



Missouri Master Gardener Association, Inc.

Awards Program Handbook

Revised September 5, 2025

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS 11:59 PM, APRIL 30,
FOLLOWING THE END OF THE AWARD YEAR**

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A. GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Missouri Master Gardener Association, Inc. (MOMGA) Awards Program is sponsored by MOMGA. The purpose of each award is to recognize outstanding Master Gardener people, chapters, and projects throughout the state of Missouri for their outstanding contributions within the state.

All entries for awards must demonstrate overall excellence and community outreach that embodies the values of the Master Gardener Program and the University of Missouri Extension. In addition, entries:

- Must have an educational component.
- Must be available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientations, national origin, and marital or family status.
- Must extend the resources of University of Missouri Extension Master Gardener program to the public wherever they live, helping them use knowledge to solve problems at work, at home, and in their communities.
- Must contain information that is research-based from the University of Missouri Extension or another accredited university.
- Should provide home horticulture education in a responsive and timely manner.
- Should collaborate with local nonprofit and municipal groups to offer education leadership for better gardening practices in area communities.
- Should foster a learning environment for volunteers.
- Should encourage continued education and the recruitment and training of new Master Gardener volunteers.
- Should offer information and education to Missouri citizens through innovative programs with creative and new approaches.

B. AWARD CATEGORIES

There are three categories of awards. The highest scoring Master Gardener person, chapter, and project in each category of a designated membership size group will receive an award. Chapters will be competing for awards against other chapters of similar size.

The categories for awards are as follows:

Master Gardener of the Year. This category recognizes a Master Gardener who is an active member in good standing within a Master Gardener chapter and whose involvement and contributions during the award year are of primary importance, although prior year contributions or involvement may also be considered.

Master Gardener Chapter of the Year. This category recognizes a Master Gardener chapter that has completed at least one or more programs and/or projects of importance to the community. The programs and/or projects must involve two or more active Master Gardeners. The programs and/or projects may be ongoing.

Master Gardener Project of the Year. This category recognizes a project which is at a physical location. The project should display best horticultural practices for educational purposes. Examples of a project are a demonstration garden, a school or community garden, or a permanent display.

Eligibility of a Chapter or Individual for Awards:

- Only those Missouri Master Gardener chapters that have paid their dues to the MOMGA Treasurer by April 1 of the award year are qualified to submit award entries. *There are no exceptions.*
- Chapters may submit only one entry per category.

Membership Categories

Chapters will compete against other chapters in the same “membership category” – small, medium, and large. Which category a chapter belongs in will be determined once award submissions are received.

Award submissions will be ranked by chapter size smallest to largest and then divided by 3. The smallest third will be in the small group, the middle third in the medium group, and the largest third in the large group. This will be done for each of the three awards, based on the submissions received for each award.

Time Period

The award year will be based on activities and events that occurred between January 1 and December 31. The actual start date of the activity or event could be earlier than January 1. The activity or event could be an ongoing one that extends into the year following the award year.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS 11:59 PM, APRIL 30, FOLLOWING THE END OF THE AWARD YEAR.

C. THE SUBMISSION PROCESS

The following requirements pertain to all awards submissions.

How to Obtain the Entry Form

Entry forms are posted on the Missouri Master Gardener Association website, www.momga.org. Download the form that is needed and save it on your computer. Then, using Word, complete the entry form on your computer. Entry forms must be a **PDF** document. If downloading the needed forms from the MOMGA website is not possible, then please contact the awards committee at awards@momga.org for further assistance. *Do not change the format of the entry form. You may delete the instructions on page 1 between the lines.*

How to Name the Entry File

Examples of how to name your award entry file are as follows:

(Chapter Name) (County Name) (Category Name)
Heart of Missouri Master Gardeners, Boone County, Master Gardener Project of the Year
Boonslick Master Gardeners, Cooper County, Master Gardener of the Year

How to Submit Your Award Entry

Email your completed award entry to awards@momga.org on or before 11:59 PM, April 30 following the end of the award year. The subject line of your email entry should be (Chapter Name) (County Name) (Category Name) as above.

The Award Entry

The award entry must be a **PDF** document. The award cannot exceed 3 pages, with the exception of the Master Gardener Chapter of the Year, which may be 4 pages in length. *The award entry must be completed using Arial font 10 points or larger.* The format must be the same as the entry form. The font color must be black. Also, the titles, headings, and margins are to remain in the same position and size as on the entry form. Italics or bold should not be used. *The section describing the person, chapter, or project being entered for an award must not exceed 150 words.*

Supplemental Documentation

In addition to the award entry itself, entries may be accompanied by a one-page supplemental document to a maximum of three supplemental document pages. These extra pages must be in PDF format. Any pictures not embedded in the document must be in JPEG format. Supplemental documentation may be included in the same file as the award entry, thus becoming pages 4, 5, and 6 of the file. On the other hand, supplemental documentation may be submitted as separate files to the same one award entry email. Supplemental documentation is intended to enhance the understanding of an award entry, but it is not necessary. The award entry should be able to stand on its own merit. No points are assigned to supplemental documentation. Examples of supplemental documentation are photos, sketches, or diagrams. If photographs of adults or children are included, photo releases must be on file at the County University of Missouri Extension Office in accordance with state and local laws.

Written material may be used as supplemental documentation as long as the material has been previously published. Examples are an excerpt from newsletter articles, newspaper advertisements, a calendar, pamphlet or book. Written phrases or sentences used as expansion of the award entry are not permitted. A written phrase or short sentence may be used as a caption to describe a picture, sketch, or other extra documentation.

Supplemental documentation must be attached to the same email as the award entry. If the extra documentation is not included as later pages of the award entry itself, then here are examples of how to entitle the supplementary documentation:

Heart of Missouri Master Gardeners Project of the Year sup1
Heart of Missouri Master Gardeners Project of the Year sup2
Heart of Missouri Master Gardeners Project of the Year sup3
Boonslick Master Gardeners Master Gardener of the Year sup1
Boonslick Master Gardeners Master Gardener of the Year sup2

Additional Criteria

Files that are zipped or compressed are not allowed.

Do not send multiple award entries in a single email. Send one entry per email. When submitting more than one award entry, use a different email for each entry and give each email a subject line as described above under How to Submit Your Award Entry.

A chapter may enter more than one category but may submit only one entry per category.

Processing the Award Entry

The Awards Committee will acknowledge by email the receipt of each award entry. This acknowledgment will go to the submitter of the entry plus CCs. If the submitter does not receive an acknowledgment within a few days, then please send an email to awards@momga.org to inquire about the entry.

The Awards Committee will review each entry to ensure that it is complete, that word limits are followed, that all requirements for the entry are met. Submissions that fail this review will not be forwarded to the judge and the submitter will be informed. The time stamp in the Awards Committee email is the official time. After the above review, the Awards Committee will forward the awards to the Extension Master Gardener State Coordinator, who will arrange judging.

Determination of resolution of disputed or missing entries will be at the sole discretion of the Awards Committee.

All award entries become the property of MOMGA.

D. THE SCORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Entries are rated using a 100-point scale. All entries will be evaluated by a judge selected by the Extension Master Gardener State Coordinator. Entries will be evaluated based on the criteria listed below. Although writing skill is not a criterion, each submission should be carefully proofread to ensure that it is easy to read, understandable, and conveys the components of the intended entry as thoroughly and accurately as possible.

Scoring criteria for the Master Gardener of the Year and Master Gardener Chapter of the Year awards follows their respective entry form questions. The scoring criteria for Master Gardener Project of the Year follows:

Simple to Replicate

15 points

The goal of the entry is to share excellent ideas and programs that can be replicated by other Master Gardener chapters. The exact project need not be duplicated, but the gardening ideas described about the project should be easy to create somewhere else.

Practicality

15 points

An award entry must appropriately support the needs of the target group.

Innovative and Creative**10 points**

The award entry must reflect the creativity and/or individuality of the Master Gardeners who are working with it. This does not mean that you must reinvent the wheel, just put your own touch on the project.

Compatibility**15 points**

The award entry must be compatible with University of Missouri Extension Master Gardener Program missions. The entry must include an educational component.

Availability**5 points**

The award entry must be available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, marital, or family status.

University of Missouri Extension**5 points**

The award entry must extend the University of Missouri Extension Service resources to assist participants to solve problems at home or within the community.

Educational Impact**20 points**

The award entry must have a significant educational impact. The submitter should organize his or her thoughts into a cohesive narrative that will include the following:

- how the subject of the award entry was planned
- how it was executed, including any obstacles that had to be overcome
- how the subject of the award entry contributed to an increase in gardening knowledge
- how the increase in gardening knowledge was determined

Worthwhile Results**10 points**

Were the results of the subject of the award entry worth the volunteer effort that was given? Master Gardener projects, people, and written materials improve people's lives, and this impact must be identified. Quantitative, objective measurements to demonstrate impact, such as user surveys or interviews will be preferred over anecdotal or qualitative reports of outcome. If the applicants use anecdotal evidence, provide specific examples, not general statements.

Clarity**5 points**

How clear and complete was the entry?

Total: 100 points**Scoring Information for Awards**

- All scoring by the judge and decisions by the MOMGA Awards Committee are final. In the case of a tie, duplicate prizes will be awarded.
- Score sheets will be provided to the submitter upon request.
- Judges may provide comments, but this is not a requirement.

Entry Requirements and General Information

- All award entry subjects must have been worked on during the award year. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in immediate disqualification.
- Chapters cannot win Chapter of the Year two years in a row.

- Master Gardeners cannot win Master Gardener of the Year two years in a row.
- Projects must demonstrate a new educational component within the award year to be submitted again.
- A list of award winners with links to the winning entries will be posted on the MOMGA website at www.momga.org after the State Master Gardener Annual Conference.