



Master Gardener Volunteer Apprentice Position Description

General Description: The Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Master Gardener Program educates New Yorkers about the art and science of growing and caring for plants. The Master Gardener Volunteer Apprentice (MGVA) role is to support the Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties (CCESO) to build relationships with community audiences and to integrate local experience and research-based knowledge in the area of horticulture, home gardening, food security, and environmental stewardship. MGVA's report to the Horticultural and Natural Resource Educator.

Responsibilities may include:

- Answer telephone inquiries and assist office visitors with plant/insect identification or diagnosis.
- Assist with establishing and maintaining educational demonstration gardens at the CCESO facility.
- Assist teachers, volunteers and/or children with gardening education projects in school or club settings.
- Interpret information from CCE bulletins and fact sheets for the general public.
- Distribute CCE and Extension approved research-based information to the public.
- Assist with CCESO educational programming, such as talks, workshops, and trainings.
- Represent CCESO within the community.
- Assist with the CCESO annual plant sale and other fundraising activities.
- Serve as a horticultural resource for the CCESO Association.

Training and Support:

- Cornell Garden-Based Learning Library (CGBLL), or Core Preparation curriculum is required. This is a minimum of 55-hours of training that includes a core qualifying course in horticulture and related topics (as adapted online and/or for classroom) to enhance expertise and ability to communicate to the public information about ecological gardening and related topics consistent with Cornell University, other land grant resources, and Cornell Cooperative Extension. Orientation to CCE, CCESO and the MGVA Program.

Apprentice Period Guidelines:

- After completing the MGVA Core Preparation Curriculum and passing the qualifying exam, you become a MGVA. MGVA will have a MGVA mentor as needed and/or appropriate.
- MGVA are expected to report 40 hours of volunteer service within the first year of service, and at least 20 hours all subsequent years. Professional Development and/or Continuing Education must account for 10 of the 20 hours annually. Attendance at two Master Gardener meetings per year is required.
- MGVA's must complete all agreements, trainings, and evaluations required by CCESO. This includes the Annual Volunteer Agreement, Code of Conduct, Acknowledgement of Risk Waiver, Sexual Harassment Training, and Background Check according to CCE Volunteer Involvement Policy & Procedure.

Qualifications:

- Basic interest in and knowledge about ornamental horticulture, flora, and food gardening.
- Passion for acquiring, sharing, and teaching horticultural knowledge and skills.
- Willingness to help meet the goals of CCESO MGVA Program.

Benefits:

- Satisfaction of serving one's community through the educational mission of CCE.
- Interaction with people with shared interests in community horticulture and home gardening.
- Deeper understanding of the horticulture, the allied sciences, and the art of garden.