Who We Are

About Us

The Virginia Cooperative Extension is your local connection to Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University.

Supported by

Extension Master Gardeners are supported by our association, the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, a 501(C)(3) non-profit, which collaborates with VCE to further our parallel goals of providing community education about sustainable gardening practices.

Contact Us

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An Extension Master Gardener is...

...an individual who, after receiving specialized training in environmental horticulture through the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), acts as a volunteer educator within his or her community. An Extension Master Gardener (EMG) provides education on all aspects of sustainable landscape management, including turf and soil fertility management, vegetable and ornamental gardening, trees and shrub care, storm water control, and insect and plant disease management.

What is an Extension Master Gardener?

What does the Volunteer Training Program include?

Developed by Virginia Tech horticulture specialists, VCE Agents, and the state Master Gardener Program Coordinator’s office, the Volunteer Training Program consists of two parts: 60 hours of classroom training, and a 60-hour hands-on internship. In class, trainees learn about basic botany and soil science, woody and herbaceous plants, vegetable gardening, Integrated Pest Management practices, lawn care, etc. The internship includes hands-on experience in our demonstration gardens, at our plant clinics, and with public education.

“What was terrific? The mix of experts that came to talk with us. Also, the support from existing Master Gardeners. It shows we are joining a vibrant, motivated community.” 2017 Trainee

How much does the Volunteer Training Program cost?

Tuition is $255 for City of Alexandria and Arlington County residents, and $305 for residents of other jurisdictions. Priority is given to Arlington and Alexandria City residents. Partial scholarships are available.

Who should take the class?

If you want to be a volunteer educator, love gardening, and want to protect our environment by sharing what you have learned with our community, this class is for you! Once certified, EMGs teach the community about our best management practices for urban agriculture and sustainable landscaping. EMGs retain their certifications by annually completing 20 volunteer hours and 8 hours of continuing education.

When and where will the 2019 Volunteer Training Program be held?

In 2019, our classes will mainly take place on Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Classes will run from September 10th through November 19th.