About the Program

Who: Program participants include gardeners from all walks of life. Diversity of ethnicity, education and experience makes for a rich and rewarding learning experience.

How: Program participants are trained by NMSU Extension specialists, county agents, and local experts how to respond to community resident's questions, and how to share what they've learned with others.

What: Master Gardeners volunteer their time to assist their local Cooperative Extension Agent in sharing appropriate research-based gardening information and techniques with others in their community. The outcomes of this program benefit everyone involved and the landscapes they inhabit.

Master Gardener Curriculum

Core Curriculum

- Fundamentals of plant science
- Fundamentals of soil science
- Weather and climate
  - Plant Pathology
- Entomology and Integrated Pest Management
  - Weed Science
  - Pesticide Safety

Additional Classes (vary by county)

- Plant identification and selection
  - Principles of xeriscaping
- Landscape design and maintenance
  - Native plants
- Turfgrass selection and maintenance
  - Urban tree care
- Vegetable production
  - Fruit and nut production
  - Wildlife management
  - Composting
- Greenhouse / hoop-house production

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Master gardener classes are taught annually in some counties and every two years in other counties. Most counties offer classes in the spring, but a few offer classes in the fall. In order to find out more about the Master Gardener Program in your county, contact your local county extension office.

- Bernalillo County (bernalillo@nmsu.edu)
- Chaves County (chaves@nmsu.edu)
- Colfax County (colfax@nmsu.edu)
- Dona Ana County (donaana@nmsu.edu)
- Eddy County (eddy@nmsu.edu)
- Lea County (lea@nmsu.edu)
- Los Alamos County (losalamos@nmsu.edu)
- Otero County (otero@nmsu.edu)
- San Juan County (sanjuan@nmsu.edu)
- Sandoval County (sandoval@nmsu.edu)
- Santa Fe County (santafe@nmsu.edu)
- Taos County (taos@nmsu.edu)
- Valencia County (valencia@nmsu.edu)

**Program Accomplishments and Impacts**

- The New Mexico Master Gardener Programs train over 300 new Master Gardeners yearly and have over 1,000 active master gardeners statewide.
- New Mexico Master Gardeners return over 50,000 hours of volunteer service valued at $1,089,500 to the counties—volunteer service is equivalent to hiring 25 staff members.
- Teachers involved in master gardener developed school gardens in Dona Ana county report that students develop a greater interest in science, develop healthier eating habits and improve their overall attitude and behavior.
- Sandoval county master gardeners grow and donate over 2,000 lbs of vegetables to local community food banks.
- Master gardener established xeric native plant gardens in many counties teach visitors the importance of water conservation.

**County Master Gardener Programs and Contacts**

**Volunteer Activities**

Volunteer activities vary by county but may include the following:
- Answering calls on the gardening hotline
- School and youth education programs
- Adult education programs
- Development and maintenance of community gardens
- Growing and donating produce to community food banks
- Plant clinics - answering questions at community events and farmer’s markets
- Home visits
- Assisting with CES workshops and conferences
- Assisting NMSU faculty with extension demonstration and research projects

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