



Why-Ask a Master Gardener
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UCCE Master Gardener of El Dorado County

You've seen that phrase, "Advice to Grow By" on the Homepage for the statewide Master Gardener website and on UC Agriculture and Natural Resources publications. Ever wonder just what it means? Who gives advice and what makes them qualified?

In a couple of words - the answers are provided by UCCE Master Gardeners.

What is a Master Gardener? We are non-paid, volunteer agents of the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE). We undergo a training program that runs for 15 weeks, pass written tests, and are certified by the University of California. After certification, we then go through an internship period where our work is overseen by experienced Master Gardeners. Only after passing both the classroom training and the internship are new Master Gardeners let loose to answer home gardeners' questions.

The home gardener is our client. Whether you concentrate on vegetables, ornamentals, fruit trees, annuals, drought-tolerant plants, or any combination, Master Gardeners are always happy and willing to answer any questions you might have.

But just how do the Master Gardeners have so much information at their fingertips? The answer is, we don't - but we know where to find the answers. Becoming a Master Gardener requires two critical characteristics. These are a thirst for expanding gardening knowledge, and a strong desire to give back to the local community through volunteering in various ways.

During training and through required continuing education, all Master Gardeners are given the tools to assist you in all things gardening. Our sources must always provide science-based, researched information. Whether your question has to do with how to control pests, when to

January 10, 2018

prune roses, how to propagate perennials, whatever garden related - Master Gardeners have received in-depth training and are made familiar with the research and websites that help us answer your questions.

There are several ways that the Master Gardeners are available to engage with you:

The Master Gardener office is located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. We are open 9 to noon, Tuesday through Friday. We answer questions whether you come through the door, by e-mail, or on the phone. Our phone number is 530-621-5512. Or fill out our Ask a Master Gardener of El Dorado County help survey at <http://ucanr.edu/ask-mgofedc>.

We routinely have a booth at various events that are held in El Dorado County throughout the year. Catch us at farmers markets, the county fair, Earth Day and other community outreach events.

Our primary purpose is education. We offer public education classes in Placerville and Cameron Park. Most classes are 2-3 hours in length and free. We periodically put on workshops that typically run the entire day and a small fee includes lunch and course materials.

The Sherwood Demonstration Garden is open to the public from April through October on Fridays and Saturdays. Docents are trained and knowledgeable about the garden in order to make your visit meaningful and informative. We also offer guided tours on a request basis, partner with schools and youth programs, and offer 2nd Saturdays with Barry all year round.

A lot of things continue to happen in the winter vegetable garden. Join MG Barry Wold when he discusses “Cold Frames and Other Season Extenders” at his monthly 2nd Saturdays with Barry class at the Sherwood Demonstration Garden, 6699 Campus Drive, Placerville from 10:00 a.m. to noon on January 13. Class is free. Parking is \$2.

Every spring, the Master Gardener Plant Sale takes place and gardeners have the opportunity to acquire lovingly propagated plants perfect for our climate, and a large number of Master Gardeners are available to answer your questions. **Save the date - April 21, 2018** for this year’s plant sale.

No matter what your question, where you pose it, what you want to learn - Master Gardeners are here for you. “Advice to Grow By – Ask Us!”

UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County are available to answer home gardening questions Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to noon, by calling [\(530\) 621-5512](tel:5306215512). Walk-ins are welcome at our office, located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. For more information about our public education classes and activities, go to our UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County website at <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu>. Sign up to receive our online notices and e-newsletter at http://ucanr.edu/master_gardener_e-news. You can also find us on Facebook.