

CMG GardenNotes #012

## CMG Volunteer Code of Conduct

The intent of this *Volunteer Code of Conduct* is to clarify relationships between the *Colorado Master Gardener Volunteer* and the Colorado Master Gardener Program of Colorado State University Extension. CSU Extension values the service of CMG volunteers and commits to do our best to make the volunteer service a productive and rewarding experience.

### In the capacity of a CMG Volunteer:

- I agree to cooperate with and support the local Extension Office staff and volunteers to jointly further the missions and objectives of the CMG Program, which are found here: <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/mg/Gardennotes/014.pdf>
- I agree to comply with training, reporting, certification, annual renewal requirements and other program directives as delineated in CMG GardenNotes #014, *The Colorado Master Gardener Program*, available at <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/mg/Gardennotes/014.pdf>. I understand this includes 24 hours minimum of approved volunteer service and 12 hours minimum of approved continuing education annually (unless special arrangements have been made, in advance, for *limited activity/inactive status*).
- I understand that the title “Colorado Master Gardener” may be used only in connection with official Colorado State University Extension activities. The title may not be used to build my personal credentials in a non-Extension activity. The title may not be used to associate the Colorado Master Gardener name with commercial products or give implied endorsements of any product or place of business.
- I agree to disseminate information without regard to race, age, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender, disability, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.
- I agree to follow federal, state, county, Colorado State University and Extension Office policies and regulations appropriate to my role as a volunteer (for example, comply with copyright law).
- I agree to provide research-based horticultural information endorsed and sanctioned by Colorado State University Extension or other research-based institutions. When I enrich a discussion with my own experience, I will frame it “from my own gardening experience...”.
- I understand the audience for CMG volunteers is non-commercial home gardeners. I understand that as a Colorado Master Gardener Volunteer it is not my role to advise commercial growers or green industry professionals; but rather to refer commercial clients to the appropriate agents.
- I understand that as a CMG volunteer, I may not give advice that could be considered by the client as legal or medical in nature. I understand that as a CMG volunteer, I do not discuss the following issues: hazard trees (potential tree failure concerns), poisonous plants and mushrooms, medical use of herbs (including growing and use of marijuana), pesticide toxicity, and the misuse of pesticides.
- In relation to pest management, I understand that it is the role of the CMG Program to provide clients with appropriate non-chemical and chemical alternatives, allowing the client to select methods in harmony with their

values. Any reference to the use of pesticides must come directly from Extension print materials. All inquiries beyond the scope of Extension print materials will be referred to the Extension Agent. I understand that I do not discuss or make comments about the toxicity of organic or synthetic pesticides. Any inquiry about pesticide toxicity will be referred to the *National Pesticide Information Center*, found here: <http://npic.orst.edu/>

- While performing my volunteer duties, I may apply only over the counter, “general use” pesticides. I will read and follow all label directions.
- I agree to consistently exhibit civility and courtesy in my behavior towards Extension staff, other volunteers and the public. I recognize that others may think and do things differently than what I personally prefer. When this happens, I will be respectful of their values and perspectives. I will avoid disrupting classes in any manner, including inappropriate comments, side conversations, and excessive personal questions. I will avoid sending inappropriate emails.
- I agree to refrain from using or possessing alcohol or illegal substances while participating in volunteer activities. Being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana or illegal substances during CMG service may result in termination as a CMG volunteer.
- I agree to provide my own transportation and pay my own expenses incurred as part of official volunteer activities. Expenses may be tax deductible with proper documentation (consult a tax advisor).
- In support of the program operations, I agree to pay annual CMG Fees, as assessed by the state and my local county program.
- I understand that the CMG email communication system (VMS) and membership lists are for internal business use only. I will not use it for commercial business or send spam type communications.

- As non-paid staff, I understand that I am not covered by CSU worker’s compensation or other medical insurance.
- I understand that volunteering for an organization is a privilege, not a right. I understand that I serve at the request of Colorado State University Extension and that the request can be withdrawn at any time.

**I further understand that Colorado State University Extension will to the extent possible:**

- Provide opportunities for my continual learning through volunteer activities, classes and workshops and online learning opportunities.
- Provide training, supervision, equipment, and direction to volunteers through the local Extension office.
- Communicate expectations and responsibilities of the program to volunteers.
- Uphold and cultivate a respectful relationship between staff and volunteers.
- Provide access to CSU Extension reference materials and professionals.
- Provide access to CSU Extension professionals.
- Provide a safe working environment within the Extension office and at CMG events.
- Match volunteer skills and interests with volunteer opportunities within the local program.
- While serving in an official CMG capacity (preapproved by the local agent/CMG Program Leader), cover CMG volunteers with University liability insurance provided that the volunteer uses research based information and applies good judgment.

CMG Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Updated September 9, 2015