

Become a Master Gardener

Do you like to garden? Are you interested in helping others? Do you like to volunteer to help others? Would you like to learn more about gardening? If you answered yes to some or all of these questions, you may want to look into the OSUE Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

This program provides intensive training in horticulture to interested Ohio residents who then volunteer their time assisting with educational programs and activities for Ohio residents through their local Ohio State University Extension county office. Volunteers are not required to have gardening skills or knowledge; a passion for learning about gardening and sharing this knowledge with others is a must! Working with county OSUE personnel, Master Gardener Volunteers provide such educational services to their communities such as: answering gardening questions from the public; conducting plant clinics; gardening activities with children, senior citizens, or disabled persons; beautifying the community; developing community or demonstration gardens; and other horticultural activities.

The OSUE Master Gardener Volunteers' mission statement is, "We are Ohio State University Extension-trained volunteers empowered to educate others with timely research-based gardening information".

The Master Gardener Volunteer program began in Ohio in the 1970's. Today, more than 3,845 Master Gardeners volunteer their time and services in Ohio counties. Last year Master Gardeners spent over 164,000 hours leading projects, giving horticultural presentations and raising gardening awareness. Their volunteer efforts resulted in \$4 million worth of community service contributions throughout Ohio.

OSUE Brown County Master Gardener Volunteers spent 1,111.25 hours serving our community and drove over 10,000 miles to volunteer. As a part of remaining an Active Master Gardener Volunteer we are required to attend 10 hours of continued education and our group of 17 MGVs turned in a whopping 388 continuing education hours!

You could qualify to be an Ohio Master Gardener Volunteer if: 1) You want to learn more about plants and gardening; 2) You are eager to participate in a practical and intensive training program; 3) You enjoy sharing your knowledge with others; and 4) You have the time to attend training and serve your community as a volunteer educator.

We hope to have a new training class starting in the fall after the fair. If you would like to add your name to be contacted with information about that upcoming class, please call the OSUE office in Brown County at 937-378-6716.

The garden seminars that the OSUE Brown County Master Gardener Volunteers host at the Mt. Orab campus of Southern State Community College started in 2012 and continues to be of our favorite endeavors. We have needed to change our schedule for the remainder of our seminars being held at the Mt. Orab campus this year. We will be meeting on the third Wednesdays for February, March and April. Christine Tailer will talk about **Starting Seeds with Float Beds on Wednesday, February 19, 2020**. Bill Pettit will talk about **Growing Big Pumpkins on Wednesday, March 18, 2020**. Susan Gilver will talk about **Straw Bale Gardening on Wednesday, April 15, 2020**. James Morris will present a program on **Integrated Pest Management** at the Western Brown High School's Community Room, on **Thursday, May 21, 2020**. We hope that you can mark your calendars and join us for the remaining garden seminars!

What are the benefits of becoming an OSUE Master Gardener Volunteer? The list for me, personally, would have to include: meeting new gardening friends, access to research-based gardening information, and the opportunity to spread the joy of gardening in my community! And yes, it is fun!