

## ATHENS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS

Athens County Master Gardener Volunteers provide the residents of Athens County with a wide variety of educational services and programs, including:

- Information Booth (Athens Farmers' Market)
- Children's Garden (Athens Community Center)
- Warren and Jean Wistendahl Native Plant Garden (Athens Community Center)
- Community Garden projects
- Annual plant sale in May (Athens Community Center)
- General education and community workshops
- Plant and garden diagnostic help

The Master Gardener Volunteer program was started by the Washington State University Extension Service in 1972. Ohio's first class was trained in 1974. Today, there are Master Gardener Volunteer programs across the United States and Canada, and in other countries.

### To become a Master Gardener Volunteer –

Candidates will initially be required to complete a 10-week course encompassing 50 hours of classroom training and hands-on field trips. Most classes feature guest speakers from across the region – experts who share their wealth of knowledge on a wide range of topics, including:

- Basic Botany and Plant Physiology
- Fungi
- Soils and Soil Fertility
- Basic Entomology
- Plant Pathology
- Integrated Pest Management
- Lawn Care and Composting
- Invasive Species
- Perennials, Annuals, and Bulbs
- Trees and Shrubs
- Home Vegetable and Fruit Production
- Local Food Production, and More

After graduation, first year volunteers are required to donate 50 hours of service to become a certified Master Gardener Volunteer, choosing from a wide variety of community projects and continuing education opportunities. Thereafter, Certified Master Gardener Volunteers donate 20 hours of service per year. Volunteers are highly encouraged to create new programs combining their own individual career skills and interests with their newly acquired base of gardening knowledge. As Master Gardeners, it's not about knowing all the answers; it's knowing how and where to find them. Our mission is to provide our community with timely research-based gardening information.

For information on upcoming classes, or how to become a Master Gardener Volunteer, please contact the Extension office at 740-593-8555.

