



Knox County Master Gardeners: Serving Knoxville & Knox County

Each day the UT-TSU Extension Knox County Master Gardener volunteers work in Knoxville and Knox County to achieve our mission: Helping Tennessee Grow Better Communities. With 16 projects throughout Knox County, our 205 members work in both public and non-profit community programs to develop opportunities for all ages and backgrounds to fulfill a passion for gardening.

Master Gardeners are educated through a 16-week program administered through University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Cooperative Extension programs. They then complete volunteer hours in Knox County to become certified and maintain that certification. In 2023 our volunteers contributed more than 20,200 volunteer hours in community projects. Here are highlights of 2023:

We offered basic gardening classes for the community in East, South and North Knoxville, with more than 85 attending. We partnered with the Knox County Community Gardens and Growers Alliance in East Knoxville and throughout Knox County to help people grow food in more than 100 community raised beds. We also held a basic Veggie Gardening Class in East Knoxville, with more than 19 people participating.



In Lonsdale, Strawberry Plains and other areas, a Master Gardener program with Habitat for Humanity homeowners—Habitat Urban Gardens (HUG) teaches Habitat homeowners the basics of growing plants. Master Gardeners then work with homeowners in designing and installing landscapes at their homes.

In West Knox County Master Gardeners oversee All Saints Charity Demonstration Garden and Concord UMC Community Garden to grow and distribute produce and fruit in area communities. More than 10,000 pounds of food was donated to more than 1,000 people in 2023 by these two programs.

Master Gardeners work in city parks, county parks, non-profit facilities and other areas to maintain gardens enjoyed by the public. We are at Knoxville Botanical Gardens in East Knoxville, James Agee Park in Fort Sanders, Racheff Gardens on Tennessee Ave., Beardsley Farm near Western Ave., Collier Preserve in Powell, UT Gardens on campus, and Hardin Valley Elementary School Garden. At the Bloom Center near Bearden, Master Gardeners work with individuals with special abilities to learn how to grow plants and seedlings.

Master Gardeners staff many Knox County farmers markets with a table for visitors to “Ask a Master Gardener” about growing plants. We also have an Ask a Master Gardener program at Norwood Library.

Our Speakers Bureau provides educational programs during the year. And our YouTube videos include 56 Prune Like a Pro original videos, in addition to other topics.



And we have a variety of youth programs and periodic programs in the community, including a beautification project at Knoxville College for its 2023 alumni reunion.

We have partnered with UT Institute of Agriculture in expanding the reach of its Tennessee Smart Yards program to residents of Knox County, helping homeowners create ecologically-sound landscapes. A Friends of Smart Yards festival was held at UT Gardens in 2023, with more than 300 people attending. Also in 2023, the KCMG Smart Yards project created a pilot collaboration with local real estate professionals to become certified

in Smart Yards concepts so that they can advise potential home buyers about the program.

We participated in the City of Knoxville's Neighborhood Resource Fair, distributing seeds and answering questions from more than 110 people. Master Gardeners participate in the Tennessee Valley Fair each year, as well as the Dogwood Arts House and Garden Show and staffing Dogwood Arts Open Gardens events.

Master Gardeners receive advanced training in native plants, organic growing and other skills to help members of the community who are increasingly more interested in these areas. In 2023, we won 1st place and 3rd place awards from the International Master Gardener Conference for two of our outreach projects.



Through its varied programs, Knox County Master Gardeners contribute to our community throughout the year. We help grow our community and add to the beauty of Knoxville and Knox County along the way.



Rosanne Smith,
president 2022-2023



Cori Holmes,
president 2024-2025



Rylan Thompson,
Knox County Coordinator

Please contact us to learn more about

Knox County Master Gardeners

<https://www.knoxcountymastergardener.org/>

Or Knox County Extension:

<https://knox.tennessee.edu/>

Garden projects map:

2024 KCMG Garden Projects

- 1 - Extension Office at the City-County Building
- 2 - All Saints Charity Garden/Demonstration Garden
- 3 - Beardsley Community Farm
- 4 - BLOOM Center
- 5 - Concord UMC Community Garden
- 6 - Collier Preserve
- 7 - Hardin Valley Elementary School Garden
- 8 - Habitat Urban Gardens (HUG)
- 9 - James Agee Park
- 10 - Knoxville Botanical Garden & Arboretum
- 11 - UT Gardens - Knoxville
- 12 - Racheff Gardens & Arboretum
- 13 - Community Gardens Alliance

★ Eastern Region Extension Office at
1801 Downtown West Blvd.



And outreach projects:

- Ask A Master Gardener
- Speakers Bureau
- Tennessee Smart Yards
- Youth Horticulture