

2012 Information about Denver Urban Gardens' Master Community Gardener Training Program



Denver Urban Gardens' (DUG) Master Community Gardener Training Program is an 11-week "train the trainer" course designed to train community leaders in all aspects of community gardening with a focus on community organizing, as well as basic horticultural knowledge. This hands-on course teaches participants the skills they need to create and maintain strong, vibrant and sustainable community gardens. The course has an organic gardening emphasis and is designed for food-producing gardens. Participants will receive 35 hours of instruction covering all aspects of community gardening; topics range from community organizing to organic gardening basics. In exchange for the instruction, participants pay a \$35 materials fee, and are required to return 30 hours of GiveBack, community service utilizing the new skills in existing or new community gardens. Participants will have until October 31, 2012 to complete the GiveBack hours.

The course is open to residents of Metro Denver area who demonstrate involvement and/or interest in community gardening, with a class limit of 30 participants. Respectfully, community gardens and organizations are limited to two applicants. Enrollment is open to the public and all applications will be considered. Limited scholarships are available to cover the materials fee for qualified applicants. Participants must be able to commit to **attend all the classes and hands-on activities** and to **complete the GiveBack hours**.

LOCATION: The Master Community Gardener classes will be held at the Denver Botanic Gardens (1007 York Street, Denver, Colorado 80206).

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

- Attendance and active participation in all eleven classes. Classes are hands-on and include some outdoor activities.
- Complete required reading assignments and participate in the hands-on group activity, including assignments outside of class time.
- Complete 30 GiveBack hours. You will have until October 31, 2012 to complete these hours.

GIVEBACK HOURS: Participants are required to contribute 30 hours of community service utilizing their new skills in existing and/or new community gardens. Part of this effort will be dedicated to working with Garden Leaders and teaching at least one class at a community garden that addresses an area in which gardeners would like to improve their skills or increase their knowledge. A maximum of 15 hours may be done in a participant's own community garden. A minimum of 15 hours must be done in DUG community gardens in which a participant is not currently involved. DUG staff will provide volunteer opportunities and additional guidance, but this aspect is self-directed. GiveBack hours must be approved before completed. Participants must fulfill 30 GiveBack hours by October 31, 2012.

FEE: In exchange for the training, participants will pay a \$35 materials fee and will be required to return 30 hours of GiveBack. Please bring payment to the first class and make checks payable to Denver Urban Gardens.

SCHOLARSHIPS: Limited full & partial scholarships are available for low-income households. To request a scholarship, please submit a letter explaining why you should be considered for a scholarship with your completed application no later than December 1st.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Applications are due **December 1, 2011**. Please submit applications online at www.dug.org/mcg-app or mail applications (postmarked no later than December 1, 2011) to Denver Urban Gardens, 3377 Blake St., Ste. 113, Denver, CO 80205. Interviews occur in December and January; all applicants will be contacted by January 31, 2012.

CONTACT US: If you have questions or need further information, please email Shannon Spurlock at shannon@dug.org or call 303.292.9900.

SCHEDULE & CLASS DESCRIPTIONS: Creating a successful community garden takes more than just a “green thumb.” In addition to horticultural skills, it also takes time, dedication, leadership, and organization. These trainings provide skills, resources and ideas to overcome the organizational and logistical challenges to build and maintain successful, productive and sustainable community gardens. Classes are interactive and a combination of lecture, panel discussions, and group activities. In addition, individuals will present to the class on topics that frequently arise in community gardens. DUG’s Master Community Gardener Training Program is an 11-week course. NO partial attendance.

- Wednesday, 2/15 *History of Community Gardens and How to Start a New Community Garden*
6:00-8:45pm Ever wondered how community gardens are started? Learn about the history and benefits of community gardens, DUG, and the growing movement of local small-scale agriculture.
- Wednesday, 2/22 *Communication Skills*
6:00-8:45pm This training includes skills and resources on conflict resolution, effective methods of communicating with gardeners, interacting with diverse populations, and overcoming language and cultural barriers.
- Wednesday, 2/29 *Community Organizing Basics (In the Garden and Out In the Neighborhood)*
6:00-8:45pm Learn effective methods of growing your community within the garden and out into the surrounding community. Develop a gardener’s skills bank and encouraging partnerships in the community garden.
- Wednesday, 3/7 *Garden Management/Administration*
6:00-8:45pm The “how-to” class of managing a community garden, including “nuts & bolts” on garden leadership, committees, budgeting, soliciting donations, and how to assign plots.
- Wednesday, 3/14 *Community Garden Design Principles*
6:00-8:45pm Principles and guidelines for garden design including physical parameters, building permanent features (e.g. raised beds and pathways), planning thematic beds, applying appropriate design for specific sites, and maintenance of infrastructure (such as how to fix simple irrigation breaks).
- Wednesday, 3/21 *Soil and Water Conservation*
6:00-8:45pm Learn basic fundamentals of plant biology and water conservation techniques and issues.
- Saturday, 3/24 *Basic Organic Growing of Edibles in Colorado - Part I*
9:00am-3:00pm The two-part series of horticulture classes provides a well-rounded approach to organic growing. Topics include soil health and improvement techniques; composting methods and demonstration; spacing and thinning; companion planting; weed and pest management; and seasonal planting techniques. This first class will focus primarily on spring gardening, including bed preparation and seed starting. There will be an outdoors, hands-on component to this class if weather permits.
- Wednesday, 4/4 *Basic Organic Growing of Edibles in Colorado - Part II*
6:00-8:45pm This class will build upon the previous week’s lessons with specific emphasis on warm and hot season crops, summer and fall gardening, seed saving, and putting the garden to rest for the winter.
- Wednesday, 4/11 *What To Do With All the Produce...*
6:00-8:45pm Identify and share community and online resources for nutrition information, healthy recipes, and preservation. Class includes how to hold a cooking demonstration.
- Saturday, 3/31, or 4/14, or
Wednesday, 4/18 *Hands-On Group Activity: Organizing a Work Day*
9:00am-12:00pm Choose one of these dates to work with DUG’s Construction Manager, Dusty Martin, and learn how to work with a community and organize a work day. This opportunity guides participants in the organizational requirements, practical tools, and knowledge required to pull everything together and make the day a productive success! (Participants must commit to one of the dates.)
- Saturdays, 4/14, 4/21, or 4/28 *Hands-On Group Activity: Education, Outreach & Community Engagement*
9:00am-12:00pm Throughout the program, participants will work toward designing and implementing the components of a community activity. This hands-on group activity will utilize the new skills gained through the program, enabling participants to apply these skills in a new or existing community garden. (Participants must commit to one of the dates.)
- Wednesday, 5/2 *Troubleshooting – Where To Find the Resources You Need*
6:00-9:00pm This session will cover ideas to overcome common difficulties that frequently arise in a community garden. In addition, this session will include where to go for more resources and a discussion of volunteer opportunities for GiveBack hours.

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