

Cumberland County Master Gardeners Mentoring Guidelines

Mentor Roles and Responsibilities

A Mentor is a certified UT Extension Master Gardener Volunteer who has been active in the Cumberland County program for a minimum of one year. A mentor is someone interested in providing leadership, support, and/or education for the development of Master Gardener Volunteer Trainees and/or Master Gardener transfers to our area. Mentors will provide guidance/support for a period of one year in which they will assist the trainee/transfer with acclimation to the Master Gardener program in Cumberland County. Mentors will serve to foster engagement/participation in Cumberland County Master Gardener programs and activities.

Mentor Criteria

- Committed to the mentoring process
- Ability and willingness to respond to individual circumstances
- Ability to encourage and motivate
- Willingness to share knowledge and create a continuous learning environment
- Possesses good interpersonal and communication skills

Mentor's role may include but not limited to:

Advisor... Provide mentee useful information regarding the Tennessee / Cumberland County Master Gardener program that might not be covered via literature, during orientation or course work. Offer mentee an avenue for support during their Master Gardener internship program.

Coach... Advise mentee on how to earn and properly record necessary volunteer and CEU hours. Create an atmosphere in which mentees feel they are important and valued members of the Cumberland County Master Gardener program.

Supporter... Encourage the participation of the mentee in meetings, volunteer opportunities, and social events. Enhance the mentee's integration into the Cumberland County Master Gardener program through supportive, non-judgmental discussions.

Mentor Responsibilities

- Meet regularly with mentee... a minimum of once per month
- Maintain strict confidentiality
- Listen and offer feedback/guidance
- Discuss progress toward completion of coursework and other requirements for certification
- Refer mentee to appropriate individual(s) for specific information when appropriate
- Assist in explaining working partnership between Cumberland County Master Gardeners, UT Extension, and UT Ag Research

Mentee Roles and Responsibilities

All interns and Master Gardener transfers admitted into the UT Extension / Cumberland County Master Gardener program are a part of the mentoring program. The effectiveness of the Mentoring program depends on the active participation of the mentee and mentor. Mentee should agree to meet at least once per month with mentor. Mentee should be willing to ask and give honest feedback regarding the program. Mentee should take personal responsibility for growth and success within the program. Mentee should be willing to follow through on referrals from mentor for sources of information. Lastly, mentee and mentors maintain strict confidentiality of conversations.