

## Master Gardener Training and Activities

The Master Gardener Training Program is demanding and intensive. Formal classroom constitutes more than 75% of the training period. Subjects include basic botany, soils, fertilizers, vegetables, entomology, citrus, turfgrass, use of (and alternatives to) chemicals, ornamentals, diseases and other related topics. All information is based on the knowledge and research from the University of Florida.

Master Gardeners deal only with homeowner questions. Extension faculty responses to all commercial and professional grower concerns. Upon completion of the training period, all Master Gardener trainees are required to pass a comprehensive examination on the materials covered throughout training.

Master Gardener activities include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Disseminating science-based information through Ask the Master Gardener plant clinics
- Answering telephone calls or other clerical work
- Develop and deliver presentations for garden clubs/civic associations
- Gardening in the UF/IFAS Demonstration Garden at the Sumter County Extension Office
- Gardening while teaching youth at the Sumter County Youth Center
- Setting up and cleaning up for meetings and demonstration booths
- Staffing extension events and booths
- Writing informational articles for newspapers and other media
- Fundraising organization and participation
- Working in our community gardens
- Participating in various educational field trips
- Other various approved activities within Sumter County

Since the Master Gardeners assist the Extension Agents and staff, they serve as an extension of UF/IFAS Extension. As such, they provide advice and recommendations, which have been well documented through experimentation and research and are approved by the University of Florida/IFAS.

The Master Gardener Program is an opportunity to learn and help others. We hope that you will become a part of this “growing” experience.

For more information on the UF/IFAS Extension Sumter County Master Gardener Volunteer Program, contact Lisa Sanderson, Residential Horticulture Agent/Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator, at [lsanderson@ufl.edu](mailto:lsanderson@ufl.edu) or Donna Lester, Horticulture Program Assistant, at [dml Lester@ufl.edu](mailto:dml Lester@ufl.edu), or call UF/IFAS Extension Sumter County at 352-569-6862.