



## University of Wyoming Extension

Platte County Office

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For Immediate Release

Date 1-09-2018

To: All Media

### **Calling All Gardening Enthusiasts! Platte County Master Gardener Program to Begin February 14, 2018**

Master Gardeners are local gardeners who have taken classes from University of Wyoming Extension staff and volunteers, and who are willing to volunteer time back to their communities. Many Master Gardeners have been long time gardeners before taking the training classes. Some Master Gardeners are young gardeners who do not know where to start, but know they need some help when they wander into a local county Extension Office. Still others have learned to garden in other parts of the country and need to adapt their gardening practices to a new climate, new soil conditions or a different growing season. Whatever the reason each trainee decides to become a Master Gardener, they will gain basic gardening skills and learn how and where to research more difficult gardening problems to find solutions. The whole idea is to begin a lifelong learning process with an interest in volunteering to help others.

The Wyoming Master Gardener programs offer 40 or more hours of training, depending upon the county. Topics from botany to water-wise gardening are taught based upon a 2004 curriculum Sustainable Horticulture for Wyoming: A Master Gardener Handbook. Once the trainees receive their classroom experience they are required to volunteer a minimum of 40 hours in their community before they are given the title of Master Gardener. Trainees can go on yard calls and to work with other Master Gardeners answering horticultural related questions, all the while learning as they help others. This experience offers an abundance of opportunities for volunteers to help fellow citizens and expand their own gardening knowledge without having to “know all the answers” to start with.

The Master Gardener program in Platte County will begin on **Wednesday, February 14th** Classroom instructors will include soils specialist, UW Extension Plant Sciences Dept. and other disciplines from within the University of Wyoming, horticulturist from other counties, as well as master gardeners from other counties.

A minimum of six will be required for the class to be offered.

The class will run for 14 weeks ending May 16th. In the past, we have been able to offer scholarships to all class participants who complete the fourteen-week training. After the initial \$150.00 per participant registration fee, participants who complete the training in the past have received partial reimbursements from scholarship donors Wheatland Ace Hardware, Drube’s Supply and the Wheatland Country Store and the same may happen this year.

**The course will run Wednesdays, Feb 14<sup>th</sup> through May 16th, 2018 at 6:00—9:00 p.m. at the Platte County Extension Office and the Guernsey High Schools EWC outreach if we have applicants from there. Registration deadline is Jan 26<sup>th</sup>. Please contact the Platte County Extension Office at 322-3667, Monday through Friday, 8:30—11:30 a.m. or 12:30—4:30 p.m., the application is available on the Platte County extension website: [www.plattecountyextension.com](http://www.plattecountyextension.com) or send an e-mail to [mmckin12@uwyo.edu](mailto:mmckin12@uwyo.edu), for an application and more information.**