

## **Cornell Cooperative Extension Association Dutchess County Volunteer Position Description**

**Title:** Master Gardener Volunteer

**Description of Project (or Purpose of Position):** To provide home and community gardeners with unbiased gardening education that is based on research or reliable experience.

**Benefits:**

- enhance horticultural knowledge and skills
- build friendships with other like-minded volunteers
- derive satisfaction from helping others
- give back to your community

**Responsibilities (or Tasks):** The volunteer will abide by the rules set forth in the Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County Master Gardener Guidelines. The volunteer will represent Cornell Cooperative Extension within the community, encourage enrollment in and support for the organization.

**Anticipated Audience:** Master Gardener volunteers interact with the public via telephone, the mail, display gardens, plant sales and information booths. This program serves all members of Dutchess County, and as such, there is the anticipation that volunteers will work with people of all age levels, including minors, individuals over age 65, and/or individuals with disabilities.

**Expected Results:** Dutchess County residents will be better informed of environmentally sound gardening and best management practices and be better able to make decisions based on Cornell and other land-grant research.

**Training and Support:**

- Orientation to the Cornell Cooperative Extension System, its mission and that of the Master Gardener Volunteer program.
- Master Gardener training includes courses in gardening, Integrated Pest Management and nuisance wildlife management. There is a fee for this training program.
- Support from Horticulture Team Coordinator (Stephanie Mallozzi), Master Gardener Coordinator and Horticulture Diagnostic Lab Educator
- Access to the CCE-DC Horticulture Resource Library, fact sheets and the Horticulture Diagnostic Lab.

**After Graduation:**

- Refresher classes, field trips and workshops are offered to increase the expertise of the volunteer.
- Periodic opportunities for statewide, regional and national Master Gardener conferences are provided.
- Receive CCE-DC Master Gardener newsletter- “Garden Gate”.

**Reporting:** Volunteers are required to maintain records of program contacts and recommendations. All time devoted to volunteer activities must be recorded on a service diary and be submitted yearly.

**Time Commitment:** In exchange for training, a CCE-DC Master Gardener Volunteer is expected to contribute 100 hours of volunteer service over an internship period of 2 years, beginning January 1 after graduation. Once internship is completed, volunteers are required to contribute 30 hours of community service per year to maintain their status as an active Master Gardener.

**Qualifications:**

- a basic interest in and knowledge about 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** – Required for all enrolled volunteers.
- **Criminal Background Check** – Required for all enrolled volunteers of CCE-DC.
- **Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) Check** – Required only if volunteer wishes to use CCE-DC Association vehicles or drive others to CCE-DC MG events.

Revised 4/14 NH