

Master Gardeners



Program Highlights 2020–21

- 250 certified Master Gardener volunteers provided over 15,000 hours of service.
- Master Gardener outreach and education reached over 10,000 people with gardening and composting information.
- Volunteers delivered 24 workshops on various topics, including: Water Wise Gardening, Firesafe Landscaping, Pest Management, Vegetable Gardening, Pest Prevention and Diagnosis, Recycling Garden Waste, School Gardens, Perennials and Flowering Shrubs, Soil and Irrigation, and Community Gardens.

The UC Master Gardener Program for Placer and Nevada counties provides volunteer training and horticultural knowledge to enhance home landscapes and garden experiences while striving to improve and preserve the quality of our natural environment.

The UC Master Gardener Programs in Placer and Nevada Counties were established in 1983 to meet the demands of the growing population and mitigate one-on-one requests to Extension staff for home gardening and related information.

Interest in home gardening and urban horticulture continues to grow. Gardening is the most popular hobby in the United States, and landscape/nursery crops are now the third largest agricultural crop in California. UC Master Gardeners identify issues and needs of Placer and Nevada County residents and develop educational activities to address these concerns in the areas of home horticulture and composting.

With the goal of shifting public perceptions of yard and garden debris from “wastes” to “resources,” the UCCE’s volunteer Master Composters have engaged the public in recognizing the importance of organics management through composting, vermi-composting, and shredding/chipping/mulching. These activities alone can divert between 20 and 35 percent of a family’s garbage from the landfills and have helped Placer and Nevada Counties meet state mandated diversion rates.

The COVID-19 situation and subsequent stay-at-home order in California created a huge increase in interest for backyard gardening. Although in person activities have been limited since March 2020, the Master Gardener volunteers maintain their social media pages, their phone hotline, and public newsletter, The Curious Gardener. In the 2020-21 year, the Master Gardeners were able to put together online public workshops. The Master Gardeners set up virtual workshops that were available to be watched live and posted to our websites for anytime viewing. The Master Gardeners gave 21 virtual workshops on a variety of topics reaching over 1,225 viewers. These will continue to be a resource for our community even after we resume in person activities.



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