



Expectations - Master Gardener School, Youth and Community Garden Support

Approved 12/08

Master Gardeners are trained by the University of California Cooperative Extension to provide the gardeners of **Riverside County** with research-based information to promote environmentally responsible and sustainable horticultural practices. Master Gardeners participate in this program entirely on a volunteer basis, not as paid employees.

Some Master Gardeners choose to accomplish our mission by serving as volunteer consultants to individuals and groups interested in beginning, improving and/or sustaining children's, school or community based gardens and by promoting garden-based learning and safe gardening practices as well as personal success/satisfaction in their garden settings. The volunteer consultant's role is to mentor and educate the group's leadership (such as teachers and parents for school gardens) who request their services. All of Riverside County's currently certified Master Gardeners have been finger-printed and have passed background screening by the California Department of Justice.

A Master Gardener volunteer consultant may provide advice on the following:

- Suggesting appropriate information resources including University of California publications for use by the Garden Team
- Determining objectives for the garden and student/community members' involvement
- Evaluating the garden site for soil suitability, orientation, size etc.
- Determining the basic needs (tools, irrigation, fencing, storage)
- Offering suggestions on bed size, soil preparation, composting, weed and pest control and summer/off season maintenance
- Recommending plant material or seeds to be planted and when to plant
- Identifying the level of support needed from parents, teachers and children and/or community leaders/members
- Meeting with the Garden Team (teachers, parents, counselors of after school programs, principals, district maintenance personnel, community team leaders and other volunteers/supporters) to provide educational support

Activities that should NOT be expected are:

- Performing physical labor
- Raising funds, writing or submitting grant applications, soliciting donations
- Maintaining the garden
- Purchasing or delivering supplies to the garden location
- Teaching children's classes without a teacher/children's leader present
- Supervising children's behavior/activities

Please keep in mind that volunteer Master Gardener consultants will act as mentors and do their best to assist you with advice, support and educational resource information to help you achieve your goals for a successful and sustainable garden project. Its ultimate success depends upon your dedication and willingness to supply and organize the labor to accomplish all of the related tasks. To request assistance from a Master Gardener Volunteer please call (951) 683-6491 or email mgriverside@ucanr.edu. Website: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/RiversideMG> .

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