

An Introduction to

Being a Master Gardener™ Volunteer

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Dear OSU Extension Service Master Gardener Volunteer:

Welcome to Oregon State University Extension Service! OSU Extension is charged with providing informal educational programs for all Oregonians by delivering objective, research-based information to help solve problems, develop leadership, and manage resources wisely. You are key to helping us achieve that mission.

In your role as a Master Gardener, you join about 30,000 Oregon volunteers working in Extension's six major program areas. OSU Extension volunteers contribute about 2 million hours annually, helping Extension reach over 1 million Oregonians. That is equivalent to nearly 1,100 full time employees. Extension volunteers have tremendous impact in their state and communities.

It is important to us that you directly benefit from your voluntary association with the OSU Extension Service. These benefits may include improved personal skills, increased self-confidence, community recognition, and a variety of educational opportunities.

We welcome you with enthusiasm and appreciation, knowing from past experience that volunteers help us to do a better job.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott".

A. Scott Reed
Dean and Director



Extension Service

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Congratulations on your decision to become an Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener!

The OSU Extension Service Master Gardener™ Program is one of the largest and most successful Master Gardener programs in the nation and is often used as a model by other states. Oregonians have been receiving reliable, accurate and up-to-date information on home horticulture from master gardeners since 1976.

Although gardening is a common bond among master gardeners, the Master Gardener™ Program is about much more. Like all Extension Service volunteer programs, our primary purpose is community service through education. A lofty task indeed, but one that brings with it great rewards.

As an OSU Extension Service master gardener you will have the opportunity to increase your horticultural knowledge, as well as a chance to help others increase theirs. It is this give and take of information that makes our program special. The Master Gardener™ Program also provides an avenue for developing your leadership, communication, and technical skills.

We look forward to working with you and hope that your new affiliation with Oregon State University and the Extension Service is an enjoyable and educational endeavor.

Sincerely,

Your OSU Community Horticulture Staff

An Introduction to Being a Master Gardener™ Volunteer

The Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener™ Program is a voluntary, educational program designed to meet the community's gardening needs. Its purpose is to teach people more about growing plants. Specifically, it aims to provide information and technical assistance about gardening and horticulture through qualified, certified volunteers.

Applicants receive formal training from professionals in plant science, horticulture, pest control, and gardening. To become an OSU master gardener, you must complete the training program, pass an examination, and volunteer a specific number of hours of public service through your local master gardener program.

The OSU Extension Service

The Oregon State University Extension Service is a partnership between OSU (a land grant university located in Corvallis) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This partnership cooperates with local governments and citizens to extend information from the university to citizens in each of Oregon's 36 counties.

As stated in the 1914 Smith Lever Law, the objectives of the Extension Service are "to aid in diffusing among people of the U.S., useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same." In other words, we are here to "help people help themselves."

Who are OSU Extension staff?

Central staff, housed at OSU's main campus in Corvallis, consists of specialists, program leaders, administrative leaders (including regional directors), an associate director, and the dean and director of Extension. Specialists provide information in areas

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such as soils, turf, home food production, youth development, insects, ornamentals, food safety, family finance, and many more. Program leaders provide guidance in five general areas: agriculture, family and community development, forestry, 4-H youth development, and marine resources. The associate and regional directors provide administrative leadership and support administration of county Extension offices.

Local county staffs consist of Extension agents, program assistants, support staff, administrators, and volunteers. Their role is to identify community needs through advisory groups, to provide resources, and to conduct programs to help citizens improve their lives. They provide information through written publications, videos, websites, news stories, community classes, and other methods.

Extension educators (agents) in county Extension offices are assigned special program areas in one or more counties. Agents can have one or more program assignments, such as horticulture and 4-H. Each agent is an Oregon State University staff member and is part of an OSU department. For example, an agent assigned to community horticulture usually is a faculty member of the Department of Horticulture.

Volunteers play a valuable role in assisting the Extension Service. When you are in an Extension office, you will find a busy staff working with volunteers in many program areas. In addition to horticulture and agriculture, there are volunteer programs in food preservation, youth development, wildlife stewardship, recycling, woodland management, and family and community leadership. OSU Extension volunteers contribute \$3 million worth of education and service to their communities each year.

The extension system nationwide

The nation's Cooperative Extension Service (CES) was established by Congress in 1914 to distribute information developed by land grant universities and research stations to citizens. Each state's extension service functions in cooperation with county, state, and federal governments. The organization is different in each state, however. In Oregon, for example, we are known as the Oregon State University Extension Service. In the state of Washington, extension is known as Washington State University Extension. In Idaho, it is known as the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension System.

IMPORTANT DATES IN EXTENSION'S HISTORY

- The nation's extension system began in 1862. Here is how it started:
- 1862—The Morrill Act created the Land Grant College and University System to provide education in agriculture and mechanical arts fields.
 - 1887—The Hatch Act established facilities in each state in order to conduct research to improve agriculture and related areas.
 - 1890—Congress established an additional 13 colleges in the South for higher education of blacks.
 - 1914—The Smith Lever Act established the Cooperative Extension Service in order to distribute information developed by land grant universities and research stations to citizens.

The state extension services differ from state departments of agriculture in structure and function. The function of the CES is to provide education and technical resources to enable local residents to identify and solve concerns and problems. All CES functions are coordinated through each state's land grant university system.

State departments of agriculture, on the other hand, are regulatory and promotional departments of state government. In Oregon, for example, the Department of Agriculture's function is to implement rules governing the sale of agricultural products, including turf and ornamentals; to regulate the use of pesticides; to develop procedures for controlling epidemic pests; and to promote the sale and use of Oregon's agricultural products. The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is under the direction of the Governor's office.

Although the original intent of the Cooperative Extension Service was to improve agricultural practices, its job has become more than that. Across the country, in classrooms, fields, and greenhouses; on paper; through websites; over the phone; and on foot, extension agents teach and distribute information. Extension publications, available free of charge or for a nominal fee, are available from local cooperative extension offices, by mail, and on the Web. They cover everything from storing geraniums in the winter to rejuvenating an old orchard.

History of the Master Gardener™ Program

In recent decades, a decline in the number of commercial agricultural producers in urban counties has led to a serious drop in funding for many state extension services. At the same time, more amateur gardeners have begun asking for information as they learn of extension's educational resources.



In 1972, Dr. David Gibby, a Cooperative Extension horticulture agent in King and Pierce counties (Washington state), was completely overwhelmed by requests for gardening information. To solve this problem, he proposed finding gardeners who, in exchange for specialized training in horticulture, would volunteer to answer questions for the public.

The program was an immediate success, with the newly trained "master gardeners" putting in far more hours answering other gardeners' questions than anyone could have anticipated. Dr. Gibby's first budget was about \$300. Cooperative Extension administrators didn't know if the program would be successful and couldn't risk much money on such a different sort of venture.

Today, there are extension master gardener programs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 4 Canadian provinces. About 110,000 people have been certified as master gardeners after receiving from 30 to 150 hours of instruction in everything from basic botany to the reduction of pesticide use.

What makes these volunteers special is that they are trained mostly by experts associated with land grant universities. These experts offer the latest research and technical assistance to their trainees. These trained volunteers then multiply the university's knowledge and share it with their county's citizens.

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The focus of volunteer training is to teach horticulture, and in particular home gardening, in a holistic manner. Training emphasizes sound gardening practices that minimize negative impacts on the environment.

Master gardeners staff horticulture hotlines and plant clinics to diagnose plant problems and maintain demonstration gardens. Additional educational programs can be found on pages 13–14 under “Master gardener jobs.”

The Oregon program

The Oregon Master Gardener™ Program is one of the oldest in the nation. It was started in 1976 by Duane Hatch, Lane County Extension agent, and Gray Thompson, Clackamas County Extension agent. Duane and Gray “Oregonized” the program to fit our needs. They began training classes in Lane and Clackamas counties with about 36 people.

Presently the Master Gardener™ Program has participants in 30 of Oregon's 36 counties, with about 3,000 active volunteers each year. The program is managed in each county by the Extension agent responsible for horticulture education programs or by a designated program assistant.

In 1978, Ray McNeilan, urban and home horticulture Extension agent in Multnomah County, became the state Master Gardener™ Program coordinator. Ray developed the Oregon program into a nationally known model. Ray retired in 1996, and a new program coordinator was hired. Dr. Ann Marie VanDerZanden served the program from 1997 to 2003. Jan Powell McNeilan has served the program since 1987, first as the program assistant for the statewide program and the Master Gardener™ Program in the Portland metro area. From 1996 through 2007, Jan was the consumer horticulture agent for the three counties in the metro area and has served twice as the interim statewide Master

Gardener™ Program coordinator during vacancies for a total of 4 years. In 2007, Gail Langellotto was selected to serve as the new statewide coordinator. Jan has retired, and a 28-year-long “McNeilan” involvement has given way to new leadership, new ideas, and the expectation that Oregon will remain a leader in national programs.

The thrust of Oregon's program still is to help local Extension offices serve their clientele, but county program managers continue to find new roles for master gardeners. New programs include youth gardening, adaptive gardening, public seminars, civic function to make communities more livable and enjoyable, and finding ways to use our environmental resources in a sustainable way. For more insight into the breadth of the Master Gardener™ Program, check the statewide program website at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg/>

Who are our clients?

Call them clients, customers, the audience, the public, homeowners, taxpayers, walk-ins, or phone callers. They are people. And the people we serve (“we” meaning Extension and master gardeners) trust us to give them straight answers supported by the University's research-based work. They look to us to solve their



problem or answer their question. From their point of view, their issue or question is the most important one.

Dealing with these taxpaying, stockholding customers is the same as any other service job. Offering them good service is the best way to get repeat customers.

Are customers always right? Of course not, but they *always have rights*. They have the right to courteous treatment, a response based on respect, and an honest answer, even if the answer is “I don’t know.” It is reasonable for them to expect us to research the question and formulate the best answer in a timely manner.

They *do not* have a right to abuse you or to be discourteous. If you do not feel comfortable handling a question, refer the client to an Extension agent.

Oregon State University does not discriminate. We offer services without regard to age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran’s status.

If we have customers, we must have a product. Our product is information. We extend information derived from the research-based university/United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) system. Our customers have confidence in the reliability and credibility of our information. This confidence is the foundation upon which the Extension Service is built.

Volunteers in partnership— Master Gardener™ Program policy guidelines

Volunteers are defined as staff who give time and expertise without receiving or expecting monetary pay. The purposes of involving volunteers are to increase the effectiveness of Extension agents and to provide personal development opportunities for each volunteer.

As you complete your training, you will become an important source of information for others. Usually you will deal

one-on-one with other gardeners. To be effective, you need to be a knowledgeable horticulturist, a detective or trouble-shooter, and a teacher.

You will go through a thorough training program on horticulture and related topics. But the job of a master gardener is people-oriented and often requires good “people skills.” As part of the OSU Extension Service’s volunteer staff, you will work in many capacities, in nearly all cases communicating ideas to others and serving Extension’s clients.

Training

Formal master gardener training is provided by the Extension Service. Instructors are agents, specialists, and/or experienced master gardeners. As needed, other professionals may be involved in the training program. Each master gardener trainee is expected to participate in every session.

The training program provides a balanced, integrated practical course in plant science. Special topics, based on local needs, are part of the curriculum. A balance of lecture and hands-on activities is used. Core training is conducted during a 2- to 3-month period in accordance with local needs. Follow-up (in-service) training is provided as needed or as opportunities occur.

Examinations

In order to become a master gardener, each trainee must pass a “final examination.” Examinations are prepared by course instructors and the local Extension agent. The test is



given to trainees at the next-to-last class, to be completed at home and reviewed at the final class. Examinations are open-book and are designed to test trainees' ability to retrieve information from class notes, the master gardener handbook, and other horticultural resources. A 70 percent score is needed to pass.

Fees

A fee is charged for the training program and/or for training materials. The fee is determined by the Extension agent in charge of the local training program and may vary from one county to another depending on local situations.

Certification

After completing the training program and passing the final examination, each master gardener is given a badge certifying that he or she has completed the training. After fulfilling the volunteer commitment, the master gardener receives a certificate, generally given at a graduation ceremony. Certification as a master gardener is valid for 1 year. Recertification is encouraged and can be accomplished by attending training sessions or by testing. Recertification is at the discretion of the county Extension agent and/or staff. Recertification opportunities vary by county.

Volunteer commitment

Your voluntary work assignment generally will be based on a mutual decision of your local Extension agent or program assistant and yourself. Many options are possible, and it is hoped that each master gardener's talents can be used effectively to benefit the gardening community.

Specific locations for the performance of volunteer work are determined locally and reflect local needs. The intent of the payback program is to provide unbiased information to the public while utilizing community resources.

You may accept expenses, per diem, or honoraria, if offered. However, the work you perform for the OSU Extension Service is free and voluntary.

During your volunteer work, you will be supported by OSU Extension agents. This support includes follow-up training, mentoring, and technical assistance. You also will be provided Extension publications as needed for your work.

Use of the master gardener title

The Oregon State University Extension master gardener title is to be used only and exclusively in the Extension volunteer Master Gardener™ Program and not for commercial purposes. You may identify yourself as a master gardener only when performing volunteer work in this Extension-sponsored program.

The training, experience, and certification gained in the Master Gardener™ Program may be listed as qualifications when seeking employment.

Liability

As an OSU master gardener, you are an agent of the University, so you are covered by the University's liability insurance. This coverage applies only when you are acting in the official capacity of master gardener. See the position description on page 16 for specifics on what is considered "official master gardener capacity."

Recommendations

When performing master gardener activities, you may make recommendations only in the areas of home horticulture, home vegetable and fruit gardening, and home yard and landscape care. Do not make recommendations in other areas for which you are not qualified. Refer questions concerning commercial crops to your county Extension agent.

When you make recommendations that include the use of pesticides (insecticides, fungicides, or herbicides), you must follow published OSU recommendations (from the PNW *Insect, Plant Disease*, and *Weed Management* handbooks, which are updated annually). Refer questions about cultural practices and problems not specifically covered by OSU recommendations to the local Extension staff.

See page 20 for a sample master gardener pest control recommendation agreement.

Volunteer rights and responsibilities

Volunteers working in any OSU Extension program have certain rights and responsibilities.

As a master gardener volunteer, you have the right to:

- Have rewarding, suitable jobs with clear expectations and support
- Be provided orientation, training, support, supervision, and evaluation
- Be kept informed and be listened to by Extension agents
- Be trusted and respected by Extension agents and coworkers
- Be recognized appropriately for your efforts
- Be treated as a coworker
- Be valued as a person capable of unique contributions

As a master gardener volunteer, you have the responsibility to:

- Accept assignments suited to your personal interests and skills
- Participate in orientation and training programs
- Learn about Extension policies, programs, and staff
- Uphold the policies of the OSU Extension Service
- Act in a professional manner, which includes respecting confidences
- Be accountable to and supportive of Extension when involved in Extension work

- Complete assignments once assumed
- Participate in staff and program evaluations
- Be willing to use and teach new ideas

Communication skills for master gardeners

As a master gardener, you will work with a variety of people. In order to fully understand a client's question and then suggest a solution, you must be able to communicate effectively. Effective communication consists of:

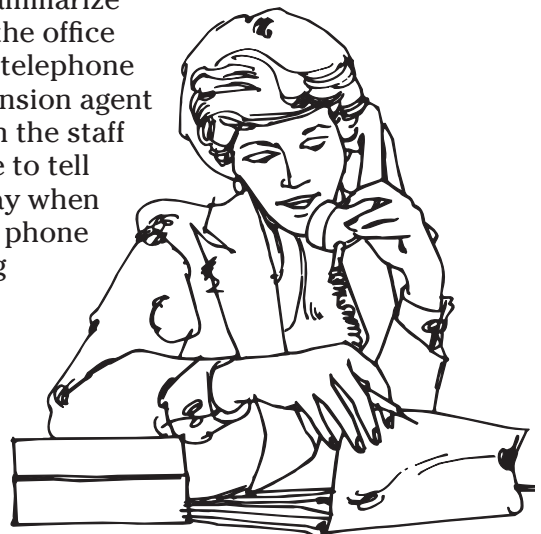
- Concentrating and being involved in the communication process
- Anticipating
- Listening
- Asking for specifics
- Withholding evaluation
- Paraphrasing or restating what was said
- Taking notes

Even with these steps in mind, effective communication can be a challenge if the object of discussion (the client's garden or plant) is not present, and you must deduce the problem from a verbal description.

Using the telephone

Be sure to familiarize yourself with the office procedure for telephone use. Your Extension agent or someone on the staff should be able to tell you what to say when answering the phone and how to log calls.

Every time you make or receive a telephone call as a master gardener,



you are representing the Oregon State University Extension Service. The impression you create can be lasting and may determine whether the customer will continue to turn to the Extension Service for assistance.

Phone skills, like any other skill, can be improved with practice. Consider these points when answering the phone as a master gardener volunteer:

- Answer promptly and identify yourself as an Oregon State University Extension master gardener volunteer.
- Use a pleasant voice.
- Be considerate and give the caller your complete attention.
- Use simple, straightforward language and avoid technical terms and slang.
- Enunciate clearly, separate words, and pronounce each syllable.
- Talk at a moderate rate and volume, but vary the tone of your voice.

When you must leave the line to obtain information, give the caller the option to wait on hold or have you call them back. Transfer a call only when necessary. If you must transfer a call, explain why. Be sure the caller wants to be transferred. If he/she does not, offer to have someone call back.

When answering for someone else, be tactful. Comments such as “He hasn’t come in yet,” or “She’s just stepped out for coffee” can give the wrong impression. It’s better to say, “Mr. Jones is away from his desk right now. May I ask him to call you?” When you take a message, be sure to write down the name, time, date, and telephone number. Don’t hesitate to ask callers to spell their name or repeat their phone number.

You occasionally will speak with a caller who is having a bad day and takes it out on you. Remain calm and don’t take

the comments personally. As long as you are trying to help a caller in a courteous manner, you are doing your job. Retaining your sense of humor is an important part of being a master gardener!

Diagnosing plant problems over the telephone

Effective communication is not just a matter of speaking clearly and listening closely. As you listen to a client’s description of an ailing houseplant, you are trying to understand a situation that you may not have experienced. The situation is very familiar to the caller, however, and it is very easy to leave out details when describing something familiar. The client may not know that the color of the leaf edges or the proximity of heating ducts to the plant are important clues to the problem.

You can improve communication by asking specific questions. By thinking of all the possible symptoms and conditions that might match the description of the ailing plant, you can pose questions that should yield enough information to find the solution.

It is a good idea to summarize your understanding of what you heard and repeat it to the client. Don’t be afraid to say something like, “I’m going to describe, in my own words, the condition of your plant as I understand it. Stop me

if I have it wrong.” The important point is to express your understanding so the client can compare it with his or her knowledge of the situation.

Surprisingly, your horticultural expertise can be a stumbling block to communication.

You might know so much about a topic that you don’t bother to listen to everything the client says. Or you



might identify the problem and possible solutions, but not be able to describe recommendations in terms the client can understand. Germination, propagation, and fertilization are very nice terms, but they are useless if they draw blank looks. There is nothing wrong with basic, down-to-earth terms such as “grow,” “dig,” and “water,” so go ahead and use them.

Although some people would dispute this statement, no one knows everything. As a master gardener, you know a great deal about horticulture, but remember that one of the most important things you know is how to find answers. In your work at plant clinics or answering the county Extension office phone, you will have access to excellent resource material. If a client’s problem is too complex to solve readily with your knowledge and available resource materials, take the person’s name, address, and phone number. Then find time to answer the question thoroughly or see that it is answered by an Extension agent or a specialist.

Writing tips

Master gardeners have plenty of opportunity to use writing skills. Some master gardeners help produce publications for local gardening needs, others prepare scripts for slide sets, and some write newsletters and columns for the local newspaper. Timely horticultural information is available for news releases and columns from the OSU Extension and Experiment Station Communications Department.

Organization and simplicity will help you achieve a well-written product. You can save a lot of time and crumpled paper by starting with a clearly defined purpose and outline.

An easy way to understand the purpose of your writing is to create the title. A good title tells, in a few words, what the subject of the work is. “All About Grapes” indicates a great deal of material

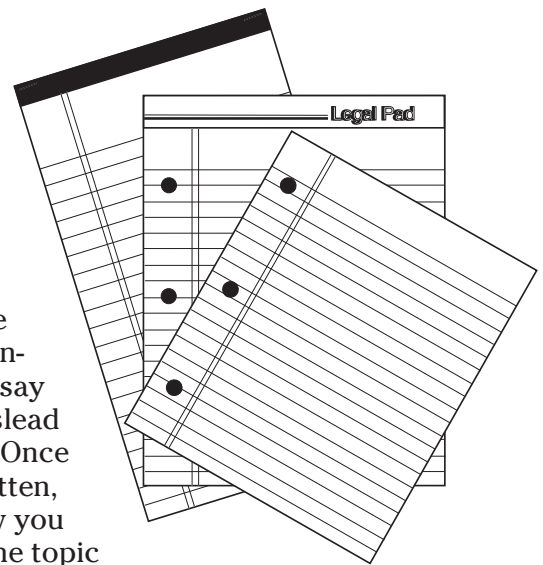
is going to be covered, including history, varieties, culture, and uses of the fruit. If you are writing only about the culture or pruning of grapes, say so. Do not mislead the audience. Once the title is written, you know how you should limit the topic and what to cover.

The roughest outline is better than none, and its bare-bones structure makes it easy to see the logic of the work you are about to create. It is much easier to repair holes in the logic at the outline stage than later, when hard-won paragraphs, or even pages, may have to be removed or rearranged. It’s a lot like pruning—easier done when there are no leaves on the tree.

After the title and outline are complete, start writing. Address each topic on the outline, and soon the job will be finished. Remember to use a topic sentence for each paragraph. Then explain each topic on the outline and back up what you say with information from professionals.

If you really get stuck, examine the idea you are trying to express. Perhaps there is nothing more to say about it. Perhaps it is irrelevant or misplaced.

Simplicity is essential to clear writing. Even though vague phrases invade business letters, news writing, television, and radio, there is no need to promote the trend. For instance, “We would like for you to stop by our office” can be replaced with “Please come into our office.” The same message is conveyed with half as many words.



If you find yourself struggling over a choice of words, try telling someone what you want to say. As you say it, listen to yourself. You probably are using the words you need to write the same explanation. Avoid slang, jargon, and flowery or obscure vocabulary. You won't go wrong with the simplest English words used correctly. The goal of good writing is to communicate, not to confuse.

Perhaps the most common misunderstanding about writing is that it can be easy. While it is true that some people are more adept at writing than others, those who write well usually admit that it takes work. Just as good gardeners must get their hands dirty, good writers spend hours rewriting, and constantly use dictionaries and grammar books. They are not looking up words you've never heard of. They are checking the actual meaning of "cultivate" or whether there is a hyphen in "damping-off." Make sure there is a good dictionary in the office and don't be afraid to use it.

When producing new materials from old, be certain not to infringe upon a copyright. If you want to use copyrighted material or even parts of that material (including art), you must obtain written permission from the publisher (and often from the author or artist as well). Remember that materials published on the Web are covered by copyright laws just as printed materials are. Most Extension materials may be used for Extension purposes even if they are copyrighted, but you still should obtain permission.

Public presentations

Because the Extension Service provides information and educates the community, you will have opportunities to appear before the public if you desire. Not only

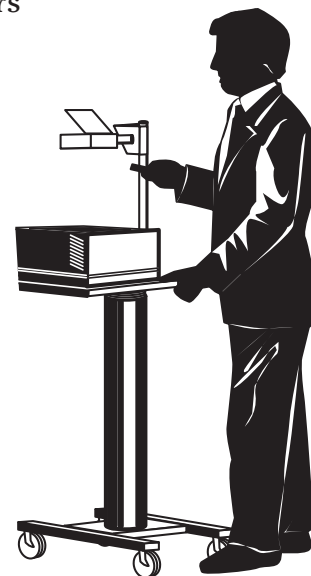
do master gardeners meet the public at plant clinics, but many master gardeners become so knowledgeable about a specific horticultural subject that they are invited to give talks to clubs and groups. This is a wonderful way to help Extension because there often is more demand for such talks

than agents can meet themselves. Agents and master gardeners also are called upon to provide workshops, demonstrations, and tours.

Public presentations take preparation to be successful. Don't be fooled by a casual delivery. Many people who seem relaxed and able to speak without effort actually have spent many hours achieving this effect by preparing and practicing. After you have created your presentation, it is important to spend some time rehearsing it.

To plan a presentation, consider:

- Who is the audience and what do they already know about the subject?
- Is the topic timely and appropriate for the audience?
- What is the purpose of the presentation?
- Will you use visual aids (slides, charts, computer projection systems, chalkboards, plant specimens, etc.)?
- How long do you have to present your topic?



Most public presentations have four components: title, introduction, body, and summary.

- The title should be short, descriptive, and interest-catching if possible, but most of all, it should tell what the subject is.
- The introduction tells the audience who you are and elaborates on the goal/content of the talk. This part of the presentation often is the key to success or failure. It sets the tone for the remainder of the program and should hook the audience's interest.
- The body of the presentation contains the substance and should satisfy the curiosity that brought the audience to the presentation. Use research-based information and cite references whenever possible.
- The summary restates the major points of the presentation in a logical sequence without details. This part should be short and clear.

Following a presentation, be prepared to answer questions. Repeat questions for the audience when they are difficult to hear or understand, then answer them.

Advertising public presentations is very important. Well-prepared programs too often fail to reach a large audience for lack of adequate advertising. Word of mouth is not sufficient. Announce public events in newsletters, newspaper feature articles, on radio or television public service announcements, in paid advertisements, and on posters displayed in appropriate locations.

Radio and television

Extension agents have been presenting educational radio and television programs for many years. If you have interest or experience in this area, you might want to volunteer to do a program or help with a program. Remember that although you can reach a large audience with one radio or television program, it will require a lot

of time to prepare. Also, demand for information from the Extension office might increase as more people become aware of its resources. Make sure to consider all of these issues before undertaking a project.

Master gardener jobs

As a master gardener, you agree to do work related to horticulture education for your county Extension office. You may do any of a variety of jobs. This variety exists because master gardeners bring a wealth of expertise to the program. Answering the phone and dealing with questions of "walk-in" clients are the most common tasks for master gardener volunteers. These tasks require both good technical and people skills. However, Oregon master gardeners fulfill many other roles, including:

- Extending gardening information to the general public through demonstration gardens, speaker's bureau presentations, seminars or workshops, and community beautification projects
- Providing gardening information through plant clinics at farmer's markets, county fairs, garden centers, and nurseries
- Working with youth in school outreach programs, special at-risk youth projects, and youth gardens
- Working on adaptive gardening projects with the elderly and physically challenged
- Working with immigrant or limited-income participants by translating Extension gardening publications for non-English speakers and developing classes about growing produce at home
- Working on special projects such as trial research gardens,



- plant or insect collections, horticulture-based slide collections, garden tours, spring fairs, and plant sales
- Providing office assistance such as clerical or computer work and organizing master gardener activities
 - Working with Extension agents to promote the Master Gardener™ Program by developing press releases, photographing master gardener events, and designing brochures

If you can think of a job that will utilize your talents, please suggest it to the agent with whom you are working.

Master gardeners as managers

Master gardener volunteers make it possible for Extension agents to reach more people than they could alone. With expanded program services, agents are more efficient but also have more responsibility. Thus, it is important that master gardeners help manage their own program. While the Extension agent and/or program assistant heads the program, a master gardener volunteer can coordinate volunteers' activities. In some counties, there are several coordinators, each responsible for a different program need.

If you have management skills or think you could become a good manager, express your interest to your Extension agent. Here are some signals that you might be manager material:

- Are you the one with suggestions on how to schedule plant clinics?
- Do you help coordinate staffing by matching jobs with workers?
- Do you often outline a group's tasks in order to get a job done?

If you do become involved in mid-management positions within the Master Gardener™ Program, remember the power of delegation. Effective delegation is essential to an organization's success. Effective delegation includes:

- Defining the assignment in terms of results
- Defining the level of control you have over the project
- Communicating guidelines and expectations
- Making resources available
- Establishing checkpoints throughout the project
- Determining criteria for success in collaboration with the delegatee

The goal of effective delegation is to build a network of support volunteers to accomplish project goals. The result benefits everyone involved in the program.



Do master gardener volunteers burn out?

Being a master gardener volunteer is similar to any other job, hobby, or avocation. Just because you are volunteering doesn't mean you can't burn out. As you get deeply involved in being a master gardener, you sometimes will need to step back and reevaluate why you first got involved with the program and why you continue with it. Being a master gardener volunteer should be an enjoyable and rewarding experience that provides the

opportunity to further your horticultural knowledge, enhance others' understanding of horticulture, and create a network with like-minded individuals.

You might be approaching burnout if you suffer from any, or a combination of, the following “syndromes”:

- *The Workaholic Syndrome*
“I must work hard all the time.”
“I must work harder than others.”
- *The Super Syndrome*
“I must be everything to everyone.”
“I must be able to help everyone.”
- *The Empty Pot Syndrome*
“I must always try to help if asked.”
- *The Striving Syndrome*
“I must always keep striving to improve myself in every way.”
- *The Tunnel Vision Syndrome*
“I can never be wrong.”
“I expect you to agree with me and see the world as I do.”
- *The “I Don’t Count” Syndrome*
“My needs aren’t as important as yours.”
“It’s selfish to take care of myself.”

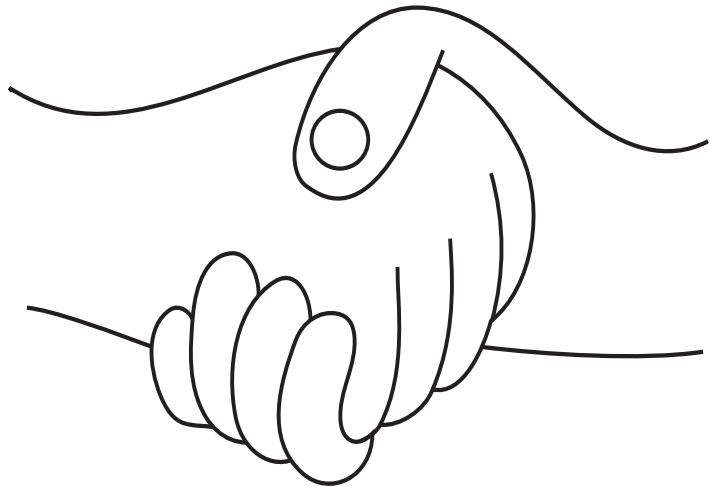
Can a volunteer be fired?

As an OSU Extension Service master gardener volunteer, you are expected to follow the same personnel rules that all Extension employees follow. Oregon State University, and hence the OSU Master Gardener™ Program, does not tolerate discriminatory behavior, sexual harassment, or alcohol or drug use on the job. We will do all we can to provide you with an enjoyable volunteer experience, but sometimes we must “deselect” folks who cannot follow the basic rules of Oregon State University or do their job as a master gardener volunteer properly.

The master gardener paycheck

As you know, volunteers receive no monetary compensation, but we hope the gratitude of your fellow paid workers in the Extension office and state staff will help you feel your work is appreciated. Certainly, the number of citizens who come to you with plant problems indicates that you and your knowledge are needed.

As you do your job, you probably will begin to notice some of the “pay” that volunteers traditionally enjoy. You are, after all, a master gardener, and your horticultural and communication skills qualify you to do interesting work. Your sense of accomplishment and pride in a job well done are assets that only you can collect.



Position description

Title	Oregon State University Extension Service master gardener volunteer
Purpose	To provide OSU Extension Service educational programs on sustainable horticulture (including home vegetable and fruit gardening, lawn and landscape maintenance, pest control, and associated topics) through trained and certified volunteer master gardeners.
Brief description of the position	<p>Answers general public questions and inquiries about gardening, landscape maintenance, pest control, and related topics by telephone; at clinics, demonstrations, workshops, or informal classes; or in other ways possible and practical.</p> <p>Cooperates with and assists local OSU Extension staff.</p> <p>May assist in preparation of specific educational resources.</p> <p>Keeps appropriate records.</p>
Requirements	<p>Must be available to participate in the training program provided for master gardener volunteers.</p> <p>Must be available to pay back the training time during the year of training, equal to the hours of training.</p> <p>Must be able to effectively communicate with the public by telephone, personal contact, group contact, or writing.</p> <p>Should have some knowledge and skills in basic horticulture and related areas.</p> <p>Should enjoy working with people.</p>
Supervision	<p>The county Extension agent with responsibility for the local master gardener program provides overall supervision and support. If no agent in the county has this responsibility, program support and supervision comes from the Master Gardener™ Program state coordinator.</p> <p>A program assistant, if available, may manage training and/or activities of the volunteer master gardener staff.</p>

Glossary of master gardener terms

Advanced training—Classes conducted by community horticulture teachers and others who are considered experts in a particular field. These classes are offered to veteran master gardeners to maintain and update their knowledge of horticulture and recent advances in the field. Advanced training classes often count toward recertification.

County Oregon Master Gardener Association (OMGA) chapter—Each county with a master gardener program also has an OMGA chapter. The chapter is made up of local master gardeners. It provides in-service training and ongoing educational opportunities for master gardeners. It promotes educational programs for the local gardening public in the form of seminars, community classes, spring fairs, harvest fairs, and other special events. The chapter continues the fellowship for master gardeners after the training is finished.

Experiment station—See OSU Agricultural Experiment Station.

Extension agent—See OSU Extension agent.

Extension office—Each county or group of counties has an Extension office staffed by agents, support staff, and volunteers. In most county Extension offices, the funding for staff comes from a combination of funds from Oregon State University and the local county. The partnership between the county and University makes the Extension Service possible. In most counties, a portion of master gardener payback time is spent in the local Extension office answering gardening questions.

Extension Service—See OSU Extension Service.

Gardener Mini-college—An annual 4-day conference cosponsored by the OSU Extension Service and OMGA. It includes classes, workshops, and seminars on horticultural topics, a quarterly meeting, and an annual awards banquet. It is an opportunity to receive advanced training and to enjoy and learn from master gardeners from around the state. It also is open to the gardening public.

Master gardener—See OSU Extension Service master gardener.

Master gardener handbook—Textbook used in master gardener training and as a reference for answering gardening questions.

Master Gardener™ Program—A teaching and management program for volunteers who want to expand their home horticulture skills and who agree to give of their time to extend gardening knowledge to others. Its purpose is to provide OSU Extension Service educational programs in home horticulture to community members through trained and certified master gardener volunteers. Direct questions regarding the Master Gardener™ Program to your county Extension agent or program assistant. In cases where there is no county agent, direct program questions to the Master Gardener™ Program state coordinator.

Master gardener training—A series of weekly, day-long training classes in community horticulture taught by Extension personnel and other experienced teachers. Training is held every year during the winter. Trainees agree to volunteer a comparable number of payback hours during the following year based on how many hours of training they receive.

Mentor—A veteran master gardener who agrees to support one or more new

master gardeners during training and payback. A mentor also helps facilitate the transition from new master gardener to active chapter member.

MG—Abbreviation often used for master gardener.

Oregon Master Gardener Association (OMGA)—A formal, statewide, non-profit organization whose purpose is to enhance and supplement the OSU Master Gardener™ Program. The statewide county chapters together make up the state association. OMGA is financed by dues contributed at the county chapter level. OMGA cosponsors the annual Gardener Mini-college with OSU and publishes a quarterly newsletter. Representatives from each chapter meet with OMGA state officers at quarterly meetings held in various locations around the state. These meetings provide a networking opportunity and a forum for chapters to share ideas and activities.

Oregon State University—The campus is located in Corvallis, and each county office is an “extension” of the University. The University has three missions: resident teaching, research, and extension. You now are part of OSU’s volunteer staff. Congratulations! (School colors are orange and black; the school mascot is the ferocious beaver.)

OSU Agricultural Experiment Station—The principal agricultural research agency in Oregon, headquartered at Oregon State University. Experiment stations are located in several areas around the state, and each one typically specializes in research relevant to commercial agriculture in that area. In some cases, commercial horticulture Extension agents are housed at experiment stations.

OSU Extension agent—A person employed by Oregon State University to extend information and services to the citizens of Oregon. Each agent

has a particular area of expertise and an assigned area (one or more counties) and is a faculty member in an OSU department. Most, but not all, Extension agents with master gardener responsibilities are members of the OSU Department of Horticulture.

OSU Extension Service—The educational outreach arm of Oregon State University that “extends” the research and services of Oregon State University to the citizens of Oregon. As part of the land grant university system, the OSU Extension Service serves both rural and urban dwellers. Extension Service personnel include Extension agents, program assistants, specialists, support staff, and a large number of volunteers like yourself. Extension works in five program areas: Agriculture, Family and Community Development, 4-H Youth Development, Marine Science, and Forestry. You are part of the Agriculture program area.

OSU Extension Service master gardener—A person who has completed the master gardener training offered by the OSU Extension Service and who performs volunteer activities in the Extension office and the local community. You should wear your MG badge when you are representing yourself as a master gardener.

OSU Extension Service Master Gardener™ Program state coordinator—Responsibilities include helping agents develop teaching programs for their master gardener volunteers and coordinating activities and needs of a statewide nature.

Payback—Time spent by master gardeners in volunteer work for the Extension Service. It “pays Extension back” for the instruction received in the initial courses.

Plant clinic—In most counties, master gardeners set up plant clinics at various locations in the county on a specific day, usually for several hours,

and answer gardening questions from the public.

PNW handbooks—Reference books published annually by OSU that specify control methods for insects, diseases, and weeds. There are three handbooks: the *PNW Plant Disease Management Handbook*, the *PNW Insect Management Handbook*, and the *PNW Weed Management Handbook*.

Recertification—A program to ensure that veteran master gardeners update their knowledge and skills. It can be

accomplished by attending certain training sessions or by testing and is at the discretion of the Extension agent and/or staff. Recertification opportunities vary by county.

Veteran MG—A master gardener who has completed training and payback and continues to volunteer for the program. (Politically correct term for an old MG as opposed to a new MG. Also known in some counties as a “perennial MG.” Check your local dialect!)

Oregon State University Extension Service master gardener pest control recommendation agreement

The protection of our environment is of concern to everyone. Misuse of pesticides can have adverse effects on the environment and on the personal safety of gardeners and their families. Quick chemical treatments are not a substitute for sound gardening practices. Given the variety of plantings and diverse maturity dates of crops in a home garden, it is difficult to comply with preharvest intervals, application rates, and other restrictions associated with specific pesticides. Therefore, alternative pest control methods may be more appropriate.

Oregon State University, other land grant universities, and federal and state agencies focus substantial amounts of time and money toward developing agricultural pest management methods that rely less on the use of pesticides. OSU master gardeners are encouraged to become familiar with these alternatives, which are a part of Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

OSU master gardeners should explore all types of research-based information appropriate to their local climate. Clients are given several possible methods for solving their pest problems, including cultural, mechanical, biological, and least toxic. When giving recommendations, clarify that the information is based on research, personal experience, or written materials. The client determines which method to use.

You will receive training during your master gardener classes that will enable you to give recommendations that fit our policy guidelines. This contract will serve as a formal basis for master gardener involvement in pest control recommendations.

1. I understand that as a master gardener my pest control recommendations must be limited to home, lawn, and garden problems; questions concerning commercial crop production, commercial pest control, aquatic weed control, and pesticide liability are to be referred to the county Extension agent.

2. I understand that as a master gardener I may recommend a chemical for home and garden pest control only if that use has been

recommended by OSU or other approved resources.

3. I understand that as a master gardener I may recommend biological control organisms or other nonchemical alternatives for home and garden pest control only if the recommended use is contained in current OSU Extension publications or other publications recognized as credible by OSU scientists.

4. I understand that as a master gardener I will provide both nonchemical and chemical pest control recommendations, allowing the client a choice of strategies.

5. I understand that pesticides must be applied with care and only to plants, animals, or sites listed on the label and recommended by OSU. When mixing and applying pesticides, all label precautions must be followed to protect the applicator, other persons, and the environment. It is a violation of the law to disregard label directions. If there is any apparent conflict between label directions and the pesticide uses suggested by OSU publications, the county Extension agent must be consulted.

6. I understand that as a master gardener I am not required to be a licensed pest control consultant to recommend pesticides registered for home and garden use.

7. I understand that as a master gardener I am considered a volunteer representative of OSU. Therefore, OSU will assume liability for my pest control recommendations, but only if my recommendations are limited to control measures that are recommended by OSU for home and garden use.

Please check one of the following, sign, and return with your materials fee and application form by December 1.

____ Yes, as an OSU master gardener I will subscribe to the above requirements.

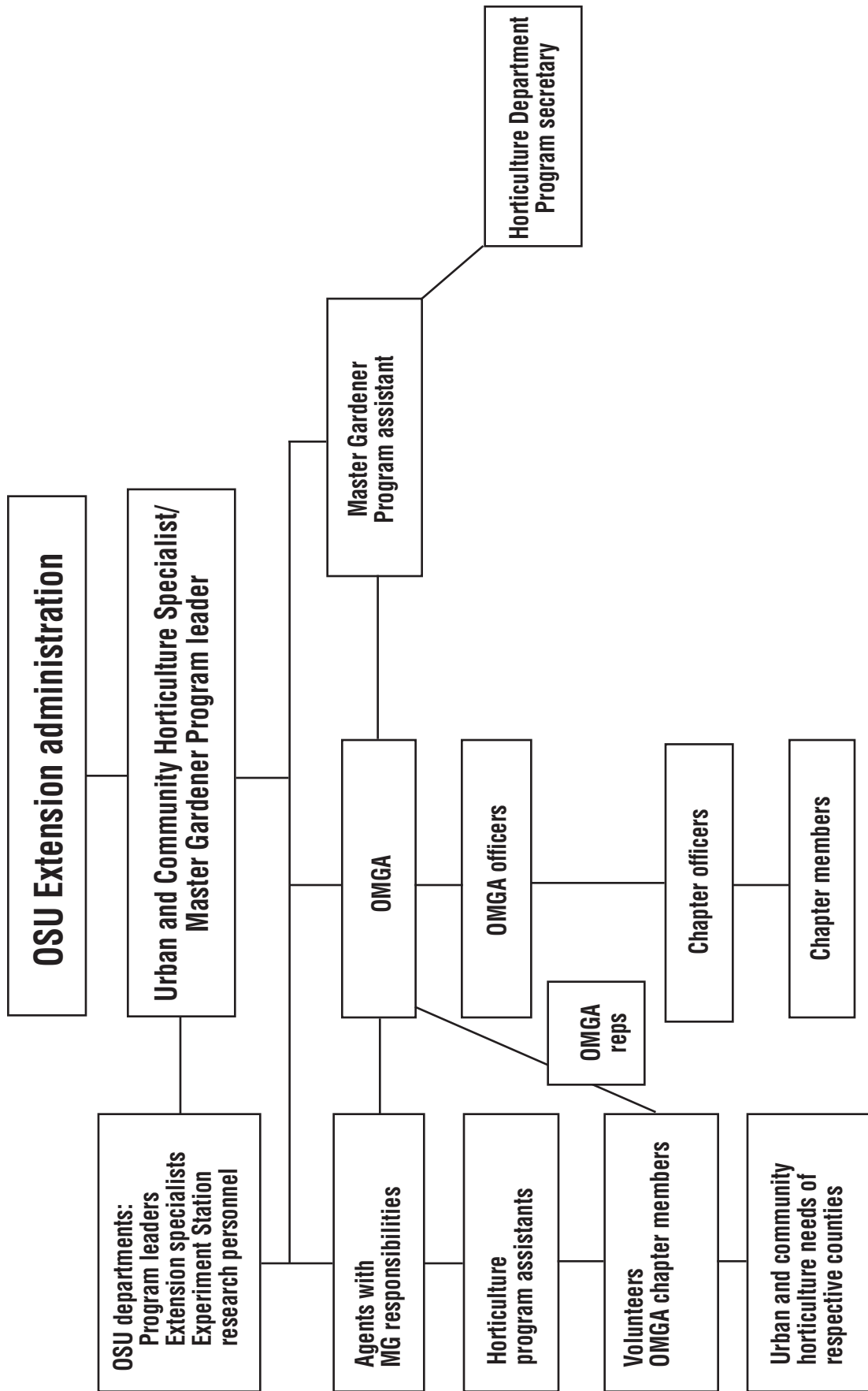
____ No, I cannot subscribe to the above policy, and I understand that I therefore cannot be certified as an OSU master gardener.

Signature _____

Date _____

Printed name _____

Oregon State University Master Gardener Program organizational chart



Extension home/urban horticulture staff

Baker County

Janice Cowan, Extension agent
2610 Grove Street
Baker City, OR 97814
541-523-6418

Benton County

Barbara Fick, Extension agent
1849 NW 9th Street
Corvallis, OR 97330
541-766-6750

Clackamas, Washington, Multnomah counties

Weston Miller, Extension agent
503-678-1264 x 114
Jordis Yost, program coordinator
503-678-1264 x 147
Program managed from:
North Willamette Research &
Extension Center (NWREC)
15210 NE Mile Rd.
Aurora, OR 97002
503-678-1264 x 147
Master Gardener office: 503-678-2527

Clatsop County

Shannon Brooks, Extension agent
2001 Marine Drive, Room 210
Astoria, OR 97103
503-325-8573

Columbia County

Chip Bubl, Extension agent
505 N. Columbia River Hwy.
St. Helens, OR 97051
503-397-3462

Coos County

Tracy Martz, Extension agent
Ohlsen Baxter Building
631 Alder St.
Myrtle Point, OR 97458
541-572-5263

Curry County

Doug Hart, Extension agent
Shelley Palmer, program assistant
P.O. Box 488
Gold Beach, OR 97444
541-247-6672

Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson counties

Amy Jo Detweiler, Extension agent
Steve Edwards, horticulture program
assistant
3893 SW Airport Way
Redmond, OR 97756-8697
541-548-6088

Douglas County

Stephen Renquist, Extension
agent
1134 SE Douglas
Roseburg, OR 97470
541-672-4461

Hood River County

Steve Castagnoli, Extension agent
Elizabeth Daniel, program
assistant
2990 Experiment Station Drive
Hood River, OR 97031
541-386-3343

Jackson County

Bob Reynolds, Extension agent
569 Hanley Road
Central Point, OR 97502-1251
541-776-7371

Josephine County

Tal Blankenship, horticulture
instructor
215 Ringuette Street
Grants Pass, OR 97527
541-476-6613

Klamath County

Brian Charlton, research and
Extension agent
Kristy Weidman, volunteer
coordinator
3328 Vandenberg Road
Klamath Falls, OR 97603
541-883-7131

Lake County

Jamie Davis, program assistant
103 S E Street
Lakeview, OR 97630
541-947-6054

Lane County

Ross Penhallegon, Extension
agent
Linda Renslow, co-program
assistant
950 West 13th Street
Eugene, OR 97402-3999
541-682-4243

Lincoln County

Sam Angima, Extension agent
29 SE 2nd Street
Newport, OR 97365
541-574-6534

Linn County

Barbara Fick, Extension agent
P.O. Box 765
Albany, OR 97321
541-967-3871

Marion County

Neil Bell, Extension agent
3180 Center Street, NE
Room 1361
Salem, OR 97301
503-588-5301

Multnomah County

(see Clackamas County)

Polk County

Neil Bell, Extension agent
Gail Miles, program assistant
P.O. Box 640 or
182 SW Academy, Suite 222
Dallas, OR 97338
503-623-8395

Tillamook County

Joy Jones, Extension agent
Donna Nelson, program assistant
2204 Fourth Street
Tillamook, OR 97141-2491
503-842-3433

Umatilla, Morrow counties

Mary Corp, Extension agent
721 SE Third Street, Suite 3
Pendleton, OR 97801-3056
541-278-5403

Union, Wallowa counties

Nancy Allen, Master Gardener
coordinator
10507 N. McAlister Rd.
LaGrande, OR 97850
541-963-1010

Wasco County

Lynn Long, Extension agent
400 E. Scenic Drive, Suite 2.278
The Dalles, OR 97058
541-296-5494

Washington County

(see Clackamas County)

Yamhill County

Linda McMahan, Extension agent
2050 Lafayette Street
McMinnville, OR 97128-9333
503-434-7517

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