



University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Master Gardener Program

2014 SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE GUIDELINES

Search for Excellence (SFE) is the recognition program of Master Gardener volunteer work throughout the United States and Canada. Guidelines and criteria governing submissions for the 2014 UCCE Master Gardener Conference apply to the International Master Gardener SFE competition. Projects selected as previous winners in the UCCE Master Gardener SFE awards are ineligible. Judges selected from across the state. Deadline for application is **July 1, 2014**.

Project submissions must fit the following parameters to qualify for SFE awards:

- Projects judged on merit for work completed between 2011 – 2013
- Projects must be completed for a full year to be considered
- Entries must be group, not individual, projects
- Each county may submit multiple SFE applications, only one project per category will be considered

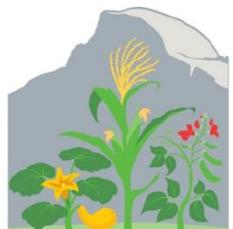
SFE Categories

- Youth programs
- Demonstration gardens
- Workshop or presentation
- Community service
- Innovative projects
- Special needs audiences (senior, disabled or horticultural therapy)
- Research (applied scientific methodology)

Submission Criteria

1. **Simple and easy to replicate** - The goal of SFE awards is to share ideas and projects that can easily be replicated by other UCCE Master Gardener programs. For example, a 20-acre botanical garden would be difficult to replicate, but gardening ideas inside the garden would be easy to replicate.
2. **Practical** - A SFE project is easy to use and fits well for the situation for which it was intended. A program might develop a wonderful project with a \$10 admission fee, but if people can't justify

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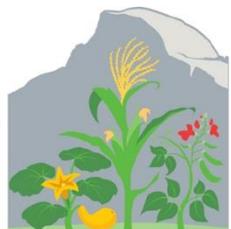
the fee they won't attend. Demonstrate that you have found the best way possible to meet the needs of your community.

3. **Original and creative** – Don't recreate the wheel, just utilize parts of it if it fits for your situation. We are looking for those added touches that make this program your own...or that reflect the personalities of the UCCE Master Gardeners who are working with it.
4. **Consistent with Cooperative Extension (UCCE) and Master Gardener missions** - Projects should have an educational component and information should be university research based. Projects must be available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientations, national origin, and marital or family status. Projects should extend the resources of the University to the public wherever they live, helping them use knowledge to solve problems at work, home, and in their communities.
5. **Significant learning and measurable impacts** - Significant learning, change in attitude, and practices are outcomes that Cooperative Extension uses to evaluate the impact of their services and programs. Impacts from UCCE Master Gardener projects should improve people's lives. Explain how your project augmented learning, increased knowledge, or changed practices to enhance quality of life. Impacts can be economical, environmental, educational, health, community-based, etc. Make sure to ask participants how your project informed them and record as an impact. Depending on the nature of the project the evaluations may be very informal (i.e. casually asking questions) or formal (i.e. pre-test/post-test).

For example: "How do you plan to use this information?" or "can you share specific information that you learned today?" shows impact - especially if you can report statistics, such as 70 percent of the participant plan to use fewer pesticides.

6. **Number of people impacted** - SFE projects should reach the most people possible from a targeted audience. Impact numbers are not as significant if the target audience does not learn or utilize the information.
7. **Complete cover sheet and two page application, including budget information** - Please give specific details as much as possible. Be sure to provide all information based on "Criteria for Judging" (see pg. 4). Be specific about educational goals met, include a budget of expenses and

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explanation of how project was funded. Note any other groups that worked on this project, if applicable.

Expectations

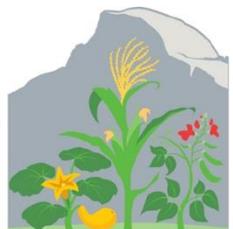
- All entries must include a short 50 - 100 words summary, summary will be shared in pre-conference publicity, and during the statewide conference
- All entrants are strongly encouraged to prepare a poster for display at the conference, regardless of award status. Please include photos of the project with documentation, county name, information about group, and other information to assist counties considering implementation of your project into their program. Must be no larger than 24 x 36". Arrangements should be made to pick up poster before the end of conference.
- If selected as a SFE winner, a representative give a short presentation (approx. 10 minutes) about winning project, at the 2014 UCCE Master Gardener Conference in October. It can presented in the format of your choice, i.e. as a talk, PowerPoint, or electronic slide show. Presenter need not be the person who submitted the entry, or person in charge of the project. Winning counties are asked to choose a dynamic presenter who is comfortable speaking to a large audience.
- Top three overall winners receive a monetary award, which will be presented to their county UCCE Master Gardener programs.
- There is no reimbursement for your registration fees or travel expenses to the conference.

Application Procedure

Final submissions (no more than three pages total, single-spaced) must include:

- A complete, typed cover sheet and application, including a 50-100 word summary of your project
- A two page description of the project and volunteer work completed (text only - no pictures)
- Pictures are not part of the application process, but will be needed for poster submission, or if project is selected
- Give completed submission to your UCCE Master Gardener Advisor or Coordinator for verification and certification of UCCE Master Gardeners involved.
- UCCE Advisors and/or Coordinator submit completed applications to SFE committee
- Deadline for applications is **July 1, 2014**. Incomplete applications will not be accepted and applications will not be accepted after that date.

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- Applications must be submitted in Microsoft Word or PDF format, all emails must include SFE and county name in the subject line.
- No hard copy or mailed applications will be accepted.
- Receipt of application will be verified via email within three days of receipt.
- Winners announced **September 1, 2014**.

Criteria for Judging:

Simplicity of project (easy to replicate)	10
Practicality, usefulness or relevance of project in relation to desired goal	10
Originality and creativity	10
Consistency with UCCE and Master Gardener missions	20
Significant learning evidenced	20
Number of people impacted	10
Clarity and completeness of project write-up (including budget and funding data)	20
Total possible points	= 100

For additional information, please contact:

Kevin Marini
Master Gardener Program Coordinator
Placer and Nevada Counties
UC Cooperative Extension
Phone: 530. 889. 7399

Email: krmarini@ucdavis.edu - Include county name and 'SFE' in subject line of any email correspondence.

Website:

[http://ucanr.edu/sites/ucmg2014conference/http_ ucanredu_sites_ucmg2014conference_/Search for Excellence /](http://ucanr.edu/sites/ucmg2014conference/http_ ucanredu_sites_ucmg2014conference_/Search_for_Excellence/)

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