University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener
Bennington County Chapter

Scholarship Application for the 2027 Extension Master Gardener Course

About the Scholarship:

Recipients will receive a $250 scholarship from the Bennington County Chapter to be applied to the 2027 UVM Extension Master Gardener course. Scholarship funds are raised by Chapter members. In the event a recipient is unable to fulfill requirements for EMG certification, the recipient is expected to, in good faith, reimburse the Chapter for the full cost of the scholarship.

NOTE: Recipients who have fully paid for the course prior to receiving a scholarship will be reimbursed $250 from the Bennington County Chapter.

Eligibility:

- Applicants must live in Bennington County,
- Enroll in the course as a Track 1 (Volunteer Certification Track)* student,
- Volunteer to work on the Chapter plant sale(s) which funds the scholarship program,
- Pursue a 40-hour internship with UVM EMG-sponsored projects, within a two-year period, and
- Participate in Chapter learning opportunities, and other events that are hosted by the Bennington County Chapter.

Application Deadline:

The completed application and the signed Memorandum of Understanding, must be emailed to Deborah Benoit at: **intheberkshires@adelphia.net** by **5:00 pm E.T. on December 14, 2026**. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered. All applicants will be notified of the results by January 8, 2027.

About the Course:

The University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener program will offer its signature course during winter/ spring 2027. Registration is open until the deadline of January 8, 2027. This is a 16-week, non-credit online course that covers the fundamentals of home gardening and is focused on evidence-based plant and soil sciences. Topics include botany basics, soil management, annuals and perennials, insect and disease pest management, fruit and vegetable production and planning, garden pollinator habitat, tree care, and sustainable landscape design.

For 2027, the Extension Master Gardener course will open on January 15, 2027. Track 1 (volunteer certification) students must attend live Zoom sessions each Thursday evening from 6 to 7:30 p.m. starting on January 21 and running through May 6. The online course content closes to all students on June 6.

For details about the course, please visit the website at: http://www.uvm.edu/mastergardener/.

To request a disability-related accommodation to participate in this program, please contact Debra Heleba at debra.heleba@uvm.edu 802-656-1777 by December 14, 2026 so we may assist you.

*Please note: Track 1 students are required to complete a volunteer application, background check consent form, and a Minor Protection training.

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Bennington County Chapter Scholarship Application

Email the completed application by no later than 5 p.m. ET on December 14, 2026 or send via USPS mail (must be postmarked by December 14) to:

Deborah Benoit at **intheberkshires@adelphia.net**
134 Barlow Ave., North Adams, MA 01247

Contact Information

Name:

Address:

City/Town: Zip code:

Email address: Phone number:

Please answer the following questions (below or on a separate page), limiting each answer to no more than 150 words.

1. How did you hear about the Master Gardener course and scholarship opportunity?

2. Please share how you might fulfill your commitment to volunteer 20 hours/ year for the next two years toward EMG certification.

3. Do you agree to volunteer under the guidance of a Certified EMG Mentor (if available) who has been selected by the EMG Chapter Steering Team? If yes, please share what types of support you would benefit from a mentor.

4. How will you contribute to the goal of Extension Master Gardeners to promote successful, safe and environmentally prudent home horticulture practices through education and community activities?

5. What is your area of interest in gardening? Flowers? Landscape? Vegetables?

6. Describe your experience and level of expertise as a gardener (please note that scholarship selections will not be based on the level of your gardening experience).

Memorandum of Understanding

2027 UVM Extension Master Gardener Course Scholarship

Scholarship recipients are selected on the basis of the applicant's interest in the UVM Extension Master Gardener (EMG) program, commitment to participate in Extension Master Gardener events and projects, and the number of scholarships available. Upon successful completion of the 2027 Extension Master Gardener Course as a Track 1 student, the recipient agrees to pursue a 40-hour internship within a two-year period. As an EMG Intern, the recipient agrees to volunteer under the guidance of a Certified EMG Mentor (if available) who has been selected by the EMG Chapter Steering Team. The EMG Mentor will help the intern select an approved project. This project will provide hands-on gardening experience as well as exposure to chapter communication and operations. The recipient is also expected to participate in chapter learning opportunities, annual plant sale and other events that their local Extension Master Gardener Chapter hosts.

Selection Criteria:

The Chapter Steering Committee will meet to determine Scholarship recipients. Criteria will be based on:

- A commitment to complete the Extension Master Gardener internship and earn EMG certification.
- A commitment to work with a mentor (if available) who will support you during your internship.
- A commitment to share acquired knowledge with fellow EMG's and the general public.
- A commitment to be an active volunteer on Chapter projects and events.

If selected, I understand the expectations and selection criteria outlined above. My signature confirms my commitment to this agreement.

_____ _____

Printed Name Date

_____

Signature