

Guidelines for Community Gardening Volunteer Hours

There has been a lot of confusion about Master Gardener involvement in community gardening. While we want to support community gardening, we have to set some guidelines for when it is an approved Master Gardener activity and when it is an extension of personal horticultural interest.

The new community gardening committee is currently planning projects and working on where Master Gardeners can be the most effective. Their current projects are as follows:

1. Garden Mentor Program - provide Master Gardeners to mentor community gardens.
2. Provide in-garden workshops.
3. Provide garden visits for the Summer Sprout program as part of their training.
4. Encourage and support Plant A Row participation in community gardens and Master Gardeners' gardens.
5. Promote participation by community gardeners at the Cuyahoga County Fair.

The referral protocol is as follows: The garden is referred to the committee. The committee will then assign volunteers to the gardens. If you are interested in participating in any of the above projects, please contact Linda Dole or Nancy Whisler. They can assist you in making connections with a community garden that has been referred through Brad. Your help is needed.

If you are involved in community gardening in some way but not through the Master Gardener community gardening committee or another approved Master Gardener activity such as Ben Franklin or the Gates Mills PAR Garden or Rocky River Community Garden, then you cannot claim volunteer hours for this activity. We have a diverse list of approved Master Gardener activities and special events. These activities can always use volunteers and are in place because they support our mission.

Many Master Gardeners are involved with functioning community gardens other than those approved as volunteer activities. Consider mentoring the garden. Provide some documentation of how you are providing educational support and you can receive volunteer hours for this. Or you might choose to organize the other gardeners to participate in the PAR project and receive hours for this.

If you have an interest in an operational project that you think is in compliance with our mission, you are welcome to submit a proposal to the Advisory Committee for approval. There is a format available at the Extension office for writing the proposal. It can then be given to the current chair for presentation at the next Advisory Committee meeting.