

OUTREACH ACTIVITY

Community Engagement Module

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION

MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Coordinate a Learning Garden Tour

Purpose: To create an educational event in your community to showcase successful gardens and highlight research-based gardening practices in action.

During a learning garden tour, residents will learn about plants they may be less familiar with and new gardening practices that they can try at home. Garden tours often follow a theme for each event (e.g., native plants, rain gardens, shade gardens, permaculture). Based on your community needs, choose a theme that will both inspire and encourage residents to use what they learn from the tour in their own gardens. Once a theme is selected, identify garden locations that showcase that theme and invite them to host a tour stop. Demonstration gardens (i.e. gardens with interpretive signage) make excellent tour locations.

If possible, set up information tables/booths at each stop along the tour to be staffed by Master Gardeners, who can provide information and/or answer questions from tour participants. Make sure that corresponding educational handouts are also available on-site for each tour stop. It's also a good idea to have Master Gardener Volunteer Program handouts available to raise awareness of the many different educational efforts offered by the program and possibly recruit new program members.

Tips for coordinating a successful Learning Garden Tour:

- Choose a theme that is interesting to members of your community
- Promote the garden tour using Promotional Flyers
- Find gardens that represent the theme, either Master Gardeners, public spaces, or residents
- Make the tour interactive by using hands-on activities wherever possible (Example: create an “interactive sidewalk” by using chalk on walkways)
- Display program-branded items, including “Let’s Talk Plants” signage at each location
- Set up and have tables / booths staffed by Master Gardeners at each tour location
- Provide handouts on the horticulture topics being showcased and about the program
- Keep track of the number of people attending the garden tour using this [form](#)