



**2018 Purdue Master Gardener  
Search for Excellence Award  
Application Deadline  
March 19, 2018**

**Purpose**

Purdue Search for Excellence (SFE) Award is recognition for Purdue Master Gardener volunteer work. This award recognizes outstanding Purdue MG group projects, rather than individual projects or programs. Applications must show evidence of significant learning in home horticulture by the participants.

**Description**

The Purdue SFE Award has four categories for Purdue Master Gardener groups to showcase outstanding contributions to their communities. Project submission must meet the following guidelines:

1. ***Choose the category that best fits the project.*** Each County Master Gardener group may submit only ONE award application per year. Choose only ONE category for the project submitted. The categories are:
  - Youth Program
  - Demonstration Garden
  - Educational Service Workshop (Workshop, Presentation or Publication)
  - Special Needs Audience (Senior, Disable or Horticultural Therapy)
2. ***Projects will be judged on their merit for work completed during 2016-2017.*** Projects entered must have completed a full year to be entered. Projects that have previously won a Purdue SFE award will not be eligible for any category.
3. ***Simple to replicate.*** Share ideas and programs that can be duplicated by other MG groups. A two-acre botanic garden would be difficult to replicate, but the gardening ideas inside it would be easy to create somewhere else. A step-by-step “how to do this” would be a great way to share your project.
4. ***Practicality.*** Highlight a program that is easy to use and fits the situation it is intended.
5. ***Original and creative.*** Originality and creativity make the program your own, or reflects the personalities of the Purdue Master Gardeners who are working on it. It is not necessary to “re-invent the wheel”, but tell us what distinguishes your project from other similar projects.
6. ***Compatible with Purdue Extension and Master Gardener Missions.***
  - All projects must have an educational component. The primary objective should be to educate others about home horticulture. Projects must be available to all persons

without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, and marital or family status.

- Projects should extend the resources of Purdue University to the public and help them use knowledge to solve problems at home and in the community. Information provided should be university research-based.

### **Application Instructions**

1. The Purdue Master Gardeners involved with the project should write the application, not Purdue Extension staff. Use the following outline and provide your application in a WORD or PDF document. All Purdue MG SFE Award applications must include the following:
  - Name of the MG Program and County
  - Name, address, phone, email of MG contact person
  - Name, title, address, phone, email of County MG Coordinator (Purdue Extension Educator)
  - Select and submit in only ONE project per county MG group and submit that project in only ONE category:
    - Youth Program
    - Demonstration Garden
    - Educational Service (Workshop, Presentation or Publication)
    - Special Needs Audiences (Senior, Disabled or Horticultural Therapy)
  - Name of Project
  - Description of project, include target audience, goals, location and partnerships
  - Discuss planning methods and implementation
  - Results
  - Budget
  - List of names of active Purdue Master Gardeners who were involved in the project from start to finish, do not include their roles
2. A verification letter emailed directly from your County MG Coordinator (Purdue Extension Educator) is required. The deadline for this verification and the application is March 19, 2018. Any project submitted without this document will be disqualified. The County MG Coordinator's email must verify that:
  - Purdue Master Gardeners involved are currently in good standing.
  - Photo releases are on file for all individuals in photos as required by Purdue University.
  - All attachments have been reviewed by the County MG Coordinator.
3. The application document should be in Word or PDF format and must be no longer than 3 pages in total length. Up to 5 digital photos in JPEG format should be submitted with the application. Your County MG Coordinator must email the verification letter along with the application and pictures to John Orick, Purdue Master Gardener State Coordinator by email, [orick@purdue.edu](mailto:orick@purdue.edu). Please put SFE, "Your County" MG program in the subject line of all emails. No hard copy of mailed applications will be accepted. Submit only the items listed in instructions 1-3 above. Any applications longer than 3 pages **will not be accepted.**

4. Questions should be directed to John Orick, Purdue Master Gardener State Coordinator, by email [orick@purdue.edu](mailto:orick@purdue.edu), by phone 765-496-7956.

### **Demonstration of Significant Educational Impact**

Purdue Master Gardener projects should improve people's lives. Explain how the project increased learning, knowledge, or changed practices to enhance quality of life. Impacts can be economical, environmental, educational, health, community-based, etc. Purdue Master Gardener SFE award-winning projects should be developed to reach the most people. However, impact numbers are not as significant, if the target audience does not learn or utilize information. Ask participants how your information helped them and record this as an impact. Depending on the nature of the project, the evaluations may be very informal (i.e. casually asking questions) or formal (i.e. pre-test/post-test).

The Purdue Master Gardener Search for Excellence Award is modeled after the International Master Gardener SFE Award. For additional information, visit:

<https://articles.extension.org/pages/29834/international-master-gardener-search-for-excellence>

### **Presentations to Award Winners and Poster Guidelines**

1. The top three entries in each category are asked to provide a poster to be displayed at the 2018 Purdue Master Gardener State Conference in Danville, IN. The size for all posters is 36 inches (height) X 48 inches (width) and should be mounted on foam core board or similar material to provide support for the poster. Posters should include photos of the project, a map showing project location, name of the Purdue MG group, information about the group, and any other pertinent information describing the award-winning project.
2. Posters are to be displayed during the 2018 Purdue MG State Conference on Friday, June 8, 2018 from 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Purdue MG State Office will provide easels for display of all posters at the conference.
3. Each SFE Award winner or a designated recipient is strongly encouraged to attend the 2018 Purdue MG State Conference on Friday, June 8, 2018 to receive their award and to be available next to their poster during designated breaks to answer questions about their project and interact with conference attendees. Award winners or representatives must register for the conference in order to receive awards in person at the conference. No reimbursement for registration fees or travel expenses will be provided. If a representative is unable to attend, alternative arrangements for presentation of the award may be discussed with the state coordinator.
4. First, second, and third place Purdue MG SFE Award winners in each category will receive a plaque naming the Purdue MG Program involved in the project.
5. All Purdue MG SFE Award winners will receive a certificate for their participation. Each award-winning MG group will receive a copy of the certificate for each member of the project team.

**Criteria for Selection**

1. Purdue Extension staff and/or active Purdue Master Gardeners (by invitation from the Purdue MG State Coordinator) will judge applicants, independently, using the point scale described below. All of the judge’s scores will be totaled and divided by the number of judges to determine the project score.

100-point scale:

Simplicity of project (easy to replicate).....	10 points
Practicality or relevance of project for situation .....	10 points
Originality or creativity.....	10 points
Consistent with Purdue Extension and MG missions .....	20 points
Clarity and completeness of project application.....	20 points
Did significant learning occur?.....	20 points
Number of people impacted.....	10 points
Total.....	100 points

2. Projects must receive an average score of 70% or better to be eligible for award.
3. A judge will be excused from judging applications from a county in which they work or volunteer.
4. An aggregate score sheet along with a judges’ comments will be returned to the applicants. We hope that the comments will help to strengthen the project.
5. All decisions and scoring by the judges will be considered final.
6. In the case of a tie, duplicate prizes will be awarded.

**Visit these webpages to view previous Purdue Master Gardener SFE Award winners:**

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/highlights-from-the-2015-purdue-master-gardener-state-conference/>

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/purdue-master-gardener-program-highlights-from-the-2016-purdue-master-gardener-state-conference/>