



Become a Master Gardener

Master Gardeners grow more than plants – we grow knowledge, community, and stewardship.

Dear Prospective McLennan County Master Gardener,

Do you enjoy gardening and want to deepen your knowledge while making a meaningful impact in your community? The **McLennan County Master Gardener Program** offers an opportunity to do just that.

Through research-based training provided by **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension**, Master Gardeners learn practical horticulture skills and share that knowledge with others across our county. Our volunteers support educational gardens, partner with schools and community organizations, answer gardening questions from the public, and help cultivate a greater appreciation for gardening and the natural world.

This year, we are excited to welcome a new class of Master Gardener interns. Whether your interests include vegetables, native plants, pollinators, landscapes, or simply becoming a more knowledgeable gardener, the Master Gardener program provides an engaging learning experience and a community of people who share your passion.

Our next **Master Gardener Intern Class begins May 27**, and we would love for you to consider joining us. Please note: we will have limited spots for this class.

On the following page, you will find important information about the **application process, training schedule, and program requirements.**

Applications will be accepted March 17 through May 4. We encourage you to review the program information and submit your application during the application period if the program feels like a good fit for you.

We look forward to welcoming the next class of Master Gardeners who will help share horticultural knowledge and strengthen our gardening community.

Warm regards,

Debbie
Debbie Fredricks
Intern Class Co-Chair

Louie
Louie McDaniel
Intern Class Co-Chair

The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is implied. Educational programs of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas, cooperating.



McLennan County Master Gardener Intern Program Information for Applicants

2026 INTERN CLASS – AT A GLANCE

- Application window: **March 17 - May 4**
- Application deadline: **May 4, 4:00pm**
- Information Session: **April 28, 3:00-5:00pm** (*presentation starts at 3:30pm*)
- Intern Class Program fee: **\$285**
- Class start date: **May 27** Class end date: **September 30**

Training Schedule & Location

Intern classes will be held on Wednesdays from 1:00-5:00 PM at the McLennan County AgriLife Extension Office in Waco. Classes will run from late May through September.

The training schedule will also include an **all-day field trip on June 10**.

Program Cost

The class fee for the 2026 Intern Class is **\$285**, payable by check to *McLennan County Master Gardeners*. This fee covers instructional materials, including the **Texas Master Gardener Handbook**, and other program expenses.

How to Apply

Applications will be available on our website and at the **McLennan County AgriLife Extension Office** during the application period.

McLennan County AgriLife Extension Office
4224 Cobbs Drive
Waco, Texas 76710

Completed applications must be submitted to the Extension Office along with the **\$285 class fee**, payable by check to **McLennan County Master Gardener Association**. All materials must be received by the application deadline to be considered.

Please note: we will have limited space in this year's intern class.

Payments will be held until the class selection process is complete. If you are not selected for the class, your payment will be returned or destroyed.

If you withdraw after submitting your application but before classes begin, **\$100 of the fee is non-refundable**. Once classes have started, the class fee is **non-refundable**.

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Training Program Overview

The Master Gardener Intern Program provides approximately **75 hours of horticultural training** through classroom instruction, demonstrations, and opportunities for **hands-on learning** led by horticulture specialists and experienced Master Gardeners.

Training topics include soil science, plant selection, vegetable gardening, landscape practices, entomology, plant diseases, and other horticultural subjects relevant to our region.

Certification Requirements

To become a certified Master Gardener, interns must complete a minimum of:

- 60 hours of classroom instruction
- 60 hours of volunteer service on approved Master Gardener projects

Volunteer activities may include educational gardens, community outreach, public education programs, and other horticultural initiatives that serve McLennan County.

Additional Requirements

Applicants must:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Be able to participate in volunteer activities throughout the year
- Have access to a computer, internet, and email
- Complete a background check if accepted into the program

Maintaining Master Gardener Certification

After certification, Master Gardeners maintain active status by completing each year:

- 20 hours of volunteer service on approved projects
- 10 hours of continuing education
- Attendance at three in-person business meetings
- Annual dues of \$12

Contact Information

MCMGA website: <https://txmg.org/mclennan>
McLennan County Texas AgriLife Extension Office

Phone: **254-757-5180**
4224 Cobbs Drive, Waco, TX 76710

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Application for Intern Class Training



INSTRUCTIONS: Please type or print clearly all answers to all questions as completely as possible.

The Texas Master Gardener program is a community volunteer service organization and as such, new class members are required to submit to a background check. We are looking for individuals with the time and inclination to volunteer for different and varied horticulture-related programs.

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ MI: _____

Preferred Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ Zip Code _____

Email address: _____

Daytime Phone: (____) _____ Evening Phone: (____) _____

Work Phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Place of Employment: _____

Your Role There: _____

If retired, what was your profession? _____

Have you previously applied or been in a Master Gardener program? Yes _____ No _____

If yes please supply the year & county/state you applied in: _____

How did you learn about the Master Gardener program? _____

Please tell us why you would like to become a Master Gardener. _____

Becoming a Master Gardener is important to me because: **(0-Not Important, 5-Most Important)**

	I will be able to increase my knowledge of gardening.		I will be able to creatively use my free time.
	I will be able to gain new skills as a gardener.		I will be certified by Texas AgriLife Extension Service.
	I will have the opportunity to receive useful training.		I will receive free instruction and materials. (excluding initial class).
	I will be able to provide a service to other people in my community and/or neighborhood.		I will gain gardening experience that can help me get/keep a job.
	I will have the opportunity to share my knowledge with other gardeners.		I will be recognized by people in my community.
	I will gain a great deal of personal satisfaction.		I can get a tax credit for my volunteer work.

Please indicate when you would be available to volunteer for Master Gardener projects.

Mornings _____ Afternoons _____ Evenings _____ Weekends _____

Mon. _____ Tues. _____ Wed. _____ Thurs. _____ Fri. _____ Sat. _____ Sun. _____

Will you be able to complete the **60** hours of **class instruction** to become certified? Yes _____ No _____

Will you be able to perform **60 volunteer service** hours to become certified? Yes _____ No _____

Recertification each year requires 20 volunteer hours on approved MCMG project(s), 12 hours of Continuing Education, attendance at a minimum of 3 meetings per year, and payment of annual dues.

Which of the following service areas are you interested in? Please mark all that apply:

“H” for high interest “A” for average interest “L” for low interest

Ornamental plants & demonstration gardens		Develop & present programs to groups wanting a speaker	
Vegetable demonstration gardens		Soil and compost development	
Plant sales (working sale, growing plants for sale)		Pollinator & Butterfly garden development & education	
Plant propagation (for plant sale inventory)		Master Gardener websites/social media	
Work with children/youth education programs		Newsletter editor or writer	
Junior Master Gardener classroom gardens		Education articles for publication/all media	
'Ask A Master Gardener' help desk taking horticultural questions from citizens		Award writing	

Other interests; please specify: _____

Your Gardening Experience: _____

Years of Gardening Experience: _____

Years of gardening in McLennan County: _____

Type of gardening experience and related training: _____

What areas of gardening are you interested in?

Entomology _____ Pathology _____ Soils _____ Vegetable _____ Herbs _____ Tree Care _____

Lawn Care _____ Flower Gardening (annual/perennials) _____ Xeriscape Gardening _____

Water Conservation _____ Landscape Design _____ Fruit and Nut Production _____ Texas Natives _____

Other _____

List areas of gardening specialization or hobbies you have (e.g. flowers, vegetables, ornamentals, house plants, community gardening) public speaking, grant writing, wood working, etc. _____

List areas of other areas (non-gardening) specialization or hobbies you have (e.g. public speaking, grant writing, accounting, wood-working, etc.) _____

List any experience in working with community organizations you may have: (e.g. schools, church youth, senior citizens, hospitals, etc.) _____

Please list any group affiliations you are a member of: (e.g. garden clubs, community gardens, plant societies, etc.) _____

Please return your completed application with your check of \$285.00 by 4pm on May 4, 2026.

Please make checks payable to **McLennan County Master Gardener Association** and indicate in the memo line **“2026 MCMG Intern class”**.

Return your application in person or via mail to
McLennan County Master Gardener Association
c/o McLennan County AgriLife Extension Office
4224 Cobb Dr., Waco, Texas 76710

*Applications must be **received** by May 4, 2026 at 4pm.

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Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement

We appreciate your commitment to the Texas Master Gardener program. Your satisfaction and progress in this volunteer position are important to us. Please read the following expectations and indicate your willingness to cooperate by signing at the end of this form. This form must be signed and filed with the county Extension office and will need to be updated every three years. Volunteers not adhering to all items in this agreement may forfeit their certification as a Master Gardener volunteer.

I understand that I am trained by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in the field of Horticulture, and I am expected to extend research-based information to the public on behalf of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. In exchange for the minimum of 60 hours of Master Gardener Training provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, I will:

- Commit to a minimum of 60 hours of volunteer service to the horticultural programming efforts in McLennan County within one year to become a certified Master Gardener.
- I understand that to maintain active status as a Master Gardener Volunteer, I must volunteer 20 hours annually after my intern year and gain 12 continuing education hours annually, and a minimum of 3 business meetings annually.
- Provide a record of this service as directed by the Master Gardener Program Coordinator.
- Comply with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Background Check policy. The background check is to be renewed every three years.

Please read the Texas Master Gardener Management guide found at <https://txmg.org/administration/management-guide> for further details on the Master Gardener program, volunteerism, and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension.

When acting as a Texas Master Gardener volunteer, I agree to:

- Consistently exhibit a positive professional manner toward and about Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the Master Gardener Program, the Master Gardener Coordinator, other Master Gardener volunteers, other Texas A&M AgriLife employees, and clients.
- Carry out and discharge all duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Avoid any conflict of interest
 - Not use my Master Gardener status to promote any commercial activity or private business.
 - Volunteer's efforts at their place of employment will not be considered volunteer service to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.
- Recommend and use (when functioning as a Master Gardener) Texas A&M AgriLife approved information for any public pesticide, herbicides, fertilizer, or cultural practices.
- Provide my own transportation and pay my own expenses incurred as part of official volunteer activities. (Expenses may be tax deductible with proper documentation.) Some County Master Gardener Associations may assist volunteers with expenses for certain types of events. Check with your local Master Gardener Program Coordinator for more information on specific association policies and procedures.

- Act in accordance with the highest standard of ethics:
 - Not physically, verbally, or sexually harass/abuse anyone
 - Refrain from illegal or unsafe behavior
 - Dress appropriately and not use harsh language
- All work by a Master Gardener - text, written, spoken, images, photos, illustrations - is expected to result from the Master Gardener's thought, research, or self-expression. All outside work sources (text, written, spoken, images, photos, and illustrations) must incorporate appropriate attribution. Failure to comply is plagiarism and puts the Texas Master Gardener program and the Master Gardener at risk of copyright infringement.

In regard to Master Gardener Coordinators, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Recognize the responsibilities of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service staff/ Master Gardener Coordinator in setting program priorities, standards, and direction. Specific projects for the performance of the volunteer work are determined locally and should reflect local needs.
- Refer all commercial horticulture inquiries to the Master Gardener Coordinator or other Extension staff.

In regard to Master Gardener Colleagues, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Welcome volunteers from all backgrounds
- Respect and safeguard the individual rights, competencies, safety, and property

In regard to Clients, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Provide quality service to the public without regard to socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

I further understand that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service employees are held to the highest standard of respect and ethical behavior toward all. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will hold employees accountable for providing the following:

- Provide training, supervision, and direction to Master Gardeners through the local county Extension office.
- Communicate expectations and responsibilities of the program to volunteers.
- Match volunteer skills and interests with volunteer opportunities within the county.
- Support Master Gardener volunteers and the local Master Gardener Association.
- Provide continuing education opportunities.
- Provide access to Extension horticulture reference materials and reasonable access to Extension professionals.



- Uphold and cultivate a trustful relationship between staff and volunteers.
- Reassign and/or terminate, if necessary, any volunteer who does not uphold Texas Master Gardener policies, procedures, guidelines, and/or values.

Grievance Policy

In the event of a disturbance in the program or between individuals, it is expected that you will visit with your agent to communicate the facts of the events. Your agent will consider all positions and determine what is best for the program. Further, if you have a conflict with your agent, it is expected that you will visit with the agent first about your perspective and try to resolve the situation with them. If a resolution is not found, please contact Jayla Fry, Texas Master Gardener Coordinator, who will determine the best course of action. You will be contacted within two weeks of the initial communication.

I understand that, as a volunteer, I will not be acting as a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service employee and will not receive pay or employee benefits. I also understand that I am not covered by workers' compensation laws in connection with my volunteer affiliation. I understand and agree that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and I both have the right to end my volunteer relationship with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at any time, for any reason, and without advance notice.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and am familiar with the Texas Master Gardener Management Guide (both the volunteer and agent).

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Agents Signature

Date

Agents Printed Name

Information taken from: Purdue, Rutgers, Georgia, Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, California, & Texas (Montgomery Co. and Denton Co.) Master Gardener Programs.

“Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.”