

## North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service

## Consumer Horticulture Agent

Aaron Lancaster  
Mecklenburg County Center  
Park & Recreation Bldg.  
5841 Brookshire Blvd.  
Charlotte, NC 28216  
704-336-4008 – phone  
704-336-6876 – fax  
LancaAL@co.mecklenburg.nc.us – email

Dear Master Gardener Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the NC State Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Program in Mecklenburg County. Training volunteers to assist the Cooperative Extension Service is the primary objective for this educational program. Students enrolled in the Master Gardener volunteer training program receive training in botany, plant pathology, soils, entomology, pesticide safety, integrated pest management (IPM), woody ornamentals, herbaceous ornamentals, vegetables, tree and small fruits, turf grass, invasive plants, water quality, environmental factors affecting plant growth, and diagnostic techniques for the home gardener.

Becoming a Certified Cooperative Extension Master Gardener requires a completion of:

- 40+ hours of formal classroom training
- Fifty hours of volunteer service: at least 20 in-service hours to be conducted at the Mecklenburg Co. Extension office during weekday business hours, answering gardening inquiries; the remaining 30 hours through approved educational outreach activities.
- All volunteer service office and outreach hours completed by December 31, 2006.
- Attendance of at least one summer diagnostic session.
- A midterm and final practicum exam (take-home).

The charge for the program is \$100.00, which includes a comprehensive manual for each participant. Enrollment is limited and competitive, so please be complete in filling out the application – the requested information is necessary to evaluate your talents and volunteer commitment. We may telephone or conduct personal interviews to elicit more information. The application must be completed and returned, post-marked by Wednesday, December 14, 2005 (do not send a check with the application at this time) to the Mecklenburg County Extension office at the address above. Class members are chosen in December. If you do not enter the upcoming class, you will need to submit a new application indicating interest in attending the following class.

The Master Gardener program is designed to enhance NC State's horticulture educational offerings, with a strong focus on volunteerism and community outreach. You will be expected to spend 20 hours volunteer time answering homeowner's gardening questions on the telephone, in person, or via email. If you have questions about the applicability of the MG program to your situation, please feel free to contact me. Thank you once again for your interest. We look forward to receiving your application!

Sincerely,

Aaron L. Lancaster  
Consumer Horticulture Agent  
Mecklenburg County Cooperative Extension  
North Carolina State University