

# How to Become a Master Gardener

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The next UCCE Placer/Nevada Master Gardener volunteer training begins **January 2021**.

**To be placed on an interest list to receive information about the next Informational Meeting in September 2020, please fill out this form:** [http://pcmg.ucanr.org/How to Become a Master Gardener/](http://pcmg.ucanr.org/How_to_Become_a_Master_Gardener/)

## **What is the UC Master Gardener program all about?**

Thank you for your interest in the University of California (UC) Master Gardener volunteer program. The UC Master Gardener program is a county-based volunteer program; that is, the local University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) county office administers the local Master Gardener program.

In our case, our UCCE office covers 2 counties (Placer and Nevada) and therefore we administer two Master Gardener programs, each one separate and distinct. Our Placer County office in Auburn is the home base for the UC Master Gardeners of Placer County while our Nevada County office in Grass Valley serves our UC Master Gardeners of Nevada County.

Although there are two separate programs, the volunteer training of new Master Gardeners is a mix of trainees from both counties. We usually interview and select 45 trainees each class, with 25 coming from Placer County and 20 from Nevada County. The general schedule of the volunteer training begins in January and ends the first Friday in May. It is an intense and thorough training; 16 different classes spanning many gardening topics. Only one absence is allowed. The classes occur on Friday afternoons from 1pm to 5pm. They take place in Auburn and in Grass Valley. There are required field trips, Hotline trainings, and homework!

A sample of the class topics:

- Intro to Horticulture
- Soils and Fertilizers
- Composting, Vermiculture and Compost Tea
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Plant Propagation
- Plant Pathology
- Fruit Trees
- Vegetable Gardening

## **The UC Master Gardener program is a VOLUNTEER program, not a CERTIFICATE program.**

If accepted into the program, you are trained and then “certified” an active UC Master Gardener volunteer in the greater county program. You then volunteer your time (50 hours the first year, 25 each year thereafter) to remain “certified” and active in the program. If you fail to put in your volunteer hours, you are no longer able to claim “UC Master Gardener” status. Each UC Master Gardener program has multiple projects that a volunteer can become engaged in to earn their hours. There are plenty of volunteer opportunities!!

If you have more questions about the Placer or Nevada County Master Gardener program, feel free to call or email Kevin Marini – 530-889-7399 (Auburn); 530-273-4563 (Grass Valley) or [krmarini@ucdavis.edu](mailto:krmarini@ucdavis.edu)

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UC Master Gardeners of Placer County are University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) ambassadors to the Placer County home gardening community. UCCE is part of the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) of the University of California.  
UCCE Placer County: 11477 E Avenue, Auburn, CA 95603, (530) 889-7385

**UC Master Gardeners of Placer County Hotline: (530) 889-7388; Website: <http://pcmg.ucanr.org/>**