



Extension

Tri River Area

Master Gardener Handbook

2012 Edition



**Colorado
State
University**

Extension

Table of Contents

Forward.....	4
Tri River Area Offices and Staff.....	5
Master Gardener Vision and Mission Statements.....	6
The Apprentice Course.....	7
What You Can Expect from Extension.....	7
What Extension Expects from You.....	8
Basic Requirements.....	8
Representing CSU.....	8
Showing Up.....	8
Keeping Accurate Records.....	8
Background Checks, References, and Proof of Lawful Presence.....	9
Communication.....	10
The Colorado Master Gardener Website.....	10
Volunteer Job Descriptions.....	11
Helping at the Apprentice Course Sessions.....	11
The Master Gardener Help Desk.....	11
The Diagnostic Team.....	13
House Calls.....	13
Seedling Tree Distribution.....	14
The Demonstration Gardens.....	14
The Arboretum.....	15
The Ute Learning Garden.....	15
Additional Gardens at the Mesa County Fairgrounds.....	15

The Demonstration Gardens, continued

Getting Involved in the Gardens.....	15
Additional Demonstration Gardens.....	16
The Xeric Garden.....	16
The Community Gardens.....	16
The Arboretum in Hotchkiss.....	16
The Grand Mesa Visitors Center.....	16
Other Opportunities.....	16
Advanced Master Gardeners.....	16
The Master Gardener Scholarship Program.....	17
Research Projects.....	17
The Annual Tree Auction and Plant Sale.....	17
Plant Exchanges.....	17
Other Projects.....	18
Handling Problems.....	19
Problems with Clients.....	19
Problems with other Master Gardeners.....	19
Problems with Staff.....	19
Problems Completing your Commitment.....	19
Legal Issues for Master Gardeners.....	20
Conflict of Interest.....	20
Copyright.....	20
Liability.....	20

Tri River Area Master Gardener Handbook

Foreword

Welcome to the Tri River Area Master Gardener Program, a vital part of Colorado State University Extension outreach for the counties of Mesa, Delta, Montrose, and Ouray in western Colorado. Our Master Gardener volunteers are our valued partners, helping us provide accurate, research-based information to the members of our communities on many aspects of horticulture.

The Master Gardener Program originated in Washington State in 1973 and rapidly spread across the country. The basic concept of the program is that volunteers receive a specific amount of top-quality training from Extension and in return provide back to Extension a specified amount of time and effort. This partnership has been of great benefit to all parties.

The Tri River Area Master Gardener Program began in 1978 with eight volunteers, and has grown to include about 300 members today. Well over 1000 people have gone through the program. During an average year, Tri River Area Master Gardeners assist 10,000 members of our communities in solving their yard and garden problems and becoming better gardeners, thus improving quality of life in western Colorado. Master Gardeners provide educational services to homeowners and other non-commercial gardeners, while Extension agents serve the commercial green industry.

We are very pleased to welcome you to this exciting program and want to do all we can to make your journey as a Master Gardener a successful and satisfying experience for you. Please do not hesitate to come forward at any time with your questions or concerns.

Tri River Area Offices and Staff

Mesa County: 2775 Highway 50, Grand Junction, 81503 244-1834

Rhonda Follman, area director, consumer and family science

Curtis Swift, commercial horticulture

Bob Hammon, entomology and agronomy

4-H and youth development – currently vacant

Susan Rose, home horticulture

Lorie Wuebold, office manager

Dolores Trevino, administrative assistant

Delta County: 525 Dodge Street, Delta, 81416 874-2195

Robbie LeValley, livestock and range

Ron Godin, agronomy

4-H and youth development – currently vacant

Karen Nittler, administrative assistant

Becky Denton, administrative assistant

Montrose County: 1001 N.2nd Street, Montrose, 81401 249-3935

Trent Hollister, 4-H and youth development

Brenda Percival, administrative assistant

Ginny Price, administrative assistant, Master Gardener

Isaac Muñoz, small acreage

Our offices are drug and alcohol-free workplaces.

Colorado Master Gardener Mission and Vision Statements¹

Mission Statement

The Colorado State University Master Gardener Program volunteer network enhances Coloradoans' quality of life by:

- extending research-based education throughout Colorado communities to foster successful gardeners;
- helping individuals make informed decisions about plants to protect neighborhood environments;
- committing to using environmentally appropriate horticulture to empower gardeners, develop partnerships, and build stronger communities.

Vision Statement

The Colorado State University Master Gardener Program leads educational efforts to nurture Colorado's natural environment and communities by:

- collaborating with the green industry, public agencies, and non-profits to provide current research-based information to the public;
- developing educational programs for local needs such as water issues, alternative pest management, and ecosystem characteristics;
- encouraging environmentally sound horticultural practices;
- reaching out to new audiences through a variety of technologies;
- providing lifelong learning opportunities and a variety of meaningful volunteer options for Colorado Master Gardeners, resulting in a committed, active network of horticultural educators who serve communities across the state;
- cultivating long-term support and securing abundant resources from diverse constituencies for the Colorado State University Master Gardener Program by showing the difference that this program makes in Coloradoans' quality of life.

¹Colorado State University Extension, Master Gardener Program, Procedures (September 27, 1999)

The Apprentice Course

The foundation of the Master Gardener Program is the Apprentice training course. In the Tri River Area and most of the rest of Colorado, this course takes place in the winter in order to have our volunteers trained and ready to begin working in the spring.

The course begins with a core series of classes, covering plant growth and development, soils, irrigation, plant diseases, and insects. Subsequent classes cover woody plants, turf, fruit production, vegetable gardening, annuals and perennials, and pest management. Some sessions such as ornamental grasses, native plants, and roses may be offered on a rotational basis.

Class sessions are one full day a week, and total approximately 70 hours of training. To pass the course, apprentices must attend 80% of the classes. While we encourage anyone who is ill to stay home, missed classes cannot be made up until the following year.

The purpose of the course is to produce volunteers with sufficient training to be of valuable assistance to gardeners in western Colorado. Our goal is quality, not quantity. We realize the course content can feel overwhelming; you are not expected to “know it all” after your first time through the course. You will receive continued support from Advanced Master Gardeners and the Master Gardener program coordinator while you volunteer with us, and the opportunity to take the course again if you so desire. Working with the public through our offices will help you consolidate and apply the training you received, and will serve as an ongoing learning opportunity.

What You Can Expect from Extension

- A first-class training course to get you started.
- A mentor to guide you through your first few office shifts. How many is up to you.
- The opportunity to meet other interesting people who share your passion for plants, and to form lasting friendships.
- Opportunities for continuing education at little or no cost. Many of our workshops are offered for free to Master Gardeners.
- Certification as a Colorado Master Gardener when you have completed your volunteer commitment.
- The opportunity to continue training and volunteering with us if you wish.

- The opportunity to improve the lives of fellow citizens by fostering successful gardening.

What Extension Expects from You

Basic Requirements

To become a Master Gardener, apprentices must be accepted into the program, complete the course, and return a minimum of 50 hours to Colorado State University Extension, working with the agents and staff out of our three area offices in Mesa, Delta, and Montrose Counties.

Working hours and contact numbers must be recorded for each volunteer. Volunteer hours are flexible and may be scheduled at your convenience, but 50 hours must be completed by the end of September of the year you take the course unless other specific arrangements are made.

Master Gardeners are educators. All projects and programs must have a strong educational component to qualify toward meeting the commitment. Any projects not originating through CSU Extension must have prior approval of the Extension agent and/or program coordinator.

Representing CSU

Master Gardeners of all levels are representatives of CSU and are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner, treating clients, staff, and one another with respect. It is particularly important for the volunteers to understand that paid staff members have their own duties and responsibilities, and to respect their time. Do ask for help when you need it; don't expect the staff to provide entertainment or to neglect their duties on your behalf.

Our offices do not have a dress code, with the exception of the Delta office which requests that you do not wear shorts. We do expect that you will be clean and neat. Wear comfortable shoes, and be prepared to work outside if the desk is slow (or overstaffed.) Please avoid strong colognes and controversial T-shirts. If you work in the green industry, do not wear clothing that identifies the business as this implies endorsement by CSU.

Showing Up

Master Gardener work schedules are very flexible, but when you are signed up we are relying on you to be here. If you are unable to keep your commitment please notify the office as soon as possible and do your best to find a replacement.

Keeping Accurate Records

Master Gardeners are expected to log in their hours and contact numbers. You will be shown how. You are expected to keep accurate and legible records of all your phone calls and walk-ins while working at the desk. Samples will be logged in neatly and accurately, and placed in the sample refrigerator at your office.

Background Checks, References and Proof of Lawful Presence

Background checks, references and proof of lawful presence are now required by CSU of all volunteers as well as paid staff. Background checks and references help to ensure that we are all working in a safe environment. The checks cover both criminal history and driving record.

The presence of anything adverse on an applicant's record does not preclude volunteering. It may affect volunteer assignments; for example, a poor driving record would mean that the volunteer cannot drive on University business (such as driving a car pool with other volunteers.) In such cases, the volunteer may request another check the following year to clear the record.

There is no cost to the volunteer for the background check. The check is handled by e-mail; applicants may expect to receive a message from Hire Right. This company has the full confidence of the University, which picks up the cost. In the event an applicant has no e-mail address, there is a paper form that may be submitted instead.

Proof of lawful presence, provided by a driver's license, passport, or similar document, allows CSU legally to offer discounts on workshops and other services to our volunteers.

Additional specific policy information as it applies to Master Gardeners is included in the commitment agreement which you submitted with your application. For your convenience, a copy is attached under "Forms" at the end of this handbook.

Communication

We communicate extensively by e-mail, which saves both time and money. Your contact information will be entered into a database which will allow e-mails to be sent to all of you or to selected groups (for example, Montrose County apprentices.) You may receive several e-mails each week, announcing upcoming activities and events, requesting volunteer assistance, and sharing topics of interest. Please check your e-mail frequently for these messages. You are expected to update the office promptly if your address changes.

Master Gardeners who do not have the ability to receive e-mails will be notified by mail of upcoming events and activities. However, there can be last minute changes of plans or locations. Master Gardeners are strongly advised to set up a free e-mail account, which you can check at the Master Gardener computer available in each office or at your local library. To stay actively involved in the program, Master Gardeners without e-mail accounts will need to make extra efforts to keep informed.

Master Gardener contact information is made available to Extension staff and other Master Gardeners unless you specifically request otherwise. It is not made available to the public. You may choose at times to follow up with a client on your own time or from home, but the client will not be given the opportunity to follow up with you without your consent.

The Colorado Master Gardener Website

A website has been developed for Tri River Area Master Gardeners to sign up for volunteer activities, receive information about upcoming events, and keep track of their volunteer time and contacts. New volunteers will receive an e-mail invitation to access this site, which works only once; when you enter the site you will need to go to the "Edit Your Profile" link on the upper left of the home page, to create a password. You will also be able to check off areas of interest to you as a volunteer, which will allow notices to be sent to you. Please be sure to check your county to be included in county specific e-mail notices.

Explore this site; you will find calendars where you can sign up to participate in various activities, and notices of upcoming events. There is also a list of links to state and local websites that may be of interest to you.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Helping at the Apprentice Course Sessions

Apprentice Master Gardeners can begin accumulating hours by helping set up and clean up the classroom. The Community Building will be open by 8:00 a.m. on class days. Until you are shown how to record your hours on line, please just keep a record of them so you can enter them later.

Advanced Master Gardeners help out at the class in many ways, such as staffing the registration tables, distributing the handouts, making copies, and grading the weekly take-home tests. They help update the manual, interview the new candidates, and assist at the class as needed. They set up and operate the audio-visual equipment, and they mentor the Apprentices when they begin working in the offices.

There is occasionally a need for trained Master Gardeners to operate audio-visual equipment and handle registration at other events.

The Master Gardener Help Desk

The most important service we provide to the residents of western Colorado is the Help Desk. Clients call with questions and concerns, and we do our best to help them solve their yard and garden problems. This often means taking the time to research the problem. It is our commitment to provide our clients with accurate, research-based, locally appropriate information. Apprentice Master Gardeners are required to put in at least 25 hours staffing the desk, unless special arrangements have been made.

Some Apprentices have some initial anxiety about working at the desk, but most discover after a few tries that it is rewarding and satisfying to be able to assist clients in this way. The desk is a great learning opportunity and will reinforce the knowledge you gain in the course as you will have the chance to apply it to specific situations.

When you first begin working at the desk, you will work with an experienced Master Gardener who will serve as your mentor. Your mentor will assist you to sign up for time slots, record your hours and contacts, and help you become familiar with office procedures. He or she will be your first resource when you have questions.

The phone calls that come to the Master Gardeners are pre-screened. There is no established rule for answering the phone, but it is recommended that you introduce yourself as a Master Gardener. Whether you choose to identify yourself as a volunteer or to give your name is up to you.

One of the first challenges Apprentice Master Gardeners face is the abundance of information available to you through our offices. The **fact sheets** contain concise, focused information on a wide range of horticultural topics and serve as a primary resource. Whenever possible, back up the information you provide to the clients with printed information. People do not always remember correctly everything they have been told on the phone. Our local website www.westernslopegardening.org and the CSU Extension website www.ext.colostate.edu are also sources for the fact sheets and additional information.

The **internet** has a wealth of information, not all of which is reliable. Remember, the public is relying on you for accurate, research-based information. In general, information from other universities and government sites is fine. Your Master Gardener Manual has a listing of additional sites. Please be cautious about information from commercial sites and remember that they have something they are trying to sell. Sometimes this information is perfectly acceptable; please consult your mentor or program coordinator when in doubt.

The **Master Gardener library** is not a lending library. The books all remain in the offices where they can be a resource for you. Some of them have been purchased especially because of their value to the program, and others have been donated. Some will be resources you will rely on frequently; your mentor can be a guide. You will be able over time to develop your own list of the most useful of the many volumes available to you. Please see the section on copyright law for information on copying material from books.

Your **Master Gardener Manual** contains a great deal of useful information. You may copy pages from it for clients as needed. **Additional resources** are available for Master Gardeners; please take the time when you can to become familiar with what is here.

Accurately determining what the clients' problems are is a challenge not unlike detective work. You will need to ask a lot of questions in most situations. It can be helpful if you let the client know that you are trying to get a complete picture of the situation, as you proceed to ask about relevant factors such as soil, watering, exposure, etc. You may want to recommend that the client bring in a sample.

In addition to the phone calls, we frequently have walk-in clients. If you are on the phone and someone is waiting to speak with you, please acknowledge them and tell them you will be with them in a moment. (This also lets your client on the phone know that you have someone waiting.) Then conclude your phone call as quickly as possible.

Walk-in clients often bring in samples. Have them fill out the sample form and talk them through the appropriate questions. Not all the questions are appropriate for every sample; for example, if the client wants some soil tested for salts there may not be a need for more than their contact information. If a salt test is requested or if you can identify the plant problem or insect,

please help the client at the time. If a sample is brought in that you are unable to diagnose, you may save it for the diagnostic team.

All client contacts whether phone calls or walk-ins need to be recorded on the contact log; your mentor will show you. There are examples of the contact log and the sample sheet in the forms section of this handbook.

Almost all of our clients are kind people who are grateful for our services. Occasionally, you may run into one who is disgruntled or even hostile. You are not expected to handle such situations yourself; tell the client you will let them discuss the matter with the horticulture educator or an agent, and hand them over as quickly as possible.

Relax and have fun! You are providing a valuable service, and you will probably learn something new each time you work at the Help Desk.

Mesa County Apprentices may begin working at the desk any time after the fruit pruning session at the Western Colorado Research Center, provided they have a mentor. An orientation meeting will be held in mid-April for Delta and Montrose County Apprentices.

The Diagnostic Teams

During the season in which we are actively receiving samples, diagnostic teams meet each week in each of the three offices to inspect and analyze the samples that have come in. These teams will collect the samples and look at them together, using the available resources to determine what the cause of the problem is and what might be done about it. They then notify the clients and complete and file the sample forms.

During the apprentice course, since it is taught in the winter, we are unable to provide you with many hands on experiences even though we realize that most adults are hands-on learners. Diagnostics is a great opportunity to make up for this and learn firsthand what various plant problems actually look like. Participating in diagnostics is a great learning experience and one that is strongly recommended for all Master Gardeners. Don't be concerned that you don't know enough to begin with; this is your opportunity to learn by doing.

Times and dates are announced during the class and will be sent out via e-mail.

Dedicated Master Gardener diagnosticians may be invited to attend advanced diagnostic training at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, which usually occurs in August if funds permit.

House Calls

Sometimes a problem cannot be diagnosed from a sample alone. Master Gardeners with sufficient experience and interest can make house calls, visiting clients' yards to inspect their problems on site. This is often especially helpful when there is a problem with a tree or a

problem across an entire landscape. This is an important service to our communities, and one for which our clients are especially grateful.

House call training sessions are held each month during the season in Mesa, Delta, and Montrose Counties, so that interested Master Gardeners can get some experience with on-site problem diagnosis. These sessions are led by the horticulture agent and/or the horticulture educator. The sessions will be announced via e-mail. Master Gardeners who wish to do so are encouraged to offer their yards and gardens for the training sessions.

Inexperienced Master Gardeners who are interested in participating in the house call program can be paired with experienced house call team members and work with them.

House calls are assigned to team members based upon their location insofar as possible. The clients are charged \$25.00 per hour for the visit, and team members are reimbursed for their mileage at the current Tri River Area mileage rate.

If the team members are unable to diagnose the problems, a follow-up visit is performed by the Horticulture Educator at no additional charge. Clients who wish to offer their yards for the training days are also not charged.

Seedling Tree Distribution

The Seedling Tree Program is run by the Colorado State Forest Service. It provides low-cost seedling trees and shrubs to Colorado residents with two or more acres of land, to be used for habitat, revegetation, windbreaks, and similar non-landscape purposes. Orders are taken over the winter, and the seedlings are delivered to the distribution points in late April.

Master Gardeners are needed to unload and sort the trees when they arrive, in Mesa, Delta, and Montrose Counties. We also assist at the distribution, helping people load their trees and ensuring that they have the information they need for successful planting and survival.

The Demonstration Gardens

The Mesa County office is surrounded by almost four acres of demonstration gardens, which include the Mesa County Arboretum, The Ute Learning Garden, and many smaller gardens. Master Gardeners who enjoy hands-on gardening are highly encouraged to get involved with planning and maintenance.

All of our gardens are supported by our program funds, grants, and donations; the county provides only the land and the irrigation water.

The Arboretum

The Mesa County Arboretum runs along the entire south side of the parking lot. It is intended to showcase a variety of unusual trees, shrubs, and other plants which may be unfamiliar to residents of the area. Begun in 2005, the Arboretum is nearly complete and requires considerable maintenance, though some things continue to be planted. One section features turf plots with 37 varieties of lawn grasses; another showcases annual, biennial, and perennial herbs. All areas are low to moderate in water use.

Within the Arboretum is an amphitheater with seating capacity for 100 or more. Outdoor classes and meetings are often held there. The Arboretum is funded in part through the purchase of pavers, engraved flagstones, or benches which are placed there to commemorate a loved one or special occasion.

The Ute Learning Garden

Our largest garden is laid out to represent the many life zones found in Colorado, and features native plants that were used by the Utes during their annual migrations. Signage identifies the plants and their historical uses, and provides additional information about Ute life and culture. A teepee, two wickiups, and several replicas of antique hearths may be found throughout the garden. An adjacent Three Sisters garden explains this planting technique. Master Gardeners who are interested in native plants may especially wish to get involved with this garden. Docent training is provided for those interested in giving tours for school children and the public. This garden is the location for one or two mini-powwows each year, with our honored guests the Northern Utes.

Additional Gardens at the Mesa County Fairgrounds

Additional gardens include an ornamental grasses garden, three rose gardens, two plant select beds, a cactus and succulent garden, and numerous others. Some of the beds along the north side of the parking lot are available if Master Gardeners would like to do special projects.

Getting Involved in the Gardens

There is a lot of maintenance involved in keeping these gardens looking great, and all Master Gardeners are encouraged to help out. There will be frequent work days scheduled during the season which will focus on whatever needs attention the most. Many Master Gardeners prefer these events, which are social and informative as well as productive. Another way to get involved is to “adopt a garden”; Master Gardeners may select a garden or an area of the Arboretum and work on their own time at their convenience. If you prefer to work on your own, perhaps after hours or on the weekends, please check with the Horticulture Educator to find out

which areas are open for adoption. Some funds are available for plant materials and other supplies.

Additional Demonstration Gardens

The Xeric Garden

A Xeriscape garden at First and Grand in Grand Junction is partially maintained by the City of Grand Junction, but Master Gardeners are needed from time to time to clean up the plants and replace any that may need it. This small but important garden on a busy intersection reinforces our commitment to educating the public about low water landscaping.

The Community Gardens

The community gardens at the Mesa County library are another way to get involved. Those who rent the plots are responsible for keeping their areas weeded, but the paths and borders need attention during the season and there is a demonstration area to maintain. Any Master Gardeners who have a plot there for the season may wish to pick up additional hours working here, as might any who live in the adjacent downtown area.

The Maloney Property in Hotchkiss

The recently acquired Maloney property, adjacent to the Delta County fairgrounds in Hotchkiss, may be a site for demonstration gardens if enough Master Gardeners are interested in committing to it.

The Grand Mesa Visitors Center

A wildflower garden at the Visitors Center on top of Grand Mesa (in Delta County) offers a pleasant respite from the heat of summer in the valleys. Although this garden has a very short season of just three months, it receives a great many visitors during that time. A couple of workdays will be held there during the summer to weed and do general maintenance. Don't forget your mosquito repellent!

At this time there are few other gardening opportunities for Master Gardeners from Delta and Montrose Counties. We are open to your suggestions.

Other Opportunities

Advanced Master Gardeners

Once you have completed your Apprentice year requirements, you are eligible to return to the program as an Advanced Master Gardener. Advanced Master Gardeners commit to a minimum

of 24 working hours and 12 continuing education hours, and pay annual dues of \$10.00. As an Advanced Master Gardener you may attend any or all of the Apprentice classes again, which may be used to fulfill your continuing education commitment.

The Master Gardener Scholarship Program

Master Gardeners who remain in the program become eligible at the beginning of their third year to apply for and receive scholarship funds to attend workshops and other trainings on gardening and horticulture. Eligible Master Gardeners may receive up to \$500.00 per calendar year, which may be used for one event or several. The funds may be used to cover transportation and lodging as well as registration. A written report about what you learned at the event is required within thirty days. Sample reports can be provided upon request.

Research Projects

During the season, Dr. Curtis Swift (Area horticulture agent) or Bob Hammon (Area entomologist/agronomist) may request the assistance of one or more Master Gardeners on field projects. We will notify you when these opportunities come up.

The Annual Tree Auction and Plant Sale

Each year the Master Gardener Tree Auction and Plant Sale is held on the Mesa County fairgrounds on the second Saturday of October. Donations of the trees and other plants are solicited from nurseries and garden centers throughout the area. Master Gardeners collect the donations, sort and price the plants, and keep them watered up to the day of the auction. A great deal of organization is needed for this event, starting in August. Additional help is needed the week of the auction and especially on the day of the event. Apprentice Master Gardeners who have been unable to return all their required time by September 30 are often able to catch up by helping with this event.

Plant Exchanges

Two Master Gardener plant exchanges occur each year, on the last day of the Apprentice Master Gardener class, and on the Saturday following the Tree Auction in October. The latter event is our graduation, where Apprentices who have completed their commitment receive their Master Gardener certificates.

Master Gardeners are encouraged to bring any extra plants they may have to the exchanges. Please label them. Other items such as gardening books or tools are also welcome.

These events are fund raisers for the Master Gardener Scholarship Program; donations are appreciated.

Other Projects

Additional opportunities come up during the year. You will be notified as they arise. Please also check the website regularly to learn about projects and events that are posted there.

Master Gardeners may design projects of their own, but keep in mind that any such projects need to be educational in nature. For example, creating a garden for a local school would not be a Master Gardener project, but assisting teachers and students with creating such a garden and teaching children how to plant would be a fine project for Master Gardeners. These projects require prior approval from the program coordinator or the horticulture agent, who can help you with including educational components into your project.

Handling Problems

Problems with Clients

Master Gardeners are not expected to have to deal with hostile clients. Be as polite as possible under the circumstances, and turn the client over to an agent or the horticulture educator.

There will be occasional clients whose minds are made up and who don't want to accept our information if it doesn't agree with their ideas. Please don't take this personally. Give or send them a relevant fact sheet if possible and be as polite as you can.

Occasionally, clients don't want to give you their name or contact information. Don't insist. Just enter them on your log as "walk-in" or "caller".

Most clients appreciate our services and are very grateful for your help.

Problems with other Master Gardeners

It is unrealistic to expect that everyone in an organization of this size will get along equally well. If you encounter difficulties with another volunteer and prefer not to work with them, it is not usually a problem as work schedules are flexible. Feel free to discuss the matter with the program coordinator.

If you feel you are being harassed by another volunteer, please notify the program coordinator as soon as possible. Master Gardeners do not have to put up with treatment that makes them uncomfortable. Your privacy will be respected.

Problems with Staff

We cannot resolve a problem if we aren't aware of it. Please bring any problems to our attention. If you feel a problem is not being resolved adequately by the program coordinator, feel free to discuss it with the horticulture agent.

We want you to feel that you are working in a safe, welcoming environment, and that your work here is appreciated.

Problems Completing your Commitment

If you find that you are not going to be able to keep your commitment to the program in the specified time, please discuss the matter with the program coordinator. We understand that events sometimes are beyond your control, and that Master Gardeners sometimes cannot complete their commitment due to legitimate reasons. While we prefer to have our trained volunteers working with us, there is always the option of buying out your remaining commitment. The commitment time can be extended under certain circumstances.

Legal Issues for Master Gardeners

The following are the current official state policies of the Colorado Master Gardener Program. We will be discussing and clarifying these points during the apprentice course. Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Conflict of Interest

Master Gardeners should avoid any situations that imply endorsement of a product or business by CSU. This is not always easy, as clients often recognize brand names. When suggesting a product it is best to name several brand names if they are available, rather than just one.

Master Gardeners who work in the green industry may not wear clothing identifying their business or solicit for their business while volunteering.

The terms *Colorado Master Gardener* and *Colorado State University Master Gardener* are registered service marks of CSU Extension and may be used only in connection with official Extension activities. These terms may not be used in marketing materials for individuals or businesses.

The term *Master Gardener* is generic and its use is not in violation of policy.

It is CSU Extension's policy that we do not provide services for free that are in competition with industry. Master Gardeners are asked not to advise on landscape design while volunteering.

Copyright

Master Gardeners are permitted to make single copies of printed or web-based information for clients. Please credit the source. We are not permitted to print multiple copies for distribution without the express permission of the copyright holder.

Multiple copies of fact sheets may be made and distributed. Pages from the manual may be copied as well. Copies of these materials should be current. They may not be distributed for profit.

If you are creating educational materials as a volunteer (counting your time toward your commitment) the copyright on this material belongs to CSU Extension. If you develop this material on your own time, you own the copyright.

Liability

While working as a Master Gardener, volunteers are covered by University liability insurance for misinformation provided they are using research-based information and applying good judgment. However, a volunteer who goes out on a limb with personal information or information from

special interest groups would not be covered. A volunteer would not be covered for information shared outside of official activities.

Master Gardeners are not authorized to give legal or medical advice, for example:

- Master Gardeners do not address hazard tree issues. If you encounter such a situation on a house call, notify the program coordinator who will send a letter recommending professional evaluation. [legal issue]
- Master Gardeners do not address poisonous-plant questions. Rather, refer the client to poison control, their doctor, or veterinarian. [medical issue]
- Master Gardeners do not advise on the medical use of herbs. [medical issue]
- All references to the use of pesticides (both organic and manufactured) must come directly from Extension print materials, pesticide industry print materials, or the Extension agents. For more in-depth information, the client must be referred to the agent. For questions about pesticide toxicity refer the client to the National Pesticide Information Center at 1-800-858-7378. [legal issue]
- Master Gardeners do not advise in the misuse of pesticides. Rather, refer the client to the Colorado Department of Agriculture. [legal issue]
- Master Gardeners may not advise medical marijuana growers, by CSU policy. [legal and medical issue]
- Master Gardeners may not identify wild mushrooms or advise on their edibility. [legal and medical issue]

As non-paid staff, Master Gardeners are not covered by University workmen's compensation or other medical insurance.