

PROJECT GUIDELINES AND PROPOSALS

Rev. 11-01

PROJECT GUIDELINES

One of the main purposes of the Master Gardener program is to work on community betterment projects. Project work is often one of the most rewarding parts of being a Master Gardener, and it is tempting for a county program to agree to help with any project that comes its way. However, before agreeing to take on a project, Master Gardeners should evaluate the usefulness of the project and determine if the organization has enough time to devote to the project.

Master Gardener projects are the primary public relations tool for most county programs. The projects should always be visible, well kept, and serve the general public. A Master Gardener program can quickly get a “bad name” if its projects are messy or if commitments are not followed.

Following are some guidelines for sanctioning Master Gardener projects, along with some forms and sample letters that may be used in the process. We have divided this process into three steps: 1. the proposal, 2. acceptance or rejection, and 3. evaluation. Always try to be fair when choosing projects and realize the limitations of your organization.

County sanctioned projects are those that have been approved by the Master Gardener organization through a specific proposal procedure such as the one suggested in the following pages. Some counties may sanction projects that others do not. Sanctioned projects may include beautification projects, school enrichment programs, horticultural therapy programs, annual garden shows, the Master Gardener newsletter, working in the Extension office, etc.

Most Master Gardener beautification projects should be a partnership between the Master Gardeners and the community. For this reason, it is recommended that beautification projects be funded by other organizations such as city or county governments, chambers of commerce, corporations, or utility companies. The community funds the project, and the Master Gardeners provide expertise, labor, and management of the project.

Project Guidelines

- Appoint a Project Review Committee.
- Identify areas within your community that need the “Master Gardener Touch”.
- Master Gardeners should avoid funding beautification projects, unless they are for County Extension offices or places Master Gardeners meet frequently.
- Select enough projects to insure that membership working hours are met.
- It is recommended that most projects be “ongoing” to maintain Master Gardener recognition.
- Group participation in sanctioned projects is recommended.
- Appoint a Project Chair for each sanctioned project.
- The Project Review Committee should promptly notify applicants of approval or rejection.
- Each Master Gardener is responsible for reporting his/her hours worked on projects. Travel time to or from projects does not count as work hours except when picking up project supplies.
- A minimum of 50% of required work hours must be on county sanctioned projects.

Project Chair Responsibilities

- Meet with contact person regularly to discuss needs and funding for the project.
- Schedule workdays and committee meetings as needed. Request that the phone committee call volunteers for workdays.
- Inform Extension staff of all workdays.
- The Committee Chair should report project status at monthly meetings.

MASTER GARDENER PROJECT PROPOSAL

Project Name: _____

Location: _____

Address: _____

City Telephone

Person Responsible
for making decisions _____

Description of project:

Starting Date: _____ Duration: _____

Proposed Number of Master Gardeners: _____ Estimated hours: _____

Cost of Project: _____

Funding Source: _____

A project may be a one-time event, or preferably an ongoing project with Master Gardener continuing maintenance. The sponsoring organization would be welcome to assist.

Other Particulars:

Proposed By Date

Hosting Organization Representative Date

Projects Committee Date

County Extension Agent Date

Membership Approval: ____ Yes ____ No Date: _____

CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS

- Provide educational opportunities for Master Gardeners and the public (labeling of uncommon plants, etc.)
- Sanctioned beautification projects for churches or schools are not recommended.
- Be accessible to the public without admission fee.
- Create visibility for Master Gardeners (identified with Master Gardener sign).
- A project should benefit a city, county, state or nonprofit organization.
- Submitted on Project Proposal form
- It is recommended that each new proposal be made available for committee review at least ONE MONTH prior to starting date.

Example Project Denial Letter

Dear _____,

Thank you for requesting gardening assistance from the _____ County Master Gardeners. We wish we could say yes to every application. However, at this time all volunteers are involved in ongoing projects. If you would like to submit your request at a later date we will be happy to reconsider it.

Sincerely,

_____, Chairman
Master Gardener Project Committee

Example Project Acceptance Letter

Dear _____,

We are happy to announce that the project for the _____ has been reviewed by our Project Committee and was approved by the _____ County Master Gardeners as one of our ongoing projects.

We look forward to working together and will be in contact with you soon.

Sincerely,

_____, Chairman
Master Gardener Project Committee

MASTER GARDENER PROJECT EVALUATION

Project Name: _____

Description: _____

Starting Date: _____ Duration: _____

Avg. attendance on workdays: _____ Cost of Project to Master Gardeners: _____

Source of Funding: _____

Special Tools or Equipment Needed: _____

1. Please describe the joys of this year's work on your project:

2. Describe any problems you had and possible solutions-
With your host organization:

With your committee members (did you have enough, too many, excessive no-shows):

3. Suggestions/recommendations for the next year:

4. Would you be willing to serve as chairman next year? _____

Our guidelines suggest project chairs rotate at least every two years. If you have already served two years, whom would you recommend from your committee to serve as chairman? Please list at least two.

Other comments and recommendations. Use the back if needed.