

Bylaws for the Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener Association

Article 1 Name

The name of this organization shall be the Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener Association, hereby referred to as NETMGA. The Northeast Tennessee Counties included are: Sullivan, Washington, Unicoi, Carter and Johnson.

Article 2 Purpose

The NETMGA program trains and maintains horticulture volunteers for The University of Tennessee Extension. The goals of this program shall be to increase the availability of horticultural information for their members and the community at large and to improve the quality of life for the residents of its participating counties through horticulture volunteer and educational activities.

Article 3 Membership

- A. Membership in the NETMGA shall be by successful completion of Master Gardener training classes and the final exam, and by remaining a member in good standing. The program is open to persons who meet the application and/or certification requirements without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status.
- B. Upon completion of the Master Gardener training class conducted by The University of Tennessee Extension, first year Master Gardeners are required to return 40 working hours and acquire an additional 8 continuing education (CEs) hours within 12 months of completion of class. At least 50% of the required working hours must be conducted on projects sanctioned by the NETMGA. These hours must be reported on the Tennessee Master Gardener (TMG) Website to meet state program certification requirements. If these requirements are not fulfilled, he or she will not be considered a Master Gardener and will forfeit membership. The Executive Committee may, with the approval of the County Extension Agent, make exceptions in unusual circumstances.
- C. To remain a Master Gardener in good standing in subsequent years one must:
 - 1. Pay annual dues by December 31st for the upcoming year.
 - 2. Complete 25 Volunteer hours during the membership year; 50% must be completed on projects sanctioned by NETMGA.
 - 3. Complete 8 Continuing Education (CE) hours during each membership year.
 - 4. Complete and sign the UT Tennessee Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement annually.

5. Members completing 10 or more years of active service are required to complete 15 hours of combined volunteer and CE hours. Name badges will reflect years of service at 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service.
- D. Persons who have successfully completed the Master Gardener training in another Tennessee county and were members in good standing in that county, may petition for immediate membership by completing a Transfer Form and submitting it to the county membership coordinator where they wish to transfer. The membership coordinator will make a change in the database and volunteer service and education hours will begin accruing in the new county. Hours related to specific projects will remain in the historical files of the previous county.
- E. Master Gardeners from another state may petition for membership to the NETMGA by:
 1. Completing the Transfer Form and provide proof of completion and enrollment in an out-of-state program with either a letter from their previous program coordinator or their certificate.
 2. Auditing the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener course organized by their local county coordinator. A maximum of two classes can be missed and the MG is exempt from exams.
 3. Performing a minimum of 25 hours of recommended volunteer service activities within one year of the end of intern training.
 4. Upon completing these requirements, out-of-state Extension Master Gardener volunteers receive a Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Certificate.
- F. Membership dues may be levied as recommended by the budget committee and voted on by the membership. Dues must be paid by December 31st or late fee will be assessed in January. Membership will be forfeited if dues are not paid by February 1st.
- G. The working year for NETMGA is January 1 to December 31. All volunteer and education hours must be turned in before the end of the Master Gardener working year. Reports to the state program will be due December 31st annually.

Article 4 Officers and Elections

- A. The members of the NETMGA who shall serve as the Executive Committee shall be: Past President; President; Vice President(s); Secretary; and Treasurer. The Extension Agent shall serve as advisor. The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting by majority vote for a term of two years and may serve successive terms.
- B. The President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, shall appoint a nominating committee of three members at least one month before the annual meeting. All nominees shall be NETMGA members in good standing. Following the report of the nominating committee, additional nominations may be made from the floor, provided that consent has been secured from the nominee.

- C. Vacancies among the officers and standing committee chairs shall be filled by the President, with approval of the Executive Committee, for the remainder of an unexpired term. However, if the office of either the President or the Vice President becomes vacant, it will be filled by a special election by the general membership. If an officer has served more than half a term, the individual is considered to have served a full term in that office.
- D. Duties of the Officers are documented in individual job descriptions available on the NETMGA website.

Article 5 Committees

The President may create committees as needed and shall appoint committee chairpersons. The chairman of each committee will select the committee members. These committees will be categorized as one of three types:

1. Project Committees - Committees to manage ongoing NETMGA sanctioned projects.
2. Ad Hoc Committees - Committees to meet immediate short term goals.
3. Standing Committees - Permanent committees necessary to support the NETMGA. Standing Committees shall determine standard rules of operation for their committee and make those rules known to the membership.

Article 6 Meetings

- A. General membership meetings shall be held the first Monday of every even numbered month. For issues that require a vote of the general membership, three executive board members and 20% of general members must be present to constitute a quorum. Meetings shall be conducted following Roberts Rules of Order.
- B. The annual business meeting of the NETMGA, with election of officers, shall take place in December of each year.
- C. The Executive Committee shall meet as needed. All Executive Committee members and the County Extension Agent will be notified of meeting time and location by the President. Members of the Executive Committee present, if not less than three, shall constitute a quorum.
- D. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the President or at request of a majority of the officers.

**Article 7
Finances**

- A. TMG Financial Policy must be followed for all financial decision and transactions. A proposed budget of anticipated revenues and expenditures as prepared by the Treasurer shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval to be presented to the general membership for adoption. The Treasurer and alternates have signing privileges in the bank account.
- B. In consideration of the budget for the NETMGA, the Executive Committee will recommend the dues, which shall be levied from the members. Such dues shall be approved at a regular meeting of the general membership.
- C. Fund-raising activities for the NETMGA may be authorized by the Executive Committee when the purpose of such activities is in agreement with the objectives of the group and not in conflict with the nature of the organization.
- D. The Treasurer will provide monthly financial reports to the Board and general membership. At the end of the working year, the Treasurer shall provide an annual financial report, which has been reviewed by the audit committee, which will be made up of at least two general members who are not part of the Executive Committee.

**Article 8
Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the NETMGA by 2/3 of the votes cast, provided the changes are agreeable to the County Extension agent, and that written notice of the proposed changes was sent to the membership twenty-one days before the time of the next meeting.

These By-Laws have been executed and approved by the following Executive Board Members and the County Coordinator (Advisor):

President _____	Date _____
Vice President _____	Date _____
Treasurer _____	Date _____
Secretary _____	Date _____
Advisor _____	Date _____