



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION

By-Laws
of the
**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION MASTER GARDENERS OF
CARVER/SCOTT COUNTIES**

The purpose of this organization is to coordinate Master Gardener endeavors to improve the quality of life and the environment through horticultural education by disseminating University of Minnesota researched-based information. Further, the organization will provide opportunities for continuing education for its members.

ARTICLE I - NAME

- Section 1. The name of the organization shall be the Carver/Scott Master Gardeners; hereafter referred to as the Program.
- Section 2. The Program is a non-profit, non-partisan group having as its primary concern the education of citizens of Carver and Scott counties in Minnesota regarding horticultural activities.

ARTICLE II - SPONSORS

- Section 1. The sponsors of this organization are the University of Minnesota Extension, Carver County, Scott County, and the University of Minnesota State Master Gardener Program.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. The membership will consist of certified University of Minnesota Master Gardeners in good standing, Master Gardener Interns, the Coordinator or other Extension representatives (if any), and certain other individuals (see Article III, Sections 4, 5).
- Section 2. Master Gardener Interns
- a. Interns are those who have been accepted by a screening committee from the Program and have completed the Core Course training, but have not yet fulfilled their obligation of 50 volunteer work hours.
 - b. No fewer than 75% of total hours volunteered during the intern year must be performed inside of Carver and/or Scott counties or at pre-approved Program events occurring outside of the county. In addition, interns must attend a minimum of five (5) monthly Program meetings during their qualifying year.
- Section 3. Certified Master Gardeners in Good Standing
- a. Certified Master Gardeners are those Master Gardeners who have completed their 50 volunteer work hours of internship by December 31 of their intern year, and have attended at least five (5) regular monthly program meetings. In special cases, by approval of the Executive Committee, internship may be carried over into a second year, in which case the Master Gardener will not become certified until all requirements are completed.

Article III, Section 3 continued

- b. To be "In good standing" requires the certified member to complete 25 volunteer work hours during each fiscal year (ending December 31) following certification. No fewer than 75% of the total hours volunteered in that year must be performed inside of Carver and/or Scott counties.
- c. To be "in good standing" further requires completing a total of five (5) hours of continuing education during each fiscal year following certification. These hours may be filled by attending five (5) monthly Program meetings. A minimum of four (4) hours of the education requirement must be obtained from attendance at (4) monthly meetings. Education other than that obtained at meetings must be approved by the Executive Committee.
- d. Since we are a large organization, we bring diverse talents, interests and values to the program. Such diversity can also bring conflict. Master Gardener volunteers shall always treat each other, the public, and Extension staff with unqualified respect. Compliance to the Code of Conduct Policy of the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota is required by all Master Gardeners. Any volunteer who poses a threat to any adult or child, to existing or potential volunteers, or who disrupts the activities or goals of Extension, including the Master Gardener Program, may be terminated at any time upon majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Section 4

Certified Master Gardeners who do not meet the criteria in Section 3 above may still be allowed membership upon:

- a. Written application to the Executive Committee, prior to the end of the year, requesting a temporary (maximum one year) exception to the criteria, said application to include an explanation of the serious and unforeseen reason(s) for the request; and
- b. Unanimous approval of the Executive Committee

Section 5

Temporary and Permanent Inactive status

- a. Temporary Inactive (TI) status is possible in certain circumstances for a period of time up to one year. TI status may be granted by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. Requests must be made in writing to the Program Chair or Extension Representative, if any, prior to any quarterly meeting.
- b. Members granted Temporary Inactive status may not receive notice of meetings, nor will they be allowed a vote during the period of time they are in approved temporary inactive status. Members will be returned to Active status when the TI period has expired providing they resume their required educational and volunteer activities.
- c. Members who do not resume active membership requirements following Temporary Inactive status will be placed on Permanent Inactive status.
- d. Once a member has been placed on Permanent Inactive status, he/she cannot return to active status unless accepted by the Interview Committee of the Carver/Scott Master Gardeners, and he or she may be required to retake the Core Course training.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICIAL BODIES

- Section 1. The official body shall be known as the Carver/Scott Master Gardeners, which includes an Executive Committee and any other special committees deemed necessary by the Program.
- Section 2. **Officers**
- a. Officers of the organization shall be the Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), Chair, Co-Chair/Secretary (hereafter referred to as the Co-Chair), Ex-Officio Chair, Finance Coordinator, and Treasurer.
 - b. The Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), will remain an officer of the Program without election from the body at large.
 - c. Nominations for office shall be made by a Nominating Committee, which shall be formed no less than one month prior to the election.
 - d. Officers subject to election shall be elected by ballot, by and from the members at least one month prior to the Program's Annual meeting. With the exception of the Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), officers must be Certified Master Gardeners in good standing. Interns are not eligible to serve as officers.
 - e. Terms of office shall be one year, with the Co-Chair progressing into the position of Chair the second year, and ex-officio Chair the third year. The Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), along with the Treasurer and Finance Coordinator, may serve an unlimited number of terms.
 - f. In the event any elected officer cannot fulfill their term of office, such position may be filled by appointment of the Executive Committee for the duration of the term.
- Section 3. **Program meetings**
- a. The Program shall regularly meet monthly, except December. The Annual Meeting shall be held no later than January 31 of each year.
 - b. **Meeting Notice**
 1. Notice of all meetings shall be given by either Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), or Chair via email, mail, facsimile, or other appropriate means.
 2. Notice shall be sent to each member at their last known home or email address not less than five (5) days before the date of the proposed meeting. The Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), or Newsletter Editor shall file the original copy of such notice.
 3. Failure of any member to receive such a notice shall not invalidate the action which may be taken at such a meeting.
 - c. **Special meetings**
 1. Special meetings shall be called by either Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), or Chair when petitioned by five or more of the members, or at his/her discretion.
 2. No business shall be considered at a special meeting except that mentioned in the notice of the meeting.
 - d. **Quorum** - 33% of active membership shall constitute a quorum.

Article IV, Section 3, continued

- e. Voting
 - 1. Each member shall be entitled to one (1) vote on all items requiring action.
 - 2. An act of the majority of members entitled to vote and present at a meeting at which a quorum has been declared shall be an act of the Program.

Section 4. Executive Committee

- a. The Executive Committee is responsible for Program management.
- b. The purpose of the Executive committee shall be to: provide leadership, take emergency action, and make policy and procedural recommendations to and for the Program. It shall act for, and in the name of, the Carver/Scott Master Gardeners.
- c. The Executive Committee has the right to review membership numbers periodically and set limits as needed.
- d. In addition to the Officers, the Executive committee shall be composed of the State Advisory Board Representative (if any); two (2) Members-at-large; and Category Chairs and/or Co-chairs from each of five categories (Teaching, Individual Contact, Community Partnerships, Communications, and Special Marketing Events). In the event of a contested decision, each Category will be granted only one vote.
- e. The Executive Committee officers and members-at-large shall be elected prior to the annual meeting. Term of office shall begin in January of each year. Executive Committee officers and members-at-large may serve no more than three (3) consecutive years in any capacity, with the exception of the Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), the Treasurer, and the Finance Coordinator, who may each serve indefinitely.
- f. One Member-at-large will be determined from the remaining slate of candidates determined prior to the Annual Meeting. The term of office will be two years, with one new Member-at-large added each year. Determination will be done by random drawing, or by second highest vote count at the time of officer election.
- g. The five Category chairs and their co-chairs will be appointed to their positions by the officers of the Executive Committee. These appointments are renewable yearly.
- h. Unexcused absences from two (2) or more consecutive Executive Committee meetings by a Committee member shall be cause for the Executive Committee to dismiss the member and appoint a new member to carry out responsibilities on the Executive Committee only.
- i. If any committee member or officer is unable to carry out their duties on the Executive Committee and provisions are not set down elsewhere in these bylaws for their replacement, the Executive Committee has the right to appoint a new member to carry out responsibilities.
- j. Meetings - The Executive Committee shall meet as needed, with a minimum of four meetings per year.

Article IV, Section 4 continued

- k Meetings of the Executive committee may be conducted by conference call provided a quorum is included. Voting may be done by email provided the result is unanimous for ratification. In the event of a disputed vote, a special meeting will be convened.
 - l. Quorum - the presence of 50% or more members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.
 - m. Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings will be available on request seven days following the meeting.
- Section 5. Committees will be established and approved as needed by the Program and/or the Executive Committee. These committees may be either permanent or temporary in nature, and may include Interview, County Fair, Nominating, By-Law, Help Desk, Garden Fever, and Yard & Garden Line Committees, among others.

ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- Section 1. **Coordinator, or other designated Extension Representative (if any)** - Responsible for overseeing all aspects of the Program and for supervising all the property of the Program. Further, to act as liaison between the Program and the County Extension Offices, along with the State Office, as needed. In addition, this officer shall:
- a. Assist members with recording of volunteer and education hours. This shall include reporting these hours yearly to the State Office. This officer has final authority for determination of acceptable educational and volunteer activities.
 - b. Work with Chair and Co-Chair to determine educational needs, plan monthly meetings and complete the physical arrangements for the meetings.
 - c. Confirm meeting speakers with a phone call and follow-up letter outlining date, time, location, topic, length of lecture and equipment needed. Follow up with confirmation call 7-10 days prior to event.
 - d. Evaluate the Program effectiveness and work with Executive Committee to institute changes.
 - e. Evaluate community needs and ensure formation of necessary committees to address those needs.
 - f. Work with State Advisory Board committee member, if any, and other State, Regional, county, and civic groups to keep the Executive Committee advised of broader issues that may affect our Program.
 - g. Publish a monthly newsletter which shall include notification to all members of upcoming meetings. This notification shall be no later than five (5) days prior to the meeting.
 - h. Confirm volunteer staffing at approved events such as community service, town expos, or other activity where no specific Chair already serves this function.
 - i. Attend meetings of the Executive Committee.
 - j. Submit year-end summary of activities at the Annual Meeting in January.

Article V continued

- k. Work with Category and Committee Chairs to develop yearly sign-up sheets in time for the Intern Orientation and February meetings.

Section 2.

Chair - This is a three-year obligation; 1st year as Co-Chair; 2nd year as Chair; 3rd year as Ex-officio Chair. Chair and Co-Chair shall not reside in the same participating county (Carver/Hennepin vs Scott/Dakota/Sibley). Subject to the general control of the Program, the Chair shall manage, direct, and supervise all affairs and business of the Program. In addition, the Chair shall:

- a. Work with the Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), along with the Co-chair to determine educational needs, plan monthly meetings and provide for the physical arrangements for the meetings.
- b. In the absence of a Coordinator, this officer shall confirm meeting speakers with a phone call and follow-up letter outlining the date, time, location, topic, length of lecture and equipment needed. Follow up with confirmation call 7-10 days prior to event.
- c. Inform the newsletter editor of all pertinent information regarding upcoming meetings in time for inclusion in the next meeting notice/newsletter.
- d. Preside at all meetings of the Program and the Executive Committee including presiding at Garden Fever
- e. Develop and distribute the agenda and meeting notices for all Executive Committee meetings
- f. Develop and distribute new member packets for incoming Executive Committee members in January.
- h. Sign all papers and instruments of the Program, unless otherwise directed by the Executive Committee and/or the University of Minnesota Extension.

Section 3.

Co-Chair/Secretary - elected to a 3-year term; 1st year as Co-chair; 2nd as Chair, 3rd as Ex-officio Chair. The Chair and Co-chair shall not reside in the same county (Carver/Hennepin vs Scott/Dakota/Sibley). The Co-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence or inability of the Chair to act. In addition, the Co-Chair shall:

- a. Work with Coordinator or Extension Representative (if any), and Chair to determine educational needs, plan monthly meetings and determine the physical arrangements of meetings. Co-Chair is solely responsible for menu and location planning for the annual meeting in January.
- b. Record minutes of regular Program meetings and provide a written copy to the newsletter editor for inclusion in the next meeting notice/newsletter.
- c. Record minutes of Executive Committee meetings, distributing copies to Executive Committee members prior to the next meeting.
- d. Keep a true and complete record of the proceedings of all minutes of both the Program and Executive Committee meetings. This record shall be passed along to the subsequent Co-Chair, and kept on file indefinitely.
- e. Prior to assuming the position of Chair, create a sign-in sheet with current members' names to be available at the February meeting.

Article V continued

Section 4.

Ex-Officio Chair - elected to a 3-year term; 1st year as Co-Chair; 2nd as Chair, 3rd as Ex-officio Chair. The Ex-officio Chair shall serve in an advisory capacity for the Chair and Co-chair at both general meetings and Executive Committee meetings. The Ex-officio Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence or inability of the Chair and the Co-Chair to act. In addition, the Ex-officio Chair shall:

- a. Work with Category and Committee Chairs to develop yearly sign-up sheets in time for the Intern Orientation and February meetings.
- b. Organize and manage the Intern Orientation in January/February
- c. In absence of a Coordinator, confirm volunteer staffing at approved events such as community service, town expos, or other activity where no specific Chair already serves this function.

Section 5.

Treasurer - elected annually, the Treasurer can serve an unlimited number of terms. In addition to all duties incident to the office of Treasurer, this officer shall:

- a. Keep correct and complete records of the accounts.
- b. Have charge and custody of all funds.
- c. Receive and disburse all funds.
- d. Present requests for money to the Executive Committee for discussion. Write and sign approved checks.
- e. Deposit all funds in a timely manner with such depository as the Executive Committee shall designate.
- f. Balance checkbook monthly.
- g. Attend Executive Committee Meetings.
- g. Have the most recent quarterly financial report available for review by the membership at large, upon request, at each regular Program meeting.

Section 6.

Finance Coordinator Appointed annually by the Executive Committee, the Finance Coordinator may serve an unlimited number of terms. In addition to all duties incident to the office of Finance Coordinator, this officer shall:

- a. Attend Executive Committee Meetings.
- b. Keep correct and complete records of the accounts.
- c. Submit a quarterly financial report to the Executive Committee.
- d. Submit a complete and detailed report of the past year's financial transactions preferably at/for the January Executive Committee meeting.
- e. Submit a proposed budget for Garden Fever and for the general operation of the Program for the coming year.

Section 7.

Members-At-Large - determined at the annual meeting from the remaining slate of candidates, each of the two Members-at-Large serves a term of two years by attending Executive Committee Meetings. In addition, they:

- a. Represent the interests and concerns of their respective counties.

Section 7 continued

- b. Evaluate the needs of their communities and ensure formation of necessary committees and programs to address those needs.

Section 8. **State Advisory Board Representative(s)** - Selected by an application process through the State Master Gardener Advisory Board for a term of three years. If any of our members serve in this capacity, they will serve concurrently as a member of the Executive Committee. As such they shall:

- a. Attend Executive Committee Meetings
- b. Report to the Executive Committee on Advisory Board actions that could affect our local Program

ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF CATEGORY CHAIRS AND CO-CHAIRS

Section 1. **All Category Chairs and Co-chairs** are appointed annually by the Executive Committee and may serve an unlimited number of terms. Chairs shall:

- a. Attend Executive Committee Meetings or designate the Co-Chair to attend in their absence.
- b. Coordinate with chairs of committees assigned to their category to avert or solve problems as they arise
- c. Find replacements as needed for chairs of their assigned committees.
- d. Meet with all assigned committee chairs at least once yearly
- e. Ensure that committee programming is scheduled in a timely manner with the Ex-Officio Chair or the Coordinator or other Extension Representative (if any).

Section 2. Category A (Teaching) Chair – responsible for activities involving youth and adult education through teaching sessions with school districts, nursing homes, libraries, etc.

Section 3. Category B/C (Individual Contact: Q&A/Phone) Chair – responsible for activities involving one on one contact with the public, including Health & Safety Fairs, County Fairs, Help Desks, Yard & Garden Line, etc.

Section 4. Category E (Community Partnerships) – responsible for activities connected to partnerships with other organizations, including Habitat for Humanity, Environmental Services, Fairgrounds Teaching Gardens, Plant a Row for the Hungry, Site visits, etc.

Section 5. Category F (Communications) – responsible for all activities involving media communications such as Writers, TV Team, Displays, and Website, etc.

Section 6. Category G/I (Special Marketing Events) – responsible for large events that produce revenue or market our programs, such as the Plant Sale, City to Country Tour, Excelsior Apple Day, Master Garden Tour, Art/Awards, and Evenings in the Garden, etc. Garden Fever falls in this category, but is administered by Category H

Section 7. Category H (Administration) – The current overall Chair and the Coordinator or other Extension Representative (if any), will serve in this capacity, with assistance from the current Executive Committee members. The position is responsible for, but not limited to, activities connected to administration such as interviews, grant writing, and Garden Fever.

ARTICLE VII - OPERATING FUNDS

- Section 1. The Carver/Scott Master Gardeners are funded mainly by Carver and Scott Counties through the University of Minnesota.
- Section 2. Monies paid to members for appearances at garden centers, talks to communities, etc. are to be turned over to the Program Treasurer. No money may be accepted by individual members while they are performing in an official University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener capacity.
- Section 3. Additional funding for the Program may be raised by various fund-raising activities.
- Section 4. No part of the finances of the Program shall contribute to the benefit of, or be distributed to, its members, Executive Committee, or other private persons, except as reimbursement for legitimate and reasonable expenses incurred on behalf of the Program.
- Section 5. If county funding for the Program is discontinued, and the program becomes solely affiliated with the University of Minnesota, all existing funds and property will remain with the group. However, if the Program is dissolved, the final act of the Executive Committee will be to determine the distribution of all funds and goods. Any remaining funds shall be distributed to the University of Minnesota Master Gardener Program. Depreciating physical assets such as computers or projectors become property of Carver/Scott counties. No part of the assets of the Carver/Scott Master Gardeners shall ever be distributed to or used for the benefit of any member, or any private individuals or corporations.

ARTICLE VIII- CHANGE IN BY-LAWS

- Section 1. These By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of members present at any Annual Meeting or special meeting where a quorum is present, with notification in writing five (5) days prior to meeting.

ARTICLE IX - SAVING CLAUSES

- Section 1. Any portion of these By-Laws found to be contrary to law shall not invalidate other portions.
- Section 2. Any portion of these By-Laws found to be contrary to guidance of the University of Minnesota, the University of Minnesota Extension, and/or the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener program shall not invalidate other portions.

ARTICLE X - EFFECTIVE DATE

- Section 1. These By-Laws shall be effective January 14, 2013

Natalie Twining
Chair

Mandy Urness
Co-Chair

Deb Tomczyk
Ex-officio Chair

Tom Hughes
Treasurer