

**Harvey County Fair.** The Master Gardeners design, decorate, and maintain a booth at the annual August Fair. The booth has varying themes from year to year. "Preserving the Harvest" was the 2011 theme and Master Gardeners designed a landscape to fit the theme.

Master Gardeners provide staff for various Fair activities, such as the tomato-tasting survey and horticultural entries. They can also staff the 'judging' tables for 4-H members. ('Judging' is a competition of identification, quality, judging, and general horticultural knowledge. In 2007, the Harvey County 4-H Team won the national title.)

To accumulate the annual 40-hour quota of service hours, Harvey County Master Gardeners volunteer in the areas of Giving Garden, Home & Garden Show, Garden Tours, Vegetable and Flower Demonstration Plots, the Harvey County Fair, or other approved activities.

Master Gardeners serve wherever there is a need for horticultural volunteers who are knowledgeable and service-minded.

If you have a volunteer spirit and love gardening---whether it is with flowers, vegetables, perennials, shrubs, trees, bulbs, or anything horticultural---please consider joining us as a Harvey County Master Gardener!

**Contact Information.**

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**HARVEY COUNTY**

# MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

## ***What are Master Gardeners?***

The Master Gardener program is a volunteer program in which K-State Research and Extension “trades” classroom training for volunteer time. After the initial 40-50 hours of comprehensive instruction in horticulture, volunteers donate an equivalent number of service hours annually. To maintain the Master Gardener title, a volunteer continues to contribute those hours every year.

Participation in our program makes you one of over 1,500 Kansas Master Gardeners who contributed over 85,000 volunteer hours last year to support the K-State Research and Extension Service. First organized in 1972 in the State of Washington, the Master Gardener program spread across the country and into several Canadian provinces. The program was first started in Kansas in 1980 in Johnson County. The Harvey County program started in 1993.

Meetings are held monthly, usually on the first Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The meetings are a potluck dinner. Gardening programs are generally held after each business meeting. Harvey County Master Gardeners can be spotted wearing green polo shirts embroidered with the Master Gardener logo.

## ***What do Harvey County Master Gardeners Do?***

**Giving Garden.** This ongoing project was started in 2000. A plot of ground next to the railroad tracks at Walnut & 6<sup>th</sup> is planted every spring with vegetables and trial ornamentals and then maintained during the growing season. All produce is donated to the Salvation Army in Newton. In 2012, we harvested over 6,700 lbs. of fresh, healthy produce to assist struggling families. We also raise test tomatoes and flowers for KSU.

**Home & Garden Show.** In April, we sponsor the Home and Garden Show which provides a place for garden-related businesses and Farmers’ Market vendors to set up booths. The Home & Garden Show also gives Master Gardeners the opportunity to educate the community with horticultural and Extension-related information.

**Garden Tours.** In June, Master Gardeners support the Newton Library’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Endowment Fund. We are available at each tour site to answer horticultural questions.

**Vegetable and Flower Demonstration Plots.** The Giving Garden has a demonstration plot to test new varieties for Kansas gardens. K-State also sends additional plants which Master Gardeners can volunteer to trial in their home gardens during the growing season.

**Other Volunteer Opportunities.** With the agent’s approval, Master Gardeners can acquire volunteer hours working on other Extension-related projects. An example of this is the Kauffman Museum garden which is maintained by a Master Gardener.