Master Gardener program reporting and evaluation guide

Who should use this guide

Extension staff involved in coordinating or providing programs related to the Master Gardener program should use the Master Gardener program reporting and evaluation guide.

How to use the guide

This guide covers how to report and evaluate the Master Gardener program activities that are tracked on a statewide basis, including core training and other educational programs; help desks and other answer services; Extension-supported gardens; and Give Back Gardening home produce donation. It is organized by activity.

Information on other systems used with the MG program, such as [GivePulse Master Gardener volunteer hours reporting](#) and [Extension volunteer management](#), is available through other sources.

Educational programs

Core training

- Program for volunteers generally following the Master Gardener standard curriculum.
- Core training is delivered in a variety of ways, including locally organized programs, statewide online (Moodle) training; and hybrid online/local training. Reporting and evaluation is tailored to the specific delivery type. Please see [core training reporting and evaluation section](#) below for detailed guidance for each training format.

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Continuing education

- Programs designed specifically as MG/MN continuing education only (NOT programs for general public that may be used as CE).
- Report in PEARS as program activity using naming format MG/CE/Program name
- Report as MG/MN program type = "continuing education" on the custom data page

Other education delivered to volunteers

- Programs or meetings delivered to Master Gardener volunteers/trainees/interns that have planned educational content but that are not designed to be continuing education or expected to be reported as CE hours.
- Report in PEARS as program activity using naming format MG/Program name
- Report as MG/MN program type = "other education for volunteers" on the custom data page

Meetings

- *Meetings, planning sessions, and recognition ceremonies* are generally NOT considered educational programs and should not be entered in PEARS.
- Report a meeting in PEARS **only** if it includes planned educational content (e.g. an expert speaker), in which case it would be "other education delivered to volunteers" (above).

Volunteer-led educational programs for the public

Volunteer-led educational programs with Extension staff present

- Enter in PEARS if Extension-staff are present and have helped coordinate or facilitate in any way.
- Report as program activity using naming format MG/Program name.
- On Collaborator page, add VOLUNTEER (Master Gardener) as a collaborator.
- Report as MG/MN program type = "volunteer-led education for public (with staff present)" on the custom data page.

Volunteer-led educational programs with no Extension staff present

- May be entered in PEARS. This is optional but recommended to represent the full educational reach of the local MG program.
- Report as program activity using naming format MG/Program name.
- On Collaborator page, add VOLUNTEER (Master Gardener) as a collaborator.
- Report as MG/MN program type = "volunteer-led education for public (no staff at event)" on the custom data page.

Help desks/answer services

Reporting. Report number of information services provided (# of responses to inquiries) if tracked locally. This is optional but highly recommended as it is used in the Extension-wide Unit Impact Dashboard. Report monthly or for the calendar year. Link: https://go.illinois.edu/HelpDeskLog

Evaluation. An optional email-based evaluation tool is available to evaluate local information services. An example of the evaluation tool is available on the MG reporting and evaluation webpage. Request your custom links here . Summary results will be provided annually.

Extension-supported gardens

Reporting. Report on all gardens that receive some Extension staff or Master Gardener support during a reporting year. Gardens may be used for demonstration, education, food donation, pollinator support, life

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skills training, community garden plots, and many other uses. See the [Garden reporting webpage](#) or [Garden reporting guide](#) for information.

Give back gardening home produce donation

Reporting. For counties where Master Gardeners donate produce from home gardens, please request that participating MGs report the pounds of produce donated at each donation time using this link: https://go.illinois.edu/GiveBackGardening. On request, this reporting survey can be set to notify the local coordinator when a report comes in. Contact Matt Spindler to set this up.

NOTE: Volunteers only report donations from home gardens here, not from Extension-supported gardens.

Volunteer hours

Reporting. Volunteer hours reporting is in GivePulse. See [GivePulse Box folder](#) for trainings and tips.

Core training reporting and evaluation

Quick links

[Core training general notes](#)
[Core training types](#)
        [Traditional training reporting and evaluation](#)
        [State hybrid training—full participation reporting and evaluation](#)
        [State hybrid training—partial participation reporting and evaluation](#)
        [Online training reporting and evaluation](#)
        [Online+local training reporting and evaluation](#)
[Sample evaluation distribution language](#)
        [Distribution email language](#)
        [Reminder email language](#)
[Reporting "extra" attendees to core training sessions](#)

Core training general notes

- All core trainings need to use the statewide MG core training evaluation.
  - ***If the core training is delivered locally, or uses only part of the state hybrid online resources, the coordinator will need to distribute the statewide evaluation link.
  - If the core training is delivered online, or through full coordination with the state hybrid training, the evaluation link will be distributed automatically.
- Consult the guidance for each type of core training delivery to see WHAT, and HOW, local coordinators should report core training in PEARS.
- Report core training as MG/MN program type = "core training" on the custom data page
- Total participants = number enrolled in whole course ONLY.
  - Do you have "extra" people attending some sessions to learn? Extra attendees at specific sessions who are there to learn educational content (not as training helpers) should be reported using [guidance for "extra" attendees below](#).

Overview of core training types

[Traditional training](#). Locally organized and delivered. May be in-person and/or virtual. May use some hybrid resources.

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[Hybrid training—state hybrid training—full participation](#). Participants use all state-coordinated shared-expert sessions and online topic resources combined with locally organized sessions.

[Hybrid training—state hybrid training—partial participation](#). Local programs use some shared expert sessions or online topic resource collections, fitting them within a locally organized program.

[Statewide online training](#). Participants use state online MG platform (Moodle). This may be supplemented by local sessions in some locations.

Traditional locally organized training reporting and evaluation

Evaluation—traditional training

Evaluation distribution. Local coordinators should distribute the evaluation via email at the conclusion of the training course, and send a follow up email reminder a week later. See [sample language and link below](#). If short local survey is also used, provide participants with that link directly, or consult with Matt Spindler to link a local survey to the statewide evaluation.

Evaluation content. Core evaluation questions. If desired, local organizers can develop their own short survey focusing on aspects of local training.

PEARS reporting—traditional training

1. Create a single program entry
2. Use program activity naming format: **MG core training/your location**
3. List all sessions under that program entry
4. Tag yourself and other staff who presented as collaborators
5. Report total participants and demographics for your trainees.

State hybrid training—full participation reporting and evaluation

Evaluation—full hybrid

Evaluation distribution. Evaluation is distributed directly to trainees through the online platform. No additional distribution is needed. If short local survey is also used, provide participants with that link directly, or consult with Karen to link a local survey to the main one in Qualtrics.

Evaluation content. Core evaluation questions + online platform question block. If desired, local organizers can develop and distribute their own short survey focusing on aspects of local training.

PEARS reporting

Local organizers:

1. Create a single program entry
2. Use program activity naming format: MG core training/hybrid/your location
3. List all local breakout sessions under that program entry
4. Tag yourself and other staff involved in the local breakout sessions as collaborators.
5. Do NOT list the statewide group sessions—they will be reported separately.
6. Report total participants and demographics for your trainees.

Candice/state organizer

1. Create a single program entry
2. Use program activity naming format: **MG core training/hybrid/statewide**
3. List all statewide sessions (90 minutes each)
4. List all collaborators

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5. List actual number of participants for each session

State hybrid training—partial participation reporting and evaluation

Evaluation

Evaluation distribution. Local coordinators should distribute the statewide evaluation via email at the conclusion of the training course, and send a follow up email reminder a week later. See sample language and link below. If short local survey is also used, provide participants with that link directly, or consult with Matt Spindler to link a local survey to the main one in Qualtrics.

Evaluation content. Core evaluation questions. If desired, local organizers can develop their own short survey focusing on aspects of local training.

PEARS reporting

1. Create a single program entry
2. Use program activity naming format: **MG core training/your location**
3. List all local sessions under that program entry; do NOT list statewide shared expert sessions as these are reported by the state coordinator.
4. Tag yourself and other staff who presented in local sessions as collaborators
5. Report total participants and demographics for your trainees.

Online training reporting and evaluation

Evaluation

Evaluation distribution. Evaluation is distributed to trainees directly through the online Moodle platform. No additional distribution is needed.

Evaluation content. Core evaluation questions + online platform question block

PEARS reporting

Local organizers: do not report Moodle sessions in PEARS. If you provide supplemental local sessions, report those in PEARS. Use name format: MG core training/online supplemental/Term/location

Candice/state organizer

1. Create a single program entry
2. Use name format: MG core training/online/Term
3. List all sessions under that program entry
4. Tag yourself and other staff who presented as collaborators
5. Report total participants and demographics as available

Sample evaluation distribution language

Distribution email language

Distribute within three days of final training meeting

Thank you for participating in the Master Gardener training program. We would like to request your feedback on this training so that we can continue to improve our Master Gardener program. We aim to hear from 100% of participants! The evaluation should take 5-10 minutes to complete. Link to survey: https://go.illinois.edu/MGevaluation

Reminder email language

Distribute a week after initial request

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At the close of Master Gardener training last week, we asked for your input so that we can continue to improve our Master Gardener training program. If you have already responded to the evaluation survey, thank you! If you have not yet responded, we respectfully request that you complete the evaluation now. We'd like to hear from all training participants so that we can better understand the strengths and weaknesses of this training. Thank you! Link to survey: https://go.illinois.edu/MGevaluation

Reporting "extra" attendees at core training sessions

Occasionally, a core training session may have additional attendees (there to learn, not to help with the class) other than the core training cohort. We want to count these participants but make sure they are differentiated from the trainees. NOTE: we do NOT count MGs who are there as volunteers to help deliver or support the training session.

If a session has extra participants other than trainees, enter a separate program activity for the session and list the number of session-only participants using this naming format: **MG core training/Extra/topic**.

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