



2018 Master Gardener Certification Program

The University of Hawaii Master Gardener program is one of hundreds of similar programs throughout the United States and Canada. The first Master Gardener Program began in 1972 in Washington State and spread quickly to other Land Grant colleges in 45 states as well as Canada.

The program is a means of assisting home gardeners with their questions while freeing up University Extension Agents to focus on commercial operations. **The program is founded on volunteers disseminating research-based information in exchange for low-cost Master Gardener training by the local university.**

Today there are over 50,000 graduate/volunteers representing all walks of life and possessing varied horticultural backgrounds. Certified Master Gardener volunteers staff booths at county fairs and farmers markets, host plant clinics and plant sales, conduct workshops, develop and maintain community and educational gardens, write advice columns in local newspapers, and operate helplines at county extension offices, answering telephone and email requests for information by the gardening public.

In addition to providing free gardening advice to the public, Master Gardeners also help promote the University of Hawaii's College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources (CTAHR) and the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) and their mission: to provide community-based education and information dissemination throughout the state of Hawaii.

West Hawaii MG Program Requirements

The requirements for becoming a certified Master Gardener include 48 hours of instruction (classes, workshops and field trips) plus 40 hours of volunteer time, which must be completed within one year of the end of classes. At least 20 of the volunteer hours must consist of public outreach, such as the Master Gardener Help Line or community outreach events. Classes are held from 9 am to 12 noon at the Kona Cooperative Extension Service in Kainaliu on Tuesday mornings; 3 workshop/field trip days to be announced..

The course covers such topics as botany, plant identification, plant nutrition, soil fertility and nutrient management, insect and plant disease management, weed control, horticultural practices, food crops, and diagnosing plant health problems.

After completing the classes, passing the open-book tests and fulfilling the required 40 volunteer hours, a candidate will be awarded a University of Hawaii Master Gardener Certificate. To maintain certification, Master Gardeners are required to donate 30 volunteer hours on the Helpline, community outreach projects, Demonstration Garden/Orchard activities, or other approved activities each year.

The 2018 series of classes will begin on Tuesday, January 23, 2017. The classes are projected to run 13 weeks, through April 17th. **To apply for admission to the program, all participants are required to fill out an application form online and then submit it to Ty McDonald with \$175 payment (see application for details) by Friday, December 29, 2017.** Fill out the application form online at <https://goo.gl/forms/bWvfU9eDENzfmrvZ2>

You will increase your knowledge of horticultural information resources, improve your plant diagnostic skills, and become aware of current pest problems plaguing West Hawaii, all in a congenial and supportive environment. For those gardeners who are life-long lovers of learning, the Master Gardener program truly is a win-win situation.

Ty McDonald, University of Hawaii Extension Agent/ West Hawaii Master Gardener Program Coordinator
Kona Cooperative Extension Service
79-7381 Mamalahoa Hwy.
Kealahou, HI 96750

Telephone inquiries: Barbara Stancil 808-938-5432

Email inquiries: celestemakrevis@gmail.com

Visit West Hawaii Master Gardeners on Facebook [here](#) & on our web page <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/uhmg/WestHI/index.asp>