

“Advanced Master Gardener - First Detector” Training Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services

Advanced Training Program Purpose and information:

The “Advanced Master Gardener - First Detector” program is designed to provide advanced training and resources whereby Master Gardeners can obtain specialization in areas that support or expand designated educational programs of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services.

To become a certified “Advanced Master Gardener - First Detector”, Master Gardeners are required to attend the “Advanced Master Gardener – First Detector” training and subsequently meet service requirements described below. This certification does not empower the individual with supervisory or administrative authority within her/his local county programs.

The National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPND) was established in 2002, to respond to the need for enhanced agricultural security through protecting the health and productivity of plants in agricultural and natural ecosystems in the U.S. The First Detector Training program is a national program established by the NPND to promote the early detection of invasive and exotic pathogens and pests through education and enlisting the help of citizen “scientists”.

The First Detector program allows for training in some basic observation and surveying skills which are most helpful in the diagnostic process in the volunteer. Additionally, this program aims to train trainers. An “Advanced Master Gardener - First Detector” is expected to be able to know what to do when observing a suspected exotic pest or pathogen.

Participation Requirements:

To be eligible for the Master Gardener Advanced Training: First Detector, an individual must possess an up-to-date Master Gardener certification, or be an employee of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Master Gardener applicants must be approved by their local County Extension Agent.

Position Description and Service Requirements:

The “Advanced Master Gardener – First Detector” is charged to increase awareness, providing training on First Detector and facilitate implementation of the program on a home/neighborhood/community level. Training activities during the course will empower the Master Gardener to complete these service requirements.

Service requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Attending the “Advanced Master Gardener - First Detector” training
- Volunteering 20 hours above and beyond their county’s current volunteer obligation within one year of the advanced training
- Serving as a local “Advanced Master Gardener - First Detector” resource in the Extension program for a minimum of one year
- Assisting in education Master Gardeners, interns and the public about the First Detector program
- Submitting a completed “Advanced Master Gardener - First Detector” Training Volunteer Report Form as directed
- Optional: Submitting TMGA Reimbursement paperwork

Advanced Training recognition and certification:

Upon completion of the “Advanced Master Gardener - First Detector” training and service requirements, the Master Gardener will be awarded an “Advanced Master Gardener – First Detector” certificate and lapel pin.

Resources Available to the “Advanced Master Gardener - First Detector”:

- Advanced First Detector Training and networking with presenters
- Educational materials on First Detector program
- Direct access to Texas A&M AgriLife Program Specialist