

WELCOME!

“So, you want to be a Master Gardener?”

Amanda Wilkins
Horticulture Extension Agent
Lee County Cooperative
Extension Office

Extension Master Gardener Volunteers
of Lee County



Why Become An Extension Master Gardener Volunteer?

DO YOU WANT TO:

- **become knowledgeable** in many gardening topics?
- **serve your community through sharing your knowledge?**
- **increase your confidence** in your own gardening skills?
- **meet others** who share your gardening interests?
- **be a life-long learner** of REALLY COOL STUFF?

me giving a mandatory plant tour to everyone who comes to visit



Today's Presentation

- Who am I?
- What is NC Cooperative Extension?
 - Who will you be working with?
- Overview of the Extension Master Gardener Program
 - Training and requirements
- Things to Get Excited About at LCCE!



Who am I?



- 2013- BS in Horticultural Science from NC State University
- 2016- MS in the Biodiversity and Taxonomy of Plants from the University of Edinburgh and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
- 2014- Curatorial Intern, Polly Hill Arboretum, West Tisbury, MA
- 2015;2017-2018- Curator of Collections, Mobile Botanical Gardens, Mobile, AL
- 2018-2022- Garden Curator, Juniper Level Botanic Garden, Raleigh, NC

Cooperative Extension Mission and Vision

Mission

- NC State Extension extends research-based knowledge to all North Carolinians, helping them transform science into everyday solutions that improve their lives and grow our state.

Vision

- We are the model of excellence in non-formal, research-based education that advances agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, youth and communities, while creating prosperity for all North Carolinians.

NC State University

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Cooperative Extension



- Provides non-formal education to the public
 - Makes university research meaningful
 - Public provides input on direction of future research
- Gives public easy and understandable access to the vast knowledge and learning resources of NCSU and NC A&T, and other NC University System resources
 - National Network too!
- Funded by federal, state, & local governments
- Administered by the Land Grant Universities
 - NCSU, NC A&T

Cooperative Extension: Cycle of Solutions



- IDENTIFY ISSUES
 - Extension experts in every county engage with farmers, businesses and families to determine local needs
- RESEARCH SOLUTIONS
 - County agents collaborate with campus specialists, applying science and technology to better understand and address timely issues
- TRANSFER RESULTS
 - Extension delivers research-based tools and solutions back to communities, translating knowledge into everyday applications

Cooperative Extension: Goals and Objectives

- North Carolinians will be civically engaged within their communities.
- North Carolinians will be prepared for and better able to recover from disasters and other emergencies.
- The economic, social and environmental welfare of North Carolinians will be improved through the generation, conservation and use of clean, sustainable, efficient and reliable energy.
- North Carolina's natural resources and environmental quality will be protected, conserved and enhanced, and ecosystem benefits will be optimized.
- Adults and children of all ages and abilities will make healthy food choices and be physically active to achieve or maintain a healthy weight and prevent chronic disease.

Cooperative Extension: Goals and Objectives

- North Carolina residents at all stages of life use effective parenting and life skills to create stable, safe and secure environments.
- North Carolina will have profitable, environmentally sustainable plant, animal and food systems that support thriving communities and provide all North Carolinians access to safe, nutritious food.
- North Carolina will excel in the global marketplace as a result of growing a competitive workforce and a diversified economy.
- Youth and adults will achieve educational success through intentional non-formal and formal educational opportunities that expand and enhance skills and knowledge.



NC STATE

EXTENSION

COLLEGE OF
AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES
 ACADEMICS • RESEARCH • EXTENSION



Department of
HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE



A Part of the Cooperative Extension System



Dean
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Director
NC Cooperative Extension Service

Department Head
Horticultural Science

Director
County Operations

Extension Specialist
Urban Horticulture

District Director

State EMGV
Association

State EMGV
Coordinator

County Director

Extension Agent

County EMGV Association

Program Coordinator

Extension Master
Gardener Volunteers



Bill Stone

Amanda Wilkins



Meet our Lee County Staff

Support



Rhonda Gaster

County Extension Administrative Assistant



LEE COUNTY CENTER

Family and Consumer Sciences



Ashley Szilvay

Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences



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Local Foods



Meredith Favre

Local Foods Coordinator - Local Foods



LEE COUNTY CENTER

4-H Youth Development



Pam Kerley

4-H Program Assistant



LEE COUNTY CENTER

NC State Extension Consumer Horticulture



Objective: to enhance the value of plants, animals, and landscapes while conserving valuable natural resources and protecting the environment.

- Best Management Practices (BMPs) for pests and fertilizers
- Selecting appropriate landscape plants
- Promoting home food production
- Promoting composting
- Promoting water conservation
- Promoting protection of water quality

How Do “We” Fulfill Those Objectives?



- Educational programs
- Publications and newsletters
- Events – workshops, field days, etc.
- Personal consultations
- Websites and online resources

The Truth is....



Extension Master Gardener Volunteers!



NC STATE EXTENSION

Master Gardener | Lee County

What is the Extension Master Gardener Program?

- Extension Agents needed a group of trained volunteers to help educate the public about gardening
 - Great increase in demand for gardening information
 - Loss of gardening knowledge with increased urbanization
- Originally developed at Washington State Univ. in 1973
 - New Hanover and Wake County first in NC in 1978



EMG Mission



Our mission is to connect people to horticulture through science-based education and outreach that empowers North Carolinians to cultivate healthy plants, landscapes, ecosystems, and communities.

Read more at: <https://emgv.ces.ncsu.edu/about-the-nc-state-extension-master-gardener-program/>

Master Gardeners Make an *Impact*

NC STATE

Extension Master Gardener

2021 SNAPSHOT



3808

Volunteers



158,634

Volunteer hours



\$4.1 million

Value of volunteer time



77,371

NC residents reached

What Do Extension Master Gardener Volunteers Do?



Assist in the mission of NC CES Consumer Horticulture to educate the public about best gardening & landscape practices

- Distribute Extension information
- Answer questions from the public
- Demonstrate sound gardening practices
- Amplify the impact of university research
- Make a positive impact through their work in the community

What makes the Program special?



The power of NCSU, NC A&T, and the Extension system

- Local and national networks

Methods, practices, and information are **research-based** and **only research-based**

- Professors and Extension Specialists continually test, re-evaluate scientific horticultural practices
- Recommendations change with new data
- Self-correcting and continuously improving

If a technique or method is not based on sound science, we cannot recommend it.

How Do You Become an Extension Master Gardener Volunteer?

Two Phases:

1. Training Course
2. Volunteer Internship with Cooperative Extension

Phase I: Training Course



- Attend minimum of 5 general public programs/workshops (basic gardening) presented by NCCE-Lee County Horticulture
- Attend one 3-3.5 hour class per month for 6 months
 - A different topic w/ assignment covered each class
 - Day and night-time options
- Attend at Least One Field Trip

Who/When For Classes



- Taught by horticulture agents and other experts
- Classes held ***
 - Day and Evening options!
 - McSwain Education Building, Lee County Ag Center

Phase I: Training Course

Each class may include:

- Brief review of previous class
- Learning objectives
- Review of best resources
- Group discussion or activity
- Frequently asked questions
- Mini-topic on volunteering and being an EMGV
- Quizzes

Orientation & Volunteering, How to Research
Soils & Soil Fertility

Introductory Botany

Insects

Plant Diseases & Disorders

Weeds

Diagnostics & IPM

Plant Propagation

Ornamental Plants

Lawns

Vegetable Gardening

Small Fruits, Tree Fruits and Nuts

Landscape Design

Exam and Diagnostic Workshop

Phase I: Training Course



Course Materials

- NC Master Gardener Training Handbook – Top Hat
- Document of links to some references
- Online Copy of Presentation
- Relevant NCSU Extension Factsheets

Phase I: Training Course



- Final Exam:
 - Take home
 - Open book
 - Focus: How to find info, terms & concepts
 - **Not about memorization**
- Receive Certification of Class Completion
- EMGV Name Tag

Phase II: Volunteer Internship

Within 1 year of completing
the class:

volunteer forty (40) hours
with Lee County Cooperative
Extension

Let's Do Some Math...

- 52 Weeks in a Year
 - 104 weekend days*
- 8-10 work hours in a day
 - 56-70 work hours in a week
- Ways to get your volunteer hours (20):
 - Farmers' Market Outreach Table
 - 5 hours x 4 times = 20 hours!
 - Demonstration Garden
 - 3 hours x 6 times + Pollinator Open House (4 hours) = 22 hours
- Ways to get your education hours (10):
 - EMG Monthly Meeting
 - 1 hour x 9 meetings
 - Plant, Pests and Pathogens
 - 1.5 hours x 9 meetings
 - EMG College
 - 12 hours

Volunteer Opportunities

- Help answer gardening questions from the public
- EMG Office Hours
- Ask an EMG Info Line
 - Phone, email
- Ask an EMG Booth
 - Festivals & events
 - Farmers Market
- Not about knowing the answer immediately
- Take contact information, problem description
 - Research (NCSU accepted standards)
 - Develop a thorough answer
 - Contact them: call, email, US mail



Pollinator Haven Garden



Stay tuned to this space!



Volunteer Opportunities



- Speaker's Bureau
 - Give talks and demos to gardening clubs, civic groups, and other organizations
 - Who is the expert?
 - Develop presentations
 - Presentations are approved and vetted by the Extension Agent for accuracy and mission coordination

Volunteer Opportunities

- 4-H Youth Development
 - Teaching 4-H kids about gardening
 - Pam Kerley, 4-H Program Assistant
- School Gardening
 - Help area teachers with gardening and plant topics
 - In development
- Junior Master Gardeners Support



Intern Volunteer Opportunities

- Community Garden Coach
 - Not Free Labor, but give advice on community gardens to
 - Churches
 - Daycares
 - Schools
 - Communities
 - There is a strong demand for guidance!



Intern Volunteer Opportunities

- Farmers' Market Table
- Farm to ECE Programming
- Regional Fair
- Office Support/Office Hours
- Farmers' Market Donation Station
- Food Pantry Support
- Food Pantry Programming/Teaching
- School Garden Support
- Building Insect Teaching Collection
- Marketing/Writing/Website
- Ag Marketplace- Lunch and Learns
- What do you want to do? :)



EMGV Mentor



- Paired with current EMGV - learn and do
 - Gardening interests, experience and location
- Will help guide newcomers throughout the volunteer process
- Very helpful on phone duty
- Ask questions and learn!

How to Remain an EMGV



- Twenty (20) hours volunteer outreach service work to community (January to December)
- Ten (10) of continuing education (January to December)
 - Training offered after monthly meetings, NC State EMG events, **approved** events/webinars (contact Amanda prior to attendance, preferably)

Interested? How to proceed:



- Contact Amanda Wilkins, Lee County Horticulture Extension Agent
 - Application: Submitted by appropriate due date
 - Copyright agreement
 - Media release
 - Background Check
- Fee
 - \$150- name tag, state and local program cost recovery, Top Hat handbook access
 - Due Date: TBD
 - Please let Amanda know if this is too much of a financial burden

Main Criteria for Being a Master Gardener

Availability to:

- Complete the training, including all quizzes, homework assignments, field trips, and exams
- Complete 40 hours of approved volunteer service within one year of graduating from class
- Assist the Extension agent

Some Determining Criteria of Application Acceptance

- willingness to work as a team member with the local Extension agent and other MGVs
- personal goals in alignment with the program
- willingness to represent Extension in a professional manner
- interest in helping people
- ability and desire to learn
- ability to communicate effectively and diplomatically with the public by phone, in person, and in writing*
- willingness to maintain and report records of volunteer work*
- other skills, such as photography, computer proficiency, carpentry, or art*
- gardening experience and expertise*
- previous volunteer experience*

Questions??

Contact Information

(or grab a card!)

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Follow Master Gardeners on social media:

- Facebook
@NCExtensionMasterGardenervolunteers
- Instagram @ncemgv
- YouTube – NC State Extension Master Gardener program channel