MASTER GARDENER

PROGRAM GUIDE & VOLUTEER APPLICATION

MASTER GARDENER

UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

IFAS Extension

Baker County Extension Service
1025 W Macclenny Avenue
Macclenny, FL 32063
904-259-3520
904-259-9034 Fax

January 30, 2013

Dear Master Gardener Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Baker County Master Gardener Program. The enclosed "Program Guide" contains information that will be useful to you in understanding the Master Gardener Volunteer Program, as well as, the role and responsibilities of a volunteer Master Gardener. It will also give you insight into University of Florida / Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Extension Service, how it functions, and how Master Gardener Volunteers operate as part of the Extension Service. The Baker County Master Gardener Program is intended as training for extension volunteers to assist the Horticulture Agent in carrying out the Baker County Horticulture Program.

Please read the enclosed materials and complete the application form, questionnaire, and project request. **Return these pages to our office before 5 pm on July 1st, 2013.**

Once we receive these application materials, we will set up a time for an interview. Interviews will be held at the Baker County Cooperative Extension Service, 1025 West Macclenny Avenue in Macclenny (Agriculture Center). The interview should last approximately 45 minutes, allowing time to review your application and answer any questions you may have about the program. Written applications will be screened and only those applicants passing the initial screening will be interviewed and considered for the Master Gardener program. You will receive a phone call no later than one day after the interview to let you know whether you are accepted to the program. For those who are accepted, you may be required to attend an orientation to be held at our office before classes begin, and all volunteers are subject to a background check.

If you have questions at any time in this process, please contact Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent, by calling 904-259-3520 or e-mail alamborn@ufl.edu.

Thank you for your interest in the Master Gardener Program.

Sincerely,

Alicia Lamborn

Alicia R. Lamborn
Horticulture Agent
UF/IFAS Baker County Extension Service

2013

MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM GUIDE

2013 BAKER COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM GUIDE

The Master Gardener Program

The rapid urban growth in many areas of the United States coupled with increased interest in the environment and home gardening, have prompted ever-increasing numbers of homeowner questions to County Extension Service Agents. Many of these questions are seasonal in nature and relatively easy to answer assuming that one has horticultural training.

In 1972, an innovative Extension Service Agent in the state of Washington reasoned that well-trained volunteers could respond to many of the everyday homeowner questions, freeing him and his colleagues for more technical and difficult problems. Volunteers, such as Extension Homemakers and 4-H Leaders, had always been a part of the Extension Service but never in the area of homeowner horticulture. So the Extension Agent decided to select, train and certify volunteers as Master Gardeners. They soon succeeded in meeting his desired objectives - in fact, they exceeded his expectations. And so it was the Master Gardener Program began.

Since that time, the Master Gardener Program has grown and is now active in more than 30 states. Florida's program began in 1979. The program has been a tremendous success and is now active in 52 of Florida's counties. The Master Gardener Program in Florida is sponsored by the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) of which the Cooperative Extension Service is a part.

What is UF/IFAS Extension?

For a more complete understanding of this unique organization, we must go back to 1862 when the U. S. Congress passed the Morrill Act, which established colleges in each state to be financed through grants of land from the federal government. They became known as "land grant colleges," a name which persists today. These colleges would emphasize teaching practical subjects, such as agriculture and home economics. The 1887 Hatch Act provided for experimental stations at land grant colleges to conduct agricultural research.

Then in 1914, the Smith-Lever Act created the Extension Service as a part of these colleges as a means of disseminating the practical knowledge gained through agricultural research. The University of Florida at Gainesville is Florida's land grant college; The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is that part of the University, which has responsibility for the Cooperative Extension Service.

The term "cooperative" refers to the method by which extension services are funded. In Florida, three cooperating tax sources provide funds: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the State through legislative appropriations and the counties through appropriations by county governments. The word "cooperative" also implies a sharing of information generated through sound research programs at the federal and state levels.

The term "extension" defines this organization's purpose - to extend the information generated at the state and federal level to people at the county level in the form of a "service." The Cooperative Extension Service is an informal educational organization, which provides information in three (3) main areas: Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development. Community Development, Marine Biology and Energy are associated programs.

The motto and goal of the Cooperative Extension Service is "Helping People Help Themselves." Thus, you can see how well the volunteer Master Gardener concept fits into the ultimate objectives and goals of the Extension Service.

Baker County Master Gardener Program

In Baker County, the Master Gardener Program began in 1980's and provides annual multi-county training to qualify candidates as Master Gardeners. Currently 12 individuals are active in the program, having committed themselves to giving a minimum of thirty five (35) hours of volunteer service each year in order to remain active in the program.

Monthly Master Gardener meetings are held to plan activities and educate volunteers. To broaden the volunteer program in Baker County for this upcoming year, we need volunteers to help in specific areas and are asking Master Gardeners to sign up for certain volunteer job positions.

Selection to become a candidate for the Master Gardener Program is not based on prior training, education, knowledge or experience. All candidates will be considered regardless of race, gender, age, or national origin.

A sincere desire to help others, a desire to learn and a personal commitment to volunteer service are the major selection criteria involved. Basic computer knowledge and skills are also considered. Gardening experience and knowledge are always helpful, but they are by no means a requirement for selection for the Master Gardener Program.

2013 Master Gardener Training

The Master Gardener Program training is demanding and intensive, and includes educational lectures (live and recorded), hands-on group activities, demonstrations and outdoor activities. The training will be held at the Baker County Extension Office on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, during August and September (dates to be announced). A schedule will be provided at the time of acceptance to the program.

Master Gardeners are allowed to miss only one (1) class because of the quantity of information covered in each session.

Each trainee is provided with Master Gardener reference materials from the University of Florida. These materials are updated frequently so that Master Gardeners always provide the most current recommendations approved by the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida.

Master Gardeners deal only with homeowner questions. Extension Agents must respond to all commercial or professional grower questions or problems.

At the conclusion of the training, all trainees are required to take a comprehensive, open book examination on the materials covered and receive a ***passing grade of 70%.*** Only then can the candidate be awarded the title of Master Gardener.

Once certified, Master Gardeners must abide by a set of policies set out by IFAS and the Baker County Extension Office.

Baker County Master Gardener Activities

As the Master Gardeners assist the Extension Office, they are in effect "extending the Extension Service." As such, they provide advice and recommendations that have been well documented as a result of experimentation and testing and are approved by the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida.

All Master Gardener Volunteer activities must provide help to Baker County Extension and therefore, must be pre-approved by the Horticulture agent.

Previously trained, active Master Gardeners provide their (35) hours of volunteer time in many ways including working in the office answering gardening questions, writing newsletter columns and fact sheets, working in the greenhouse, making home problem-solving visits, working with youth in the 4-H program, creating educational exhibits, maintaining the demonstration gardens and teaching arboretum, speaking to local organizations, and assisting at the Baker County Fair.

New Master Gardeners will be signing up for one or more of the available positions in order to complete their (75) hour requirement. We are currently in need of volunteers with computer skills to help answer gardening questions and work on other projects in the office, as well as help maintain the demonstration gardens, arboretum, and

greenhouse crops. Another option for Master Gardener volunteers will be assisting and facilitating youth gardening programs.

Learning is on-going for Master Gardeners. Regular on-going training sessions give Master Gardeners the opportunity to gain additional timely gardening information. Training is often coupled with the monthly Master Gardener meetings. There are also field trips led by the horticulture agent to various functions around the state. In past years, we attended the UF Floriculture Trials, UF Poinsettia Field Day, visited wholesale and retail nurseries in north Florida, manned the Master Gardener booth at EPCOT Theme Park's International Flower & Garden Festival, and toured specialty farms such as the Greathouse Butterfly Farm. Additionally, once a year, UF/IFAS conducts Advanced Master Gardener training. This voluntary session provides in-depth information on gardening subjects and is presented by State Extension specialists and other authorities. It is an excellent opportunity for Master Gardeners to sneak a look into the future of horticultural research at IFAS.

BAKER COUNTY MASTER GARDENER POLICIES

The title "Florida Master Gardener" is to be used only and exclusively in the Florida Cooperative Extension Service Master Gardener program in which the trained and certified Master Gardeners answer gardening questions. Thus, ***Master Gardeners are expected to identify themselves only when doing unpaid volunteer educational work in this program***.

In addition to the University training, Master Gardeners have diagnostic support via County Extension Agents and State Extension Specialists. Master Gardeners also are provided Cooperative Extension Service publications, which discuss University recommendations.

Florida Master Gardeners are advised not to advertise their names or their places of business, nor be listed on the advertisements of business places as Master Gardeners. This is a University of Florida-Florida Cooperative Extension Service public service program providing unbiased information.

Appearing as a commercial activity, having association with commercial products, or giving implied University or Extension Service endorsement of any product or place of business is improper. In making recommendations, which include the use of chemicals (e.g., insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides), Florida Master Gardeners are to follow published Florida Cooperative Extension Service recommendations. Use of other pesticide recommendations is not approved. Cultural problems, which are not specifically covered by Cooperative Extension Service recommendations, may be handled by suggesting treatments, which an experienced Master Gardener considers appropriate. Questions concerning commercial production of crops and pest control on such crops are to be referred to the local County Extension Agent.

A ***$50.00*** fee ($60 for couples) is required once you are accepted into the training program. This fee will be used to purchase training materials and supplies.

A Florida Master Gardener must attend the prescribed hours of instruction and pass an examination administered by the Florida Cooperative Extension Service before becoming a certified Master Gardener. ***This certification is restrictive in nature in that it is valid only when the individual is participating in the Florida Master Gardener Program and for one year only. If an individual ceases active participation, then the certification as Master Gardener becomes void.*** New certifications will be issued each year only to those individuals who make a commitment for participation in the program for the coming year. Those not continuing in the program will not be recertified and should be aware that if they represent themselves as Master Gardeners, they are violating their original commitment to the Florida Cooperative Extension Service.

The training and experience gained by participation in the Florida Master Gardener program is valuable and may rightfully be listed and featured as qualifications when seeking employment. Once employed, and while serving as a paid employee, or if self-employed, Master Gardeners should not display credentials or give the appearance of being a Master Gardener at the place of business.

Experienced Master Gardeners are likely to receive invitations to speak before groups. ***Please do not seek payment for such speaking appearances***. Your work is much appreciated by the Florida Cooperative Extension Service and Baker County gardeners who have received or will receive your counsel.

BAKER COUNTY PROGRAM GUIDELINES

RECERTIFICATION as an *Active* Master Gardener- a Master Gardener may recertify for participation in the program for another year by:

(1) Committing to thirty five (35) hours of volunteer work to be completed in one year, and

(2) By completing or having completed ten (10) hours additional horticulture training. Examples of this are: Master Gardener training for new trainees, Master Gardener Advanced Training, horticulture classes held at the extension office, horticulture seminars, educational field trips, etc. Check with Horticulture Agent to see if the training is acceptable.

INACTIVE STATUS - an *inactive* Master Gardener is one who is unable to commit to an additional thirty five (35) hours at present but would like the opportunity to possibly recertify him/herself in the future. The following policies apply:

(1) An inactive Master Gardener is one who is in good standing, having completed his/her original commitment of seventy five (75) hours volunteer service the first year and can recertify at any time.

(2) Inactive Master Gardeners are *not* eligible for Master Gardener Advanced Training, monthly mailings, or Master Gardener educational meetings.

(3) For inactive Master Gardeners to become reinstated, they must complete ten (10) hours of horticulture training and receive a ***passing grade of 70%*** on a comprehensive examination on the materials covered in basic Master Gardener training.

Pre-Approval

Master Gardeners will be required to have all projects pre-approved. The Horticulture Agent will decide which projects are assigned to which volunteer and will provide approval.

Required Attendance at Monthly Meetings

Master Gardeners will be required to attend at least 4 monthly meetings per year. Volunteer hours will not be given for attendance at monthly meetings. However, learning hours may be available if there is an educational portion during the meeting. Meetings are currently scheduled for the first Monday of the month at 9:00 am.

Reporting of Hours

Master Gardeners will be required to report volunteer hours monthly. Volunteer Management System (VMS) Training will provide details on reporting hours. This online system requires all volunteers to have an active email address, although a computer at the Extension Office may be used to report hours. Active Master Gardeners must complete their volunteer hours by Dec. 31st of each year. New Master Gardeners will have exactly one year from graduation to complete their 75 hours.

Requirements of Baker County Master Gardeners

- ✓ Must be outgoing and work well with the public and co-workers
- ✓ Have a desire to learn and help others
- ✓ Must follow directions and be flexible (we often get requests on short notice)
- ✓ Must have time to volunteer; in the past, those working full time were unable to complete the required hours.
- ✓ Must have a computer and email: this is the only way to disseminate information between meetings in a timely manner and report volunteer hours.
- ✓ Each year, all Master Gardeners are required to work on a project (whether an ongoing project or a new project), and are also required to conduct an educational program or demonstration, or work in the office answering homeowner questions.
- ✓ New Master Gardener volunteers will be asked to work a minimum of 25 hours in the office answering homeowner questions and work on an educational project.
- ✓ Since Master Gardeners work with youth, yearly background checks are necessary.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A. & M. University Cooperative Extension Program, and Boards of County Commissioners Cooperating.

2013 Master Gardener Volunteer Application

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY

NAME: Mr. Mrs. Ms. _____

ADDRESS: _____
Mailing Address City ZIP

PHONE: home_____work_____cell_____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

- Are you currently employed? YES NO Occupation:
- Education: High School College Degree & Major Other advanced training/degree

  _____

- Have you ever pleaded "nolo contendere" (no contest) to or been convicted or found guilty (even if adjudication withheld) of a first degree misdemeanor or a felony?

  YES NO

  Offense and disposition: _____

  (Please explain fully.) _____
  _____
  _____

- Have you applied for Master Gardener training before? YES NO

  If so, when & where? _____

- Please list any specialized gardening interests or hobbies you have (such as vegetables, house plants, ornamentals, lawn care, landscaping, bonsai, carpentry, computers, writing, etc.)

  _____

- What gardening affiliations do you have (garden clubs, horticultural societies, etc.)?

  _____

- Do you do volunteer work for other groups or organizations? YES NO

_____

- Why do you want to become a Master Gardener?

_____

- Do you own a personal computer YES NO
- Do you check email: daily weekly several times daily rarely
- Please list any specialized skills you have that can be used in the Master Gardener program e.g., publicity, construction, grant research or writing, irrigation systems, etc.

_____

- Do you have any physical restrictions that prevent you from working in a demonstration garden or in a greenhouse? NO YES Please explain

_____

Please indicate the reasons that are important to you for becoming a Master Gardener by placing a check in the box provided:

☐ 1. I will have the opportunity to receive useful training.
☐ 2. I will become a part of the University of Florida-IFAS.
☐ 3. I will have the opportunity to share my knowledge with other gardeners.
☐ 4. I will gain practical experience that can help me get a job.
☐ 5. I will be able to provide a service to other people in my community.
☐ 6. I can get a tax credit for my volunteer work.
☐ 7. I will receive free instruction and materials.
☐ 8. I will be able to increase my knowledge in the area of gardening.
☐ 9. I will gain a great deal of personal satisfaction.
☐ 10. I will be able to creatively use my free time.
☐ 11. I will be recognized by people in my community.
☐ 12. I will be able to gain new skills as a gardener.
☐ 13. I will be certified by the University of Florida Cooperative Extensive Service.
☐ 14. Other reasons not mentioned above:

_____

_____

We are very pleased that you are interested in the Master Gardener Program. There are many reasons why individuals want to be a part of this effort and program. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Return the Master Gardener application, questionnaire, and project request form to Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent, Baker County Extension Office, 1025 West Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny, Florida 32063.

MASTER GARDENER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. The Master Gardener Program is sponsored by:
    1. The University of Florida
    2. Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
    3. IFAS (Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences) - University of Florida
    4. Florida Division of Plant Industry

2. The Cooperative Extension Service was created by a legislative act called:
    1. The Morrill Act (1862)
    2. The Smith-Lever Act (1914)
    3. The Hatch Act (1887)
    4. The Larson Act (1898)

3. The Cooperative Extension Service is funded by:
    1. The Federal Government
    2. The State of Florida
    3. Baker County
    4. All of the above

4. Baker County Master Gardeners are required to volunteer how many hours?
    1. 25 hours for as long as they remain active
    2. 75 hrs the first year, & 35 hrs each year after that to remain active
    3. 50 hours total for as long as they remain active
    4. 50 hours for each year they remain active

5. Baker County Master Gardeners are required to attain how many additional hours of horticultural training in order to recertify for another year?
    1. 0 hours
    2. 5 hours
    3. 10 hours
    4. 15 hours

6. The main purpose of the Master Gardener Program is to increase or extend the service and output of information offered by the Cooperative Extension Service?
    1. True
    2. False

7. The Cooperative Extension Service provides information to the community primarily in the areas of:
   1. Home Economics
   2. 4-H Youth
   3. Agriculture
   4. All of the above

8. Master Gardeners make <u>most</u> pesticide recommendations using information generated from:
   1. Public sources such as books, magazines and newspaper articles
   2. Personal, practical experience
   3. Florida Cooperative Extension Service
   4. All of the above

9. The title “Master Gardener” is to be used only in association with the Master Gardener Program and not for commercial purposes.
   1. True
   2. False

10. The Master Gardeners are called upon to extend information to people involved in commercial agricultural/horticultural endeavors.
    1. True
    2. False

11. List 2 topics to be covered in Master Gardener Training class.
    1
    2.

12. What do the letters IFAS mean?

13. After the year in which training is completed, active MG status is maintained when a Master Gardener completes_____ volunteer hours plus _____learning hours.

14. In Baker County, how often must MG volunteer hours be reported?

15. Name two attributes of a successful Master Gardener volunteer.

    1.
    2.

Project Requests

What Do You Want to Work on as You Volunteer this Year?

Please request the projects that you feel qualified for and/or interested in. Final assignments will be made by the Horticulture Agent.

- ☐ Work in Extension office answering homeowner questions. This would involve working a 3-hour shift on a specific day. A calendar will be available to schedule your time shift.

- ☐ Give gardening presentations (approved by the horticulture agent) to various groups (garden clubs, churches, neighborhood associations, or civic groups) on topics that you are knowledgeable on and feel comfortable teaching. These groups sometimes request speakers on a variety of topics.

- ☐ Write articles for Master Gardener section of the horticultural newsletter (1/2 pg or less).

- ☐ Work teaching youth to garden during youth gardening programs held at area schools.

- ☐ Work in greenhouse or shade house performing grower tasks such as potting plants, watering, pruning, deadheading, etc.

- ☐ Work on drawing up a landscape plan to create a *demonstration garden* at Extension office.

- ☐ Work in the demonstration gardens; assist with weeding, pruning, fertilizing, planting, etc.

- ☐ Help with 4-H Summer Day Camps. Plan garden related activities, crafts, and games. Work to execute program.

- ☐ Act as Fundraising Coordinator for the Baker County Master Gardener Program.

- ☐ Work as club leader for the Jr. Master Gardener 4-H Club, teaching youth from specific curriculum, and be a liaison between Horticulture agent and 4-H agent to facilitate this program.

- ☐ Assist with Jr. Master Gardener Program – assist club leader and/or act as a guest speaker using related curriculum.

- ☐ Create educational displays that can be used during demonstrations for the public.

Please list any other projects that you'd like to volunteer for in 2013-2014:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

From the list above, please identify at the top three projects that you can commit to doing during your first year. Remember, we reserve the right to make a final determination of which areas you will be assigned based on the skills of each of our Master Gardeners.

1-

2-

3-

Please return the volunteer application, questionnaire and project request to the Baker County Extension Office by the designated time.

Thank you for your interest in the Master Gardener Program and for taking the time to fill out these forms. I look forward to working with you in the future and getting to know you better.

- Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent

MASTER GARDENER
UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
IFAS Extension

107 Mehrhof Hall
PO Box 110675
Gainesville, FL 32611-0675
Phone: (352) 273-4521
Fax: (352) 392-1413
http://mastergardener.ifas.ufl.edu

Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Application

Citizens interested in volunteering for the UF/IFAS Extension Florida Master Gardener program must complete this application. Acceptance is contingent on return of this form to your county Extension office for submission and clearance through appropriate screening processes. These processes are in place to help ensure the safety and well-being of all Extension program participants.

General Information

Name: _____ Male ☐ Female ☐

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ Zip: _____

How long have you lived at this address? _____ years _____ months

(If less than five years, attach a sheet listing all previous addresses for the past five years.)

Day phone: _____ Evening phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

List ***work*** experience during the past 5 years, with most recent experiences first. Add a page if needed.

Employer	Position/Title	City/State	Years

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List *volunteer* experience during the past five years, with current or most recent experiences first. Identify work with youth and community groups. Add a page if needed.

Organization/Group	Role/Title	City/State	Years

Personal Interest

Why are you interested in volunteering?

References

List three references who have knowledge of your qualifications but who are not related to you.

Name	Mailing Address	Phone

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Have you been accused or convicted of a criminal offense in the past seven years? Yes ☐ No ☐
If yes, explain:

Have you ever been accused or convicted of a crime involving a minor (including a deferred imposition of sentence?) Yes ☐ No ☐
If yes, explain:

Note: A criminal record will not necessarily disqualify an applicant. A criminal record will be considered as it relates to specific responsibilities of the volunteer role.

I certify that the above information is correct. I authorize the University of Florida IFAS Extension Service to request information for conducting a background check and to contact references. I authorize a check of my driver's license record as needed. I understand that misrepresentation or omission of the facts requested is just cause for non-appointment as an Extension program volunteer. My signature and information below are necessary to process this application.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Date of Birth

_____
Driver's License Number (State)

Thank you for your application. Return the application to the county Extension office at your earliest convenience.