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University of California Cooperative Extension Los Angeles County

Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources
4800 E. Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90022
Telephone: (323) 260-2267 • Fax: (323) 260-5208
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The Common Ground Garden Program

*University of California
Cooperative Extension,
Los Angeles County*



UCCE & the Garden Program



The Common Ground Garden Program is part of the University of California Cooperative Extension in Los Angeles County. A Cooperative Extension office exists in every California county, responding to the changing needs of the local populations and carrying out research-based programs, particularly in the areas of food, health, agriculture and the environment. Striving to serve the needs of diverse communities of Los Angeles County, staff offer the following programs: 4-H Youth Development, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), Network for a Healthy California (formerly the 5 a Day program), Natural Resources, Environmental Horticulture, and the Common Ground Garden Program.

Common Ground is made up of three intertwined projects—the Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program; Fresh from the Garden; and community, school and shelter gardens. Main programs are administered by paid coordinators and accomplished by Cooperative Extension's dedicated volunteers. In 2006-07, 180 Master Gardeners volunteered 9,205 hours and served 79,005 low- and limited-income gardeners at 103 garden sites in LA County.

The Common Ground Garden Program Goals

Staff help county residents grow and healthfully prepare fresh vegetables. The program's target audience is low-income and limited-resource families and seniors. By training community volunteers, Cooperative Extension empowers neighborhoods to create their own unique solutions.

Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program



The purpose of Cooperative Extension's MG Program is to extend to the public UC research-based information on home horticulture, pest identification, landscape management, and other environmental and natural resource issues. The program provides volunteers with more than 78 hours of intense gardening and outreach training. The curriculum covers vegetables, fruits, flowers, shrubs, trees, soils, composting, fertilizing, irrigating, pests and diseases, and

tools—all based on organic methods and utilizing hands-on techniques. Upon completion of the training program, volunteers must give back at least 50 hours of service within one year at local gardens or respond to gardening questions on the phone or email helplines. In addition, volunteers must earn at least another 15 hours of continuing education time.

Contact: Yvonne Savio (323) 260-3407, ydsavio@ucdavis.edu

Fresh from the Garden

Staff help limited-income vegetable gardeners increase their knowledge of healthful eating habits and food preparation, while emphasizing the importance of increase consumption of fresh vegetables. Seasonally-appropriate classes covering simple and nutritious preparation techniques of garden-fresh vegetables are presented individually or as a series.

Contact: Sue Giordano (323) 260-3201, sugiordano@ucdavis.edu

Community & Shelter Gardens

Master Gardeners and Fresh from the Garden volunteers provide free workshops, seeds, gardening information and technical assistance to local gardeners.

Contact Yvonne Savio (323) 260-3407, ydsavio@ucdavis.edu

School Garden Consultants

Gardens bring to life a child's natural curiosity about plants, insects, soil and the cycles of life. Hands-on activities in school gardens add excitement, beauty and instant lessons to the school day. Our Master Gardeners offer technical assistance to teachers and students, helping them to design, find resources for, construct and maintain school gardens

Contact: Yvonne Savio (323) 260-3407, ydsavio@ucdavis.edu

General Information

Please contact Gloria Mitchell (323) 260-3348, gjmitche@ucdavis.edu for general information, publications and workshops.

Gardening Questions?

Please call the Master Gardener Gardening Helpline (323) 260-3238, or send an email to mglosangeleshelpline@ucdavis.edu.

Make a Donation

You can help by making a donation to the Common Ground Garden Program. UC Cooperative Extension is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your tax-deductible donation will help us reach more gardeners throughout LA County.

Checks should be made payable to UC Regents, with the note "Common Ground" on the menu line and sent to:

Common Ground Garden Program
UC Cooperative Extension, Los Angeles County
4800 E. Cesar E. Chavez Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90022

In addition, gifts, bequests or trusts can be made to the California Master Gardener Endowment Fund, which provides support in perpetuity for the California Master Gardener programs and activities. All donations are tax-deductible.

If you would like your gift to benefit LA County's Master Gardener Program specifically, please attach a note to the donation, indicating such a designation.

For information, visit <http://camastergardeners.ucdavis.edu> and click on "Endowment Fund."

Donations to the Endowment should be made payable to UC Regents and sent to:

Statewide Master Gardener Program
Agriculture and Natural Resources
UC Cooperative Extension
One Shields Avenue
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