primary role serves as program contact for another organization in collaboration with the CMG program.
• Assigned this status by the local coordinator (following consultation)
• Continue to receive the same privileges as CMG volunteers
• Continue to pay fees, report hours and complete the reappointment form each year.

**Colorado Master Gardener Emeritus**

• Have made a substantial contribution to the CMG program
• Must be in good standing with the program at the time of the designation
• Desire continued, but limited activity but must limit participation due to circumstances beyond their control such as personal or family health needs.
• May continue to volunteer and report hours as able, but is not required to.
• Must continue to pay fees and complete the reappointment form each year.
• Are designated by county coordinator and CMG coordinator following consultation.
Section B: Volunteer Opportunities and Continuing Education

A. Volunteer Activities - 50 hours required in Apprentice year; 24 hours per year thereafter

Definition of a CMG Volunteer Activity

1. Activities must be **supportive** of CSU Extension issues.

2. Activities must be **educational** in nature. What knowledge and skills does the client develop?

3. Activities must have **advanced approval of designated** county staff. The local CMG agent/coordinator makes the final decision about what is acceptable.

4. Volunteers must be **identified** as Colorado State University Extension, Colorado Master Gardeners.

How do I Know if an Activity is Educational?
Sometimes there is confusion about what makes an activity an educational one – or not. In an educational activity, participants gain knowledge or skills or both. Three components that further help identify an educational activity are:

- The activity has been marketed
- The activity has a defined audience
- The activity has an **intentional message**

Difference Between Educational and Service Activities

Let’s say you are involved in a youth garden with the assignment of coaching youth to transplant cabbages; this is an educational activity. You are teaching them how (perhaps even demonstrating how); they are learning the steps to transplant the cabbage; they are gaining the skill to perform transplanting. You do not transplant for them.

You might demonstrate how to prune a tree for a garden club, but you don’t go to member’s homes and prune all their trees. Pruning trees for citizens is an example of a service activity where education or learning a new skill are not provided to the consumer. Service activities cannot be performed for Colorado Master Gardener volunteer hours. Please see the following chart for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational</th>
<th>Service-oriented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share information about garden design</th>
<th>Develop a landscape design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share information about plant species adapted to local growing conditions</td>
<td>Call around to find nurseries that carry a product or certain plants for an individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor a community group, working with them</td>
<td>Maintain a garden for a group/organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement a demonstration garden that empowers viewer to adapt concepts demonstrated</td>
<td>Maintain a garden to beautify an area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Specific Examples**

**Mentoring** - CMG volunteers can serve as mentors to other groups (like 4-H clubs and school or church youth groups) who are planting and/or maintaining parks, community gardens and other green spaces. Here the CMG serves in an educational role as he/she demonstrates a technique, coaches or instructs clients.

**Demonstration Gardens** - To be acceptable for CMG hours, the demonstration garden must truly empower the viewer to make knowledgeable decisions. This requires signage and print materials about the garden’s educational objectives. For example, an attractive xeric garden does not give viewers the knowledge to adapt xeric principles in their home gardens. Signs need to identify xeric plants the viewer may want to purchase. Onsite printed materials, online links and/or QR codes should give additional information about techniques for reducing water usage. CMG programs should also consider sponsoring public educational activities in the garden. It could also be used as a backdrop or tool for blogs, newspaper articles and you-tube video production.

When a demonstration garden produces food that is donated to a food bank or similar entity:

1) The demonstration garden must meet the above description of an educational demonstration garden;
2) **AND** must meet the definition of a CMG volunteer activity to be counted as a CMG activity.

Food raised in a church, school or community garden may not be counted as CMG volunteer time unless there is an approved CMG educational activity affiliated with it.

**University Research Efforts** - Interested CMG volunteers can become actively involved in University research efforts, working with state and county staff. In these projects, research staff work WITH Master Gardeners to create a two-way flow of information and a learning environment for all.
Free labor crew - As Colorado Master Gardeners, volunteers may NOT work as a free labor crew to plant and/or maintain city and county parks, plant trees for community groups or otherwise maintain private or public properties. These activities are not educational in nature.

Initiating Local Projects
Local community projects may be initiated by CMG volunteers. However, they must be educational in nature, follow CMG guidelines and use Colorado State University recommendations. Projects should provide educational value to participants such as sharing information, consulting and/or demonstrating techniques.

Projects discouraged include those where Colorado Master Gardeners provide only labor or involve commercial businesses where there appears to be a conflict of interest.

CMG volunteers desiring to initiate projects should contact the agent/coordinator in charge of the local program and discuss it with him/her. Roles of volunteers, partners, funding, responsibilities and operations should be identified in written form before approval is given. When a county has ample, existing projects for the volunteer program, a project may be denied.

B. Continuing Education Requirement – 12 hours per year

The continuing education requirement serves three purposes:

- Provides opportunity for continued learning.
- Defines a minimum participation level within the program.
- reduces liability to Extension and agents by expecting non-paid staff to be continually updated on research-based information.

A minimum of six (of the twelve) hours must be from educational events specifically sponsored by Extension for CMG volunteers. (All 12 hours may be from these events.) Examples include:
• CMG OnLine classes. Counties are not to restrict the hours that volunteers may view CMG OnLine videos. A county may require that up to six hours of the continuing education be from other specific venues (such as county meetings).
• County, regional, and state CMG updates by specialists, agents, experienced CMG volunteers, Green Industry members, etc.
• State CMG conferences
• Specialized training courses, like "Diagnostic Clinics"
• Re-attendance at basic training sessions
• Volunteer development training
• Writer's workshops

Other educational activities may count 1) as they relate to horticulture and the CMG role AND 2) with prior approval of designated agent or coordinator. Examples include:

• Public garden classes
• Academic classes
• Garden club speakers
• Gardening videos
• Distance learning opportunities
• Job-related in-service
• Special research projects
• Independent projects

Time includes reasonable travel time to and from CMG events (unless prohibited by county policy) and preparation time for CMG outreach activities. It does not include personal study time.

IF IN DOUBT: Volunteer hours are counted when the CMG provides educational programs to clients. Continuing education hours are counted when the CMG is in the student role, receiving the training.

Volunteer Commitment
The term “volunteer” is used to help the public understand that Colorado Master Gardener Volunteers are donating their time to assist them and are not paid staff of CSU Extension or the county. This is important in setting the public’s level of expectations. Coloradans are very appreciative of CMG efforts donated to assist them. This is important because some can become rather demanding of paid staff.

However, being a “volunteer” NEVER implies a lack of responsibility in fulfilling commitments. When a CMG volunteer fails to honor a commitment by not showing up, it may create serious problems for the program. A CMG volunteer who makes a habit of not showing up will be released from the program.
Section C: Program Policies

Use of Colorado Master Gardener Name
Our program is known as the **Colorado Master Gardener** program. The term “master gardener” (without any reference to the Colorado State University Extension System at the state or county level) is considered generic and is used by many organizations and businesses. It may be used in situations not affiliated with the Colorado State University Extension System. However, use of this term is discouraged. When volunteers refer to themselves as members of our program, they should use the term “Colorado Master Gardener.”

The Colorado Master Gardener Code of Conduct
The intent of this **Volunteer Code of Conduct** is to clarify relationships between the **Colorado Master Gardener Volunteer** and the Colorado Master Gardener Program of Colorado State University Extension.

**In the capacity of a CMG Volunteer:**

- I agree to be civil, courteous and considerate towards Extension staff, other volunteers and the public. Others may think and do things differently than what I personally prefer, but I will be respectful of their values and perspectives.

- I agree to cooperate with and support the local Extension Office staff and volunteers to jointly further the missions and objectives of the CMG Program. In addition, I agree to comply with training, reporting, certification, annual renewal requirements and other program directives as stated in CMG GardenNotes #014 [http://cmg.colostate.edu/Gardennotes/014.pdf](http://cmg.colostate.edu/Gardennotes/014.pdf)

- I understand that the title “**Colorado Master Gardener**” may be used only in connection with official Colorado State University Extension activities. The title may not be used to associate the Colorado Master Gardener name with commercial products or give implied endorsements of any product or place of business. The title may not be used to advance my personal political, religious or environmental beliefs.

- I agree to disseminate information without regard to race, age, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender, disability, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

- I agree to follow federal, state, county, Colorado State University and Extension Office policies and regulations appropriate to my role as a volunteer.

- I agree to provide research-based horticultural information from Colorado State University or other research-based institutions.
• I understand CMG volunteer clientele are non-commercial home gardeners. I understand that as a CMG volunteer it is not my role to advise commercial growers or green industry professionals and will refer these clients to the appropriate Extension staff.

• I understand that as a CMG volunteer, I may not give advice that could be considered by the client as legal or medical in nature. I will not discuss the following issues: hazard trees, poisonous plants and mushrooms, medical use of herbs (including growing and use of marijuana), pesticide toxicity and the misuse of pesticides. I will refer these issues to the appropriate Extension staff.

• In relation to pest management, I will follow the recommendations based on integrated pest management (IPM) strategies, allowing the client to select methods in harmony with their values. Any reference to the use of pesticides must come directly from Extension resources. All inquiries beyond this scope will be referred to appropriate Extension staff.

• I understand that I will not discuss or make comments about the toxicity of organic or synthetic pesticides. Inquiries about pesticide toxicity will be referred to the National Pesticide Information Center, found here: http://npic.orst.edu/

• I will avoid being disruptive in training classes, volunteer events, and using social media or email. I understand that the CMG email communication system (VMS) and membership lists are for internal Extension business use only. I will not use it for commercial business or send spam type communications.

• I agree to refrain from using or possessing alcohol or illegal substances (including marijuana) while participating in volunteer activities. Being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana or illegal substances during CMG service will result in disciplinary action.

• In support of the program operations, I agree to pay annual CMG fees and other expenses in regards to the program (i.e. books, transportation, course fees, clothing), as assessed by the state and my local county program.

• As non-paid staff, I understand that I am not covered by CSU worker’s compensation or other medical insurance.

• I understand that volunteering for an organization is a privilege, not a right. I understand that I serve at the request of Colorado State University Extension and that the request can be withdrawn at any time.

I further understand that Colorado State University Extension will to the extent possible:

• Provide opportunities for my continual learning through volunteer activities, classes and workshops and online learning opportunities.

• Provide training, supervision, equipment, and direction to volunteers through the local Extension office.
• Communicate expectations and responsibilities of the program to volunteers.

• Uphold and cultivate a respectful relationship between staff and volunteers.

• Provide access to CSU Extension reference materials and professionals.

• Provide a safe working environment within the Extension office and at CMG events.

• Match volunteer skills and interests with volunteer opportunities within the local program.

• While serving in an official CMG capacity (preapproved by the local agent/CMG Program Leader), cover CMG volunteers with University liability insurance provided that the volunteer uses research based information and applies good judgment.

Conflict of interest
Any situation that has the potential to infer that Colorado State University promotes or endorses a private business or product could be a conflict of interest. Most conflict-of-interest problems arise from implied endorsement, i.e. implying that the service is provided by or in collaboration with Colorado State University, or implying that Colorado State University is recommending a business or product.

CMG volunteers are identified as Colorado Master Gardeners (or otherwise affiliated with Colorado State University) ONLY while serving in authorized CMG activities.

Volunteers with green industry connections may NOT use CMG activities as a source of business contacts. CMG volunteers may not wear CMG name badges or CMG clothing items while working as employees or owners of a nursery, garden center or other business. The title “Colorado Master Gardener” (or other indicators suggesting affiliation with Colorado State University) may NOT be used on any marketing materials for private business. The Colorado Gardener Certificate implies participation in training only. Since it does not imply that the holder is representing the Colorado State University Extension system as a volunteer, it may be used for marketing purposes.

Copyright Law

CMG volunteers must not violate copyright laws in performance of volunteer service.

CSU Extension gives permission to CMG volunteers to make copies of our fact sheets and CMG GardenNotes as part of their CMG work. (However, they are generally available free from the website.) Copies must be of acceptable quality, of the current version, and made without changes. Permission to
copy Colorado State University materials does not extend to publications available for sale or other print materials.

Copyright law prohibits making multiple copies of any material for group distribution without permission of the copyright holder. For additional information on copyright, refer to CMG GardenNotes #018, Using Copyrighted Materials: Are You Legal?

Equal Opportunity
CSU Extension programs are available to all without discrimination. Colorado State University has zero tolerance for discrimination based on race, gender, age, disability, color, veteran status, religion, genetic information, national origin or ancestry, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or expression.

Legal and Medical Advice
While working as volunteers, Colorado Master Gardeners are not authorized to give legal or medical advice. Violation of this protocol by CMG volunteers is ground for automatic dismissal from the CMG Program.

1) Hazard Trees – CMG volunteers do NOT address hazard tree issues (concerns about the potential for a tree to fall on a house or other structure resulting in injury or property damage.) Rather, they should refer the client to a certified arborist. [legal issue]

2) Poisonous Plants and Mushrooms – CMG volunteers do NOT address poisonous plant or mushroom questions. [medical issue]

3) Medical Issues including Human Health Entomology and Medical Marijuana – CMG volunteers do NOT advise on medically related issues, including the influence of insects on human health and the medicinal use of herbs. [medical issue]

4) Pesticide Misuse - CMG volunteers do not advise on the misuse of pesticides by others. In these situations, customers should contact the Colorado Department of Agriculture. (legal issue)

5) Pesticide health and environmental safety issues - As a CMG, volunteers are not authorized to discuss pesticide health and environmental safety issues. The role of CMG volunteers also does NOT include any discussion about merits or limitations of any type of pesticide. (legal issue)

Pesticides
Provide Pesticide options - The role of Extension in pest management is to help clients understand non-chemical and chemical options, not to spread personal values or opinions about the use of pesticides.

Direct to Appropriate Pesticides The role of CMG volunteers is limited to directing clients to appropriate pesticides, using Extension Fact Sheets and other Extension print materials. It is a good practice to
supply a print copy of the fact sheets when possible. Use of other reference materials is not acceptable for pesticide information.

**Pesticide toxicity information** – Although CMGs may not discuss pesticide health and safety issues, a client may be directly referred to the National Pesticide Information Network. This program is sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in cooperation with Oregon State University. Information of this type can be found on the next page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Pesticide Information Network</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 1-800-858-7378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:npic@ace.orst.edu">npic@ace.orst.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web: <a href="http://npic.orst.edu">http://npic.orst.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours: 7 days a week, excluding holidays, 6:30 am to 4:30 pm, Pacific time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pesticide Use in Demonstration/Research Gardens** – CMGs may use general use pesticides in these settings. All pesticides must be used in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations and the label directions. Volunteers must read and follow the label directions. No “home remedies” may be used as a pesticide unless Colorado State University has a published recommendation for the product.

**CSU Extension Protocol for Medical Marijuana**

The General Counsel's staff at Colorado State University has informed CSU Extension of the following in regards to Medical Marijuana. These restrictions apply to all Colorado State University Extension staff members and volunteers, including Colorado Master Gardener volunteers.

While the use of Medical Marijuana is legal in the state of Colorado, Marijuana remains a Schedule 1 illegal drug under federal law and as such, Colorado State University Extension cannot be involved with this item.

Assistance with Medical Marijuana plant health questions will not be provided. Individuals requesting such information will not be provided referral information. CMG volunteers will not address the issue with the media.

Our offices are considered drug-free workplaces, as CSU is a federal contractor. Marijuana plants and/or plant parts are not permitted in CSU Extension offices. Marijuana plants or plant parts delivered to or left at CSU Extension offices will be turned over to legal authorities for destruction.
If CSU Extension employees or volunteers (including Colorado Master Gardeners) assist medical marijuana growers, they will be acting outside the scope of their employee/volunteer role and assume personal liability for any legal action that may be taken against them.

**Liability**

While working in an official CMG capacity (as volunteer, non-paid University staff) CMG volunteers are covered by University liability insurance for mis-information, provided they are using research/knowledge-based information and applying good judgment. (This means that the University may assist with a defense if it is in the best interests of the University.) CMG volunteers will not be covered if they go out on a limb with personal information or information from special interest groups.

A CMG volunteer would not be covered for information shared outside of official (approved) CMG activities.

**Worker’s Comp and Medical Insurance**

As non-paid staff, CMG volunteers are NOT covered by worker’s compensation or other medical insurance

**Memberships and Transfers**

**Cross County Enrollment**

Cross-county enrollment procedures were developed to address varying needs of CMG volunteers and ensure that each volunteer is engaged in an active local CMG Program.

**Residents from CMG Program Counties applying to neighboring CMG Program Counties**

**Colorado Gardener Certificate Students** – Residents may register in a neighboring county based on available space and payment of fees (same process as an in-county registration).

**CMG Volunteers**

Being accountable to local taxpayers and county budget support, applicants should apply to their home county program. Most counties will give priority to local residents.

Some potential applicants may better connect to a neighboring county (due to work, social, and family settings) rather than their county of residency. Residents may apply/transfer as a volunteer to another county under a written memorandum of agreement. The agreement includes the following:

- A statement clarifying the situation why the applicant prefers membership in a program outside their county of residence.
• A statement clarifying that the volunteer work will be done in and behalf of the host county. The volunteer understands and accepts the travel commitment between the between counties. Travel time incurred for volunteer outreach (from the home to volunteer activities) counts towards volunteer hours.
• A statement clarifying that the volunteer is not at will to float between CMG Program in their county of residence and the host county.
• A statement clarifying that volunteer engagement support will be provided through the host county (that the non-county resident volunteer will be a regular, active member of the host county CMG Program) including:
  o Communications links between the CMG volunteer and the CMG Program
  o CMG outreach activities links
  o CMG continuing education links
  o Volunteer reporting links
  o Volunteer recognition

A memorandum of agreement is signed as part of the application process by the CMG applicant, the hosting county CMG Program agent/coordinator and the county of residence agent/coordinator. After the initial year, active membership continues with the host county program.

Residents of an Extension County without CMG Programs applying to neighboring CMG Program

Colorado Gardener Certificate Students – Residents may register in a neighboring county based on available space and payment of fees (same process as an in-county registration).

CMG Volunteers – Non-county residents may apply/transfer to a neighboring county under a written memorandum of agreement in one of two programming options, as follows:

Volunteering for the host county – work will be done for and on behalf of the host county. The memorandum of agreement includes the following items:

• A statement clarifying that the volunteer work will be done in and on behalf of the host county. The volunteer understands and accepts the travel commitment between the between counties. Travel time incurred for volunteer outreach (from the home to volunteer activities) counts towards volunteer hours.
• A statement clarifying that volunteer engagement support will be provided through the host county (that the non-county resident volunteer will be a regular, active member of the host county CMG Program) including:
  o Communications links between the CMG volunteer and the CMG Program
  o CMG outreach activities links
  o CMG continuing education links
  o Volunteer reporting links
  o Volunteer recognition

The memorandum of agreement is signed as part of the application process by the CMG applicant, the hosting county CMG Program agent/coordinator and the county of residence agent/coordinator. After the initial year, active membership continues with the host county program.
Residents from a Non-Extension County (counties where the County Commission elects not to fund the Extension Partnership)

**Colorado Gardener Certificate students** – Residents may register in a neighboring county based on available space and payment of fees.

**CMG Volunteers** – Residents may not apply to or transfer to a neighboring county as CMG volunteers. If a county terminates funding of the Extension partnership, current CMG volunteers will be “released” from volunteer service. All CMG program outreach and training ends within the county.

Cross-County projects

**Cross-county outreach project** – volunteer service may include special cross-county volunteer projects. There should be a memorandum of agreement that includes the following items:

- Statement clarifying the nature of a cross-county CMG outreach project, including:
  - Nature and scope of the work in the home county
  - Communications links, related to the special project, between the volunteer and agents
  - Technical support links, related to the special project, between the volunteer and agents
  - A statement clarifying any specific division of volunteer efforts and other program support concerns between counties, as appropriate
  - A statement clarifying that volunteer engagement support will be provided through the host county (that the non-county resident volunteer will be a regular, active member of the host county CMG Program) including:
    - Communications links between the volunteer and the CMG Program
    - Inclusion in host county CMG outreach activities options
    - CMG continuing education links
    - Volunteer reporting links
    - Volunteer recognition

The memorandum of agreement is signed as part of the application process by the CMG applicant, the hosting county CMG Program agent, the county of residence agent and county directors. The memorandum of agreement remains in effect while the volunteer is active in the CMG program. It may be modified with agreement of all parties. The volunteer remains a fully active member of the host county CMG Program.

It is responsibility of the volunteer and/or resident county agent to initiate cross-county special projects.

Transfer to Another County within Colorado

Colorado Master Gardeners may request a transfer to another county’s program. Consideration will be based on recommendations of previous county staff and need for additional volunteers in the local program. Transfers are not approved for CMG volunteers who have not fully honored their volunteer commitment. In most situations, a transfer may be feasible only at the beginning of the calendar year when volunteer opportunities are readily open.
Transfers will be denied for volunteers who have failed to complete volunteer commitments (50 hours volunteer service in the apprentice year and 24 hours each additional year, plus continuing education requirements).

Under a ruling of the US Supreme Court, volunteering is a privilege, not a right. A transfer is not guaranteed.

If a transfer is approved, the CMG volunteer should participate in some type of local orientation with the agent/staff. Volunteers need to understand that county programs may be vastly different in outreach focus and operational procedures. Procedures will be different than in the previous county and the volunteer will need to shift his/her mind-set to the new county’s procedures.

Transfer From Another State to Colorado

Individuals who completed Master Gardener training in another state may APPLY to the Colorado program as follows:

1. If he/she was active within the past three years, the individual may APPLY to become a CMG volunteer. Acceptance is based on:
   - Recommendations from agent in previous state;
   - Interest and availability for volunteer work; and
   - Gardening background.
   - CMG volunteers should understand that they may request a transfer, but that there is nothing automatic or guaranteed in the process. Volunteering is a privilege, not a right.

In most situations, a transfer may be only feasible near the beginning of the calendar year when volunteer opportunities are readily available.

Nationally, MG training is not coordinated between states. States do not automatically accept training offered in other states. Each state varies in the amount of training and subject matter covered.

In Colorado, important skills for CMG work include being familiar with local soils, insects and diseases. Our training content is Colorado-based. Content even varies to some degree within different areas of the state in order to focus on local needs.

Based on the area of the nation the volunteer is moving from, the agent will require that the CMG volunteer participate in basic training sessions where content would be different in Colorado.

2. He or she applies as an Apprentice CMG, going through the application and acceptance process, basic training and volunteer service.
Failure to Complete the Payback Agreement (Apprentice)

- Those who fail to complete the minimum payback hours by October 31st of the training year will be billed for the class tuition.
- The billing rate is $15.00 per uncompleted hour, up to $500 maximum.
- Individuals with special situations may be given an extension (up to 12 months) at the discretion of the agent.

Volunteer Release

Non-renewal, release or dismissal of CMG

Under a ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court, volunteering for any organization is a privilege, not a right. Organizations have the right to select individuals they desire to work as volunteers in their organization. Organizations may release volunteers at the discretion of the organization. According to CSU Extension policy, volunteers serve at the request of CSU Extension as non-paid staff. That request can be withdrawn for any reason or no reason at any time.

Examples of situations when CMG volunteers may be released (dismissed):

- Repeated failure to give knowledge-based information.
- Repeated failure to show-up for volunteer commitments.
- Repeated failure to turn in reports in a timely manner.
- When a volunteer oversteps his/her authority.
- When safety of clients/staff/other volunteers is in danger (i.e., abusive, bullying, disrespectful, hostile or threatening behavior)
- Showing up for CMG activities under the influence of drugs (including marijuana) or alcohol.
- Other situations where the actions as a Colorado Master Gardener does not reflect well on the University.
- At the discretion of the agent or request of the volunteer
- To accommodate the training of additional people as community gardening resources
- At the discretion of the agent or request of the volunteer

VMS - Online Volunteer Management System

This program was developed specifically for Master Gardener programs by the University of California Cooperative Extension, and is used in Colorado under licensed agreement with the University of California.

All Colorado Master Gardeners are required to report their hours and contacts and the information must be recorded in the VMS system.

VMS It is not to be used for commercial business or sending spam types of communications. It is for internal CSU Extension business use only.