

Application Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
(for committee use only)

**Tennessee Master Gardener Search For Excellence  
2011 Application**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 30, 2011**

NAME OF MG GROUP: Sequatchie Valley Master Gardeners

COUNTY: Bledsoe & Sequatchie

**MASTER GARDENER CONTACT:**

NAME John P. Formby

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**MASTER GARDENER COORDINATOR/EXTENSION STAFF:**

NAME Sheldon D. Barker

TITLE Director and Extension Agent, Sequatchie County

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**CATEGORY---MUST SELECT AND SUBMIT IN ONLY ONE CATEGORY**

- Youth
- Demonstration Garden
- Workshop or Presentation
- Community Service
- Innovative Project
- Research
- Special Needs Audience

COMMENCEMENT DATE OF PROJECT: August 6, 2008

**LIST THE NAMES OF MASTER GARDENERS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT.** Do not include their roles or any other individuals in this listing. *(Place the cursor in the box to type a name.)*

<b>Jerry Dauer John Formby</b>	<b>Edna Clemons James Fawcett</b>	<b>Robert Kenville Earle Jean Kenville</b>	<b>Douglas Stafford Pamela Ryle</b>
<b>Robert Wilson Linda Barker</b>	<b>Sammye Finley Nita Formby</b>	<b>Kenneth Lee Norman Murduck</b>	<b>Peggy Uhey Ann Wheeler</b>
<b>Alice Bickford Laura Blackmon</b>	<b>Sophia Gabalski James Grudzen</b>	<b>Tina Plain Gerald Powell</b>	
<b>Arthur Buchman Billie Cole</b>	<b>Carol Holland Linda Johnson</b>	<b>Sylvia Powell Art Slack</b>	

If you are using Word, place your cursor in the boxes and click twice. If using PDF, place your cursor in the box and begin typing.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT** (include name, location, target audience, goals, and partnerships)

<p><b>Sequatchie Valley Vegetable Gardening Workshop</b></p> <p>A four and a half hour Vegetable Gardening Workshop with Master Gardener instructors is offered on a Saturday morning in mid March each year by the Sequatchie Valley Master Gardeners (SVMGs). The primary goal is to provide basic gardening information to interested local citizens and to enhance and expand the knowledge and skills of vegetable gardeners in the multi-county region. Specific objectives of the Workshop include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide practical and useful information concerning how to successfully grow vegetables in and around the Sequatchie Valley of Tennessee,</li> <li>• To enable beginning as well as intermediate and experienced gardeners to acquire new gardening knowledge based upon University Extension research and publications as well as the personal experience of Workshop Instructors, and</li> <li>• To open and/or expand communication conduits between vegetable gardeners in and around the Sequatchie Valley and the County Extension Offices and the SVMG community.</li> </ul> <p>The Workshop features four presentations by different Master Gardeners including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Three P's: Planning, Preparing and Planting Vegetable Gardens</li> <li>2. Varieties to Plant, Garden Maintenance and Harvesting</li> <li>3. Garden Diseases and Pest Control: How to Get the Most from Your Garden</li> <li>4. Herb Gardening</li> </ol> <p>Participants are required to register for the Workshop at one of the County Extension offices and pay a \$10 fee at least one week in advance of the date of the Workshop.</p> <p>In 2009, the first year of the project, two Workshops were presented – one in Dunlap (Sequatchie County) and the other in Pikeville (Bledsoe County). The Workshop now rotates annually between the two small towns, which are 19 miles apart.</p>
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## DESCRIBE THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT.

The idea for the project originated in mid 2008 and was inspired by a newspaper article in the Tuscaloosa News describing a Fall Vegetable Gardening Workshop that attracted gardeners from a number of counties throughout west Alabama. Extension Professionals served as instructors in the Alabama Workshop and Master Gardeners functioned as hosts and provided food and refreshments. Sequatchie Valley Master Gardeners adopted the general concept of the Alabama program, but designed and implemented a spring Workshop in which Master Gardeners organized, hosted and taught the entire program with oversight by UT County Extension Agents. Using the topics discussed in the west Alabama Workshop as a general guide, plans were developed in the fall and early winter of 2008. Under the leadership of the then Vice President of the SVMG Association and with significant input and suggestions from County Extension Agents, plans were finalized and four local Master Gardeners, including two retired university professors, were recruited as instructors. Fortunately, the interests and expertise of the instructors coincided with the topics that we thought should be included in a Workshop focusing on vegetable gardening basics and containing sufficient advanced material to make it both interesting and a learning experience for intermediate and seasoned gardeners.

The first two Workshops were offered in the spring of 2009 and were judged by all involved to be highly successful. However, the Sequatchie Valley region of Tennessee is rural and sparsely populated. As a consequence, it was unclear at the time whether there would be sufficient interest and enrollments in future Workshops. On a trial basis the Workshop was repeated in 2010 and 2011 as single events rotating between the two counties.

The Workshop has now been presented four times with minor year-to-year modifications. A total of 77 gardeners from the Sequatchie Valley region have registered and paid, with a couple of no shows. Gardeners from seven counties have attended. The most recent Workshops were just as successful as the initial 2009 Workshops, or more so. In terms of enrollment, the 2011 Workshop in Pikeville was the most successful to date.

## HOW HAS THE PROJECT BEEN FUNDED AND HOW HAVE THOSE FUNDS BEEN SPENT?

The four Workshops have generated cash revenues totaling \$790 from registration fees, while cash expenses have been only \$60.00. Cash receipts in excess of cash expenditures have been used to support other worthy SVMG projects.

The cash expenditures went to two local weekly newspapers (*Bledsonian Banner* and *Dunlap Tribune*) and the *Sequatchie Valley Shopper*, which is distributed gratis throughout the region. Each of these publications is owned by the same business firm and all prominently print *Community Announcements* including forthcoming SVMG Vegetable Gardening Workshops. However, a fee of \$5 is charged by each publication to repeat an announcement. Variations in the *Community Announcements* advertising the Workshops have been repeated twelve times over a three year period.

The SVMG Association has not attempted to account for non-cash donations of food and door prizes by SVMGs, copying by the Extension Offices and the use of meeting rooms and facilities provided by local banks, governments and the telephone cooperative.

**DESCRIBE THE OUTCOMES OF THIS PROJECT. HOW HAS IT AUGMENTED LEARNING, INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OR CHANGED PRACTICES TO ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE? INCLUDE THE METHODS YOU USED TO MEASURE THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT.** (These impacts could be economical, educational, environmental, health or community based.) SFE projects should be developed to reach the most people possible from the target audience. Impact numbers are not significant if the target audience does not learn or utilize the information. Make sure that you ask participants how this information helped them and record this as an impact. For example, evaluation questions that ask, “How do you plan to use this information?” or “Can you share specific information that you learned today?”

An evaluation instrument was administered at the end of each Workshop and 72 participants' submitted assessments. All or almost all **agreed** or **strongly agreed** that:

- The Workshop is an effective method of conveying basic vegetable gardening information (100% of respondents)
- They will use what they learned in the Workshop (97% of respondents)
- The learning objectives were clear (95% of respondents)
- The Workshop lived up to expectations (95% of respondents)
- The Workshop's instructors were all well prepared (97% of respondents)
- The pace of the Workshop was appropriate (92% of respondents).

In July 2011 a brief follow up evaluation was delivered by email to 45 mailboxes of participants for whom email addresses appeared to be valid. The number actually opening and reading the email is unknown. Sixteen of 45 (36%) responded.

- All respondents (100%) agreed that in retrospect the workshop was helpful.
- Fifteen respondents (94%) reported they have applied the knowledge acquired in the Workshop and most explained how they used it.
- Eight respondents (50%) indicated that they had sought more information through post Workshop contacts with Extension Offices, Master Gardeners or both.

In planning and implementing the project it was anticipated that, if successful, the Workshop would serve as a feeder program into the more intensive Master Gardener Training Class. To some extent this has happened with slightly more than 10% of Workshop participants going on to become Master Gardeners. However, the Workshop appears to attract a somewhat younger clientele interested in learning only about vegetable gardening. Family responsibilities and available time appear to play an important role in determining which Workshop participants continue on to become Master Gardeners.

A final outcome worthy of reporting involves the food served during Workshop breaks. Most participants seem to have only limited experience with culinary herbs and a number expressed delight with the food, which was seasoned with garden herbs (e.g. Tarragon Potatoes, Rosemary Carrots, Jalapeno Jelly and Lemon Rosemary Crumbcake). Many participants requested workshop recipes, which have been widely shared.