



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
**EXTENSION**  
MASTER GARDENER

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2018-2019**





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**EXTENSION MASTER  
GARDENERS ARE YOUR  
NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS  
WHO SHARE UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH-BASED  
HORTICULTURE INFORMATION  
AND PROMOTE  
HEALTHY LANDSCAPES,  
HEALTHY PEOPLE AND A  
HEALTHY PLANET.**

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**Cover Photo:** Beret Halverson

## PROGRAM IMPACT

The UVM Extension Master Gardener (EMG) program cultivates gardening communities throughout Vermont. Our program provides technical assistance to Vermonters on consumer horticulture and integrated pest management topics. We educate and train volunteers to deliver community-based horticulture programs and research-based information. Our certified volunteers promote successful, safe and environmentally prudent horticulture practices that are healthy for people and the environment.

In 2018 and 2019, our 381 active volunteers put in over 12,157 volunteer hours, and led 91 community gardening and composting projects which impacted 49,903 Vermonters. They provided communities with 105,326 pounds of fresh produce. Volunteers provide technical assistance and educational opportunities at gardens, libraries, museums, schools, senior centers, parks, town centers, early childhood centers and more. 138 volunteers worked with youth, 172 volunteers worked with adults, and 166 volunteers worked with older adults. Master Gardeners led outreach efforts: provided horticulture therapy; led stewardship and restoration projects; and created and enhanced green spaces for the public to enjoy nature and access plants.

## 2018-2019 PROGRAMS IN REVIEW

The UVM Extension Master Gardener Helpline provided direct support for 989 people in 2019. We estimate that 260 people participated in our two online courses in 2018-2019, including 16 out-of-state students and 244 in-state students.

## EDUCATION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

### 2018:

- Fall Master Composter Online Course and two in-person trainings (55 participants)
- State Extension Master Gardener Conference at the Four Corners Foundation in Windham, Vt. (75 participants)

### 2019:

- Extension Master Gardener Online Course (95 participants)
- 10 Summer Advanced Trainings (100 participants)
- Master Gardener Helpline (989 participants)
- Fall Master Composter Online Course (100 participants)
- Master Gardener State Conference at Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, Vt. (134 participants)

**TOTAL: 1,548 participants**

**96% OF STUDENTS WERE SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED WITH THE INSTRUCTORS AND CONTENT OF THE 2019 MASTER GARDENER COURSE, AND 97% OF STUDENTS WERE SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED WITH THE 2019 MASTER COMPOSTER COURSE.**

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

### Annual Volunteer Support Programs:

1. Nursery Discount: Each January, we reach out to Vermont nurseries and garden centers statewide, asking for discounts for active Master Gardeners. In 2018, 11 businesses participated, and in 2019 21 businesses provided discounts.
2. Educational Resources: EMGs receive a master list of approximately 200 conferences, webinars, workshops, garden tours, blogs, podcasts, websites, and a list of horticultural experts to explore for chapter education workshops.
3. Grant Opportunities: We distribute a current list of approximately 30 grant programs and foundations which chapters and project leaders can explore to support horticultural education initiatives.
4. Recognition Events: Each year the state office recognizes EMGs who have volunteered 250, 500, 750, or 1,000 hours. Several local chapters also host recognition activities.
5. Intern Support: Two times each year, new interns are matched with mentors who share their interests, and work on projects related to food security, school gardens, historic restoration, therapeutic gardens, community gardens and demonstration gardens.

### Chapter Leader Support:

EMG program staff attend chapter meetings and networking events to share success strategies and best practices for chapter leadership. Chapters vary in or-

ganizational structure, activities, and leadership roles. For example, the Windsor Chapter has co-chairs, a treasurer, and a newsletter editor, and hosts three to four education programs and a plant sale each year. The Northwest Chapter (based in Burlington) shares chapter organization among six volunteers, meets in the fall for a planning session, and hosts events each month including films, garden tours, meet-and-greet potlucks and education programs. During this fiscal year, 33 volunteer leaders organized activities in six chapters around the state.

### Project Leader Support:

There are 90 Extension Master Gardener and Master Composter volunteer projects around the state. These include school-based projects, historic restoration and demonstration gardens, news articles/Facebook pages, horticulture therapy, community gardens, plant sales, information tables, community and rain gardens, invasive plant research projects, and projects which supply organic food to schools and non-profit organizations. More than 100 volunteer project leaders maintain strong working relationships with project partners including towns, non-profits, schools, and other institutions which support master gardener projects, publicize their projects, recruit volunteers, provide education, and mentor interns.





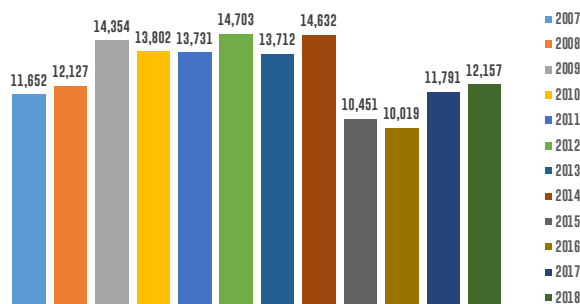
## GOALS

For August 2019 through August 2020

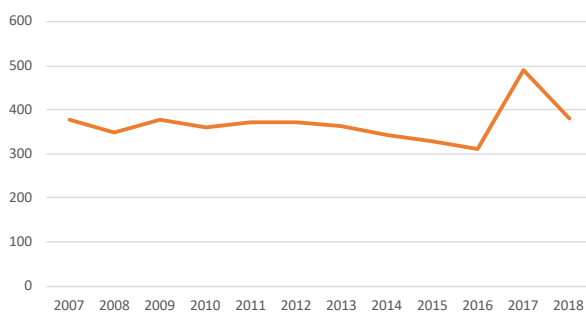


Continue to improve  
advanced training programs  
and online offerings.

## VOLUNTEER HOURS



## # OF VOLUNTEERS



## PROGRAM STATISTICS

# \$305,708.55

## VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS THIS YEAR

## FOOD SECURITY

# 105,326

 pounds of food donated

# 53

 Volunteers reached food insecure groups

## REACH

# 138

 Volunteers reached Vermont youth (up to 17 years old)

# 72

 Volunteers reached low-income groups

## UVM MASTER GARDENER HELPLINE

# 16

 Volunteers

# 73

 Specimens

# 470

 Phone Calls

# 387

 Emails





## MASTER GARDENER HELPLINE

Cool, wet spring conditions led to several recurring diseases including cedar apple rust (orange spots on apples leaves), apple scab (apples losing their leaves), maple anthracnose (maples dropping leaves) and peach leaf curl (reddish area on developing leaves). While there were calls from home gardeners concerned about late blight, it didn't make it to Vermont this year.

There were also calls and questions such as, "why are my berries so mushy?" In most cases, the answer was due to spotted wing drosophila, an insect which burrows into berries. Interestingly, the Helpline didn't hear much about leek moth this year; perhaps because the public is more aware and hopefully more prepared to manage it. There were also numerous distressed calls from gardeners who found *Amyntas agrestis*, a.k.a. "crazy snake worm" in their compost, gardens and yards.

2019 was a sad year for Helpline staff and volunteers. Two dedicated volunteers passed away and a third moved to California. We are honoring these three wonderful volunteers by remembering their contributions to the Master Gardener program.

**Don Hipes**, EMG '95. Don volunteered at the helpline for over 18 years, volunteering over 1,700 hours! He thoroughly enjoyed sharing his broad range of knowledge

of horticulture not only with Vermonters, but also with interns he mentored at the Helpline. We remember Don as being patient, calm, smart, shy, dedicated, kind and having a great sense of humor. Don passed away in October 2019.

**Carol Holmquist**, EMG '14. Carol started volunteering at the Helpline in 2017, and from the beginning it was obvious that she loved doing research and helping Vermonters with their home gardening questions. She enjoyed sharing her wide range of knowledge on climate change, growing herbs, and growing microgreens indoors, through the many presentations she developed and presented at the Extension Annual Conferences. We are very grateful for the time we spent working with her. Carol passed away in August 2019.

**Dana Engel**, EMG '06. Dana volunteered at the helpline for over 13 years, volunteering over 350 hours! Dana is curious, insightful, upbeat, funny, blunt, confident, smart and spirited! She has settled into her new home in Oakland, California and enjoys spending time with her family and friends. Thank you, Dana, for your commitment to the Master Gardener Helpline.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## State Conference Planning Committee

Five Northwest and Central Master Gardeners were hard at work behind the scenes in 2019 planning the annual state conference, "Caring for People Plants and Our Planet," at the Shelburne Museum. Planning committee members were Bob Kesner (marketing), Judy Mirro (food), Karen Burke (speakers), Linda Pitkin (marketing) and Carol Holmquist (fundraising). This was the third annual conference, and the second to take place in the North/Central region. The first state conference (October 2017) was held at The North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier, and the second (October 2018) was held at the Fourth Corner Foundation in Windham. Next year, the fourth conference will rotate back down to the southern region. The Master Gardener Program staff extends a big "thank you" to everyone who worked so hard to make this conference a success, and most especially to the Shelburne Museum for generously donating the space and the NW Master Gardener Chapter for donating the breakfast food.

## North Branch Nature Center Compost Demonstration, Montpelier, Vt.

In partnership with the North Branch Nature Center (NBNC) and the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District, Master Gardener/Composter volunteer Sandy Parr organized a community composting demonstration project. Sandy and other volunteers constructed a large Jora composter, a three-bin composting system and two Green Cone digesters, and hosted two compost workshops on site. Volunteers helped establish a community compost drop-off where NBNC members can drop off kitchen scraps for composting. A signboard explains how the composting site operates, and the composting equipment is accessible as a demonstration for the general public. The compost created on site will be used in the NBNC Master Gardener pollinator gardens.

## Northfield Promise Playground, Northfield, Vt.

This new community playground is also a Master Gardener project. The space was developed to improve Kindergarten readiness and access to physical activity for children through age six, and provides multi-sensory play experiences. This space includes a playhouse and mud kitchen for imaginary play, musical instruments, plants for play, blueberry bushes, rock garden, walking track, pretend car, friendship swing and two grass mounds for running up and down.

EMG volunteers chose, planted and now maintain the playground plants, and create educational signage appropriate for both young children and families. Exposure to EMG resources helps teach young families the value of sustainable gardening practices and research-based information.

## The Haven, White River Jct., Vt.

The Upper Valley Haven entered its sixth season of collaboration with the UVM Extension Master Gardeners (EMG) during spring 2019. A team of 15 volunteers manage extensive gardens including two well-established asparagus beds; rhubarb, blueberries and raspberries; a grape arbor and currants; apple, pear and plum trees; and several kitchen gardens with herbs and annual vegetables. Fruits and vegetables grown at the Haven are available to more than 1,100 families each month. Partnerships with Dartmouth College, Upper Valley Apple Corps, and the Vermont Community Garden Network support this project.



## Howard Dean Education Center (HDEC), Springfield, Vt.

The demonstration gardens at HDEC are a long-standing project in collaboration with the Horticulture and Natural Resources program at River Valley Technical Center. The site provides pollinator habitat and hands-on, horticulture volunteer opportunities for students from River Valley Technical Center (RVTC). With full sun exposure, and surrounded by concrete sidewalks and pavement, the gardens are an excellent example of how drought-tolerant annuals, perennials, dahlias and fruit trees can thrive in a xeriscape (little or no irrigation) environment.





## 2018 EXCEPTIONAL VOLUNTEERS & AWARDS

### Exceptional Volunteers

The Extension Master Gardener Program honors and thanks the following volunteers who went above and beyond this year:

**Don Hipes 95'**, Helpline Volunteer for 18 years

**Mary Ann Castimore**, Helpline Volunteer / Addison Field Days Table Organizer, 864 hours

**Wendy Alger**, Central Chapter Chair

Northern Region Conference Planning Committee: **Karen Burke, Carol Holmquist, Bob Kesner, Judy Mirro, Linda Pitkin**

### Awards

Thank you to the following volunteers for their service in 2018:

#### 250+ hours

Megan Battey, Jean Bergman, Anne Bula, Phil Carter, Bea Cole, Barbara Curran, Ann Dehner, Clara Gilbertson, Karen Gollegly, Carol Holmquist, Karen Patno, Marie Porreca, Wendy Savoie, Dorothy Sundquist, Heather Woodworth

#### 500+ hours

Christine Barnes, Alma Beals, Gloria Hammond, Kim Holzberger, Bob Kesner, LindaLou Parker, Robilee Smith, Ann Squires

#### 750+ hours

Michele Delhay, Trish Kargman, Kitty Werner

### Lifetime Members

There are currently 30 Lifetime Members of the Master Gardener Program. These are exceptional volunteers who have contributed 1,000 or more volunteer program hours. The following volunteers have reached their 1,000-hour milestone: **Charlene Clifford '04, Judith Hebert '04, Kate Mesaros '06**. Congratulations!



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## JOIN US

Become a Master Gardener or Composter Volunteer, and help UVM Extension grow healthy plants, people and Vermont environment. To find out how to become a Master Gardener Volunteer visit [go.uvm.edu/emg](http://go.uvm.edu/emg).

## SUPPORT US

Your support helps us continue to train new EMG and Vermont Master Composter students, provide continuing education to members, operate the Garden Information Helpline, and place EMG volunteer educators in local outreach projects throughout Vermont. Visit [go.uvm.edu/emg-fund](http://go.uvm.edu/emg-fund) to learn more or to donate.

**[www.uvm.edu/mastergardener](http://www.uvm.edu/mastergardener)**

## DEPARTMENT STAFF

### *Plant Diagnostic Clinic*

Ann Hazelrigg, Gabriella Maia

### *Master Gardener Program*

Lisa Chouinard, Beret Halverson, Cindy Heath

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National Institute of Food and Agriculture