



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
VOLUNTEER REPORT FORM  
PERIOD JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025  
Deadline: August 8, 2025

1. DEPARTMENT INFORMATION:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Department:    | University of California Cooperative Extension |
| Division/Unit: | San Diego County                               |

2. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM BENEFITS:

- a. GENERAL VOLUNTEERS (this section should include community volunteer, student intern, groups, corporations, etc.)

|                        |                |           |                  |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|
| No. of Volunteers: 648 | Hours: 109,309 | x \$40.14 | = \$4,387,663.26 |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|

Types of work performed by GENERAL VOLUNTEERS in this category:

The Master Food Preserver (MFP) is a public service and outreach program that extends research-based information about home food preservation to the public. The key mission is to keep residents safe and well as they culturally appropriate, research-based practices to safely preserve food in home, reducing food waste, increasing food security, and providing engaging ways for citizens to explore healthy food. Volunteers are required to attend an intensive training program that covers topics such as food safety, boiling water and atmospheric steam canning, pressure canning, canning jam and jellies, pickling and fermenting, and dehydrating and freezing. Classes meet several times a month, with multiple hands-on labs, quizzes, special projects, and a final exam. After certification, volunteers conduct outreach via hands on workshops, demonstrations, presentations to community groups, presentations at community gardens and via a hotline email and phone.

Master Gardeners are volunteers trained and supervised by the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE). For 43 years, the Master Gardener Volunteers have been dedicated to our mission "to extend research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices to the residents of California." Our current team of volunteers educate their community in a vast number of ways on an equally vast number of garden related topics. We have a hotline to ask gardening questions via phone or email, staffed 7 days a week. We maintain 4 demonstration gardens around the county; at the Flower Fields in Carlsbad, at the County Operations Center where we host Ask-A-Master Gardener Wednesdays for county staff and site visitors, Founder's Plaza in Balboa Park, and Paradise Hills Native Garden which was a landfill transformed into a useable green space for an underserved community. We attend local fairs, garden clubs, and business to disseminate information. We provide assistance to 900 schools in the County, grades K-12 with ongoing support and expertise. We also provide wellness activities to our aging population both in intergenerational community gardens as well as live-in care facilities for residents suffering from Alzheimer's or dementia. We maintain over an acre of garden space at the Youth Transition Center where incarcerated youth are housed, giving weekly garden lessons. We help monthly at the East Mesa detention facility with their gardening that



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goes right to the facilities kitchen and work programs but also grows oak trees to support reforestation projects for County Parks. We assist 80 community gardens with planning, planting, education, irrigation, and how to create inclusive spaces. We also assist in research projects for Farm and Home Advisors such as looking and recording where invasive species and plants are. We write for various publications, the Union-Tribune, California Gardens Magazine, local community papers, blogs, external newsletter, and social media.

The 4-H Youth Development Program is an educational initiative managed by the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), a division of the UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Designed to foster positive youth development, the program emphasizes social, physical, and emotional skills in young participants. Through interactive experiential learning, youth are encouraged and supported to achieve their maximum potential, thereby contributing to the advancement of youth development as a field. In San Diego County, local youth and adult volunteers play a crucial role by organizing and facilitating 14 community clubs a part of the program.

4-H Adult volunteers, who are community club leaders, manage the club program. They assist with enrollment for volunteers and members, club year planning by mentoring youth officers, advising the club treasurer regarding the club finances, and making sure projects are being held according to policy. Adult volunteers, who are project leaders, lead a project on a specific subject (e.g., poultry, sewing, computer coding, etc.). They provide educational opportunities to the youth members. Other adult volunteer tasks are to be chaperones and to assist with fundraising, outreach, and special activities.

4-H Youth volunteers are officers in the clubs – president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, historian, reporter, sergeant at arms, healthy living, and civic engagement. They decide what the club is going to do, their budget, how they will fundraise, and how they will make an impact in their community. They are also junior and teen leaders where they teach back what they have learned to other youth.

- b. INSTITUTIONAL VOLUNTEERS (this section should include honor camp inmates, PIC/RETC, GAIN, etc.)

|                        |            |           |   |     |
|------------------------|------------|-----------|---|-----|
| No. of Volunteers: N/A | Hours: N/A | x \$40.14 | = | N/A |
|------------------------|------------|-----------|---|-----|

Types of work performed by INSTITUTIONAL VOLUNTEERS in this category: N/A



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
VOLUNTEER REPORT FORM  
PERIOD JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025  
Deadline: August 8, 2025

- c. SPECIALIZED VOLUNTEERS (this section should include utilization of Special Volunteers in positions requiring specific skills and/or expertise levels, for example, an attorney, physician, sports figure or celebrity). These specialized positions have verifiable compensation levels (VCL). If you have such a volunteer, please indicate the position, hours and compensation level below.)

| Position                | Hours | x | VCL     | = | Dollar Benefit |
|-------------------------|-------|---|---------|---|----------------|
| Educational Cooperators | 2,647 |   | \$66.13 |   | \$175,046.11   |

No. of Volunteers: 112      Total Hours: 2,647      Total Value: = \$175,046.11

Types of work performed by SPECIALIZED VOLUNTEERS in this category:

Volunteers for EFNEP invites and recruits new families to attend the program. They assist in promoting via flyers and announcements for EFNEP. Teachers set up the room to teach and assist in managing youth during lessons and enforcing key lesson messages.

- d. TOTALS OF DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEERS (from above):

|                         | No. of Volunteers | Hours              | Dollar Benefit        |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 2a.                     | 648               | 109,309            | \$4,387,663.26        |
| 2b.                     | N/A               | N/A                | N/A                   |
| 2c.                     | 112               | 2,647              | \$175,046.11          |
| <b>Total Volunteers</b> | <b>760</b>        | <b>Total Hours</b> | <b>Total Value</b>    |
|                         |                   | <b>111,956</b>     | <b>\$4,562,709.37</b> |

3. DONATIONS TO VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:

Please list all donations to the department's Volunteer Program including monetary donations and tangible/intangible items. Items such as computers, air time, transportation, books, etc. Please assign a fair market value to each and add to the total value of the donations section.

|               |  |        |             |
|---------------|--|--------|-------------|
| Item Donated: | Master Food Preserver<br>Unrestricted Cash Donations | Value: | \$1,302.44  |
| Item Donated: | Master Gardener Unrestricted<br>Cash Donations       | Value: | \$7,513.95  |
| Item Donated: | 4-H Donations  | Value: | \$7,712.84  |
| Total Value:  |  |        | \$16,529.23 |



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
VOLUNTEER REPORT FORM  
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Deadline: August 8, 2025

**4. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM COSTS:**

- a. Cost of direct supervision of volunteers (total hours of direct supervision times hourly rate of staff person(s) directly supervising program volunteers.

|            |   |               |   |             |
|------------|---|---------------|---|-------------|
| Hours: 208 | x | Rate: \$54.15 | = | \$11,263.20 |
|------------|---|---------------|---|-------------|

- b. Cost of program coordination (total hours of program coordination times hourly rate of coordinator(s)). This section should include coordination of staff, compiling statistics, job description preparation, volunteer placements and recognition, etc.

|              |   |               |   |              |
|--------------|---|---------------|---|--------------|
| Hours: 3,654 | x | Rate: \$44.67 | = | \$163,224.18 |
|--------------|---|---------------|---|--------------|

- c. Other program costs (volunteer training materials/supplies, recognition costs, etc.):

| <u>Item</u>  | <u>Cost</u> |
|--|-------------|
| Bi-Annual Master Gardener Class Training Materials | \$4,872.49  |
| Master Food Preservers Supplies                    | \$4,700.00  |

**TOTAL OF OTHER PROGRAM COSTS**

**\$9,572.49**

- d. **TOTAL OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAM COST**  
(Sum of 4a, 4b and 4c)

**\$184,059.87**

**5. NET BENEFIT TO DEPARTMENT FROM VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:**

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| a. Total Dollar Benefits of Volunteers, Item 2d (Page 2)       | \$4,562,709.37 |
| b. Total of Donations to Volunteer Program, Item 3 (Page 2)    | \$16,529.23    |
| c. Subtract Total of Volunteer Program Costs, Item 4d (Page 3) | \$184,059.87   |

**TOTAL PROGRAM BENEFIT**

**\$4,395,178.73**



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
VOLUNTEER REPORT FORM  
PERIOD JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025  
Deadline: August 8, 2025

**6. RECRUITING:**

Please describe your recruiting programs:

The Master Food Preserver Program hosts a statewide training program, onboarding all new volunteers at one time during the year. Two MFP Volunteers joined the statewide training effort and became mentors to a new virtual training program rolled out across all counties. Each volunteer mentors a group of prospective new volunteers from Counties that do not have a current coordinator and MFP program. Their mentees will graduate in June 2024. Recruitment efforts are conducted via direct email, website, and social media.

The Master Gardener Program recruits a new training class once every other year. Recruiting started in July 2024 with a public information forum open to anyone who wants more information about what we do and the requirements for training and maintaining a UC certified status. We had 200 people attend our public forum, plus it was recorded to watch online for those that could not attend in person. We advertise to our interest list of about 10,000 individuals, have social media blasts, a featured article in the Union Tribune, flyers and printed materials distributed to local libraries, community gardens, farmer's markets and at MG outreach events. Applications are open for 2 months from August 1 – September 30. Each application is scored separately by 3 people to determine the average and discourage any bias. Out of the applications submitted, generally around 200, half are moved to the interview phase. Each applicant is interviewed by a panel of 3 people who again score the applicant individually then an average is taken to determine who will be accepted into the program. We accepted 50 applicants for this fiscal year, who attend an extensive training weekly from January – June 2025. New volunteers must attend every class, complete weekly quizzes, and one cumulative final with a score of 75% or better.

For the 2024-2025 4-H program year, clubs continued to use traditional marketing tools and outreach opportunities like flyers in schools, community centers, online community portals, and fairs. The website and social media for county information, as well as individual clubs were widely used for outreach. Many clubs participated in community events like street fairs, petting zoos, and parades to promote the program.

**7. SPECIAL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS:**

Please describe any special activities and/or achievements your program was involved in during the period of this report:



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
VOLUNTEER REPORT FORM  
PERIOD JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025  
Deadline: August 8, 2025

4-H Volunteers stepped up to plan and conduct county events to support leadership, public speaking, and interviewing skills by having Presentation Day, and Art& Design Day which included Fashion Revue. Staff held the 1st annual Leadership Summit on two different Saturdays and two evenings via Zoom. Staff also held Treasurer Trainings and End-of-Year Financial Reporting trainings. Members have participated in regional and statewide programs such as State Presentation Day and State Leadership Conference. Nine youth members and four adult volunteers attended 4-H Summer Camp.

This year EFNEP staff has had more public outreach promoting the program. The EFNEP Program made an appearance at the Botanical Garden School event, the Mira Costa College event and the zoom promotional class at Grossmont College. Each event was to attract the new target group: Emerging Adults (age 19-29 years old).

During June 11- June 29, 2025, the Master Food Preservers (MFPs) staffed a large booth at the San Diego County Fair. From Wednesdays through Sundays, 11am-4pm, MFPs answered food preservation questions from the public. The booth reached 1,857 people combined over the 15 days in June. Additionally, the Master Food Preservers gave on-stage presentations in the O'Brien Hall as well as smaller demonstrations in the O'Brien Classroom.

The Master Gardener Program offers 2 large public outreach and educational opportunities yearly in the form of a plant sale, seminar, garden tour or similar style event. We see thousands of people at each event focused on connecting attendees to science-based resources and information.

During the 2024 Plant Sale and Education Day more than 3000 participants attended the biennial Master Gardener Plant sale. We provided educational opportunities on a huge variety of topics including starting a school garden, growing culturally relevant produce, friendly and inclusive gardening, monarch butterflies, tree care, ask-a-master-gardener table, and bean planting/seed starting for kids. We also had 6 lightning 30-minute talks on various topics with all 25 chairs filled and sharpened 140 garden tools and provided tool care education. Two MGs dressed as Mother Earth and Mother Nature passed out 1,500 vegetable seeds, stickers, and invasive insect tattoos to kids.

In Spring 2025, Master Gardeners hosted a Spring Seminar at Sikes Adobe Historic Farmstead. We welcomed more than 650 participants on March 22nd, to an all-day educational seminar featuring workshops about irrigation, farming with chickens, plant propagation, seed starting, fruit tree pruning, berry patch gardening, herb gardening, gardening with pets and children and many others. We had a total of 14 booths staffed by various Master gardeners who are committee members of our multiple outreach programs. They answered questions about our program and gardening from 9am - 3pm. We invited Master Food Preserver volunteers to host an information table and give three workshops on kombucha, strawberry jam canning, and preserving lemons. While preparing for this event, the MG Program donated over \$2,000 in materials (irrigation, soil, compost, and plants) to Sikes Historic Farmstead and the San Dieguito River Valley Parks and Rec department.

Another special activity for the year is partnering with AIS to start 8 community gardens in all areas of the county focusing on intergenerational accessibility and education. We continue to maintain and teach at those gardens.



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
VOLUNTEER REPORT FORM  
PERIOD JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025  
Deadline: August 8, 2025

From April 1 - May 11 (a total of 41 days), Master Gardeners open their demonstration garden at the Flower Fields in Carlsbad. Each day, multiple docents rove around themed garden beds demonstrating the array of plants the community can grow at home, as well as answering questions about watering, gardening, path pathology, pests, pesticides, and more. In total, there were 144,000 visitors in April and 71,169 visitors in May.

The Master Gardeners staffed multiple booths on April 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> at the Spring Home and Garden Show at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Master Gardeners engaged with 168 participants who had gardening questions.

On April 19, 2025, the Community Garden Committee organized their 6th annual Community Coordinator's Day. There were 16 invitees that included community garden coordinators, leaders, and key volunteers who had the opportunity to connect/network with each other sharing issues, problem solving and collaborating. As well as attending lectures from Master Gardeners about universal design, creating garden spaces that accommodate every ability; from Carlsbad fire captain on fire-safe landscaping practices in their community gardens; and Smerdu community garden leader and MG Dana Withall. Our tool care committee also sharpened tools for participants, giving small lessons about proper tool care and storing tools at community gardens.

Lastly, from May 12-16, 2025, volunteers from our school garden committee taught 2,045 school kids at the San Diego Fairgrounds event "Plant, Grow, Eat." Multiple grades from district 1 schools participated in the event where they learned about soil composition, how to grow vegetables such as radishes and beans, how to grow flowers for pollinators, lessons about worms with magnifying glasses and microscopes, composting their food waste at their schools and how they contribute to our food system.

## 8. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM GOALS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 -25:

Please describe your program goals. Include activities, number of volunteers, recruitment, training, recognition and other goals:

The EFNEP Program has a goal of Adults: enroll 150-200 /Educator/year and Youth: enroll 1200/Educator/year.

The Master Food Preservers will continue to grow their volunteer numbers and collaborate with various partners. The creation of social media accounts will promote awareness to this new program.

The Master Gardener Program is continuing to educate the public of San Diego County. We completed our 23/24 goal of onboarding 50 new Master Gardener Volunteers. Our current number of volunteers is 356 and planning/recruitment for the January 2027 class will begin in January 2026. We also provide internal recognition for volunteers yearly in November, giving awards to those volunteers who have contributed 1,000, 2,500 and every thousand hours after that. We honored one volunteer who achieved more than 8,000 hours in the last 20 years. Our goal is to host another





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VOLUNTEER REPORT FORM  
PERIOD JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025  
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successful outreach event in September in Balboa Park, and in the spring at Sikes Adobe Historic Farmstead.

In the upcoming year, the 4-H Youth Development Program will expand operations to enhance support for its volunteers and youth. We have three new clubs that are in the process of being started. One will serve the Camp Pendleton region. The Volunteer Management Organization is being restarted with committees such as Presentation Day, Art & Design Day, and Outreach. Additionally, the program aims to expand its presence at community events to bolster recruitment and raise awareness of the 4-H program. We will continue our increased opportunities for training. Leadership Summit is planned for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year highlighting the positive impact and outcomes of the program for youth. There are planned trainings for Adult Volunteers – for both Club Leadership teams and Project Leaders. We are developing an Outreach training course and plan to continue Treasurer Training and End-of-Year Financial Reporting training. Efforts will be concentrated on growing membership among both volunteers and youth. The program will continue to explore various delivery methods such as afterschool programming, military programming, community program clubs, and traditional 4-H clubs.

**9. GENERAL INFORMATION:**

|                                   |                     |            |  |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------|--|
| Name of Person Completing Report: | Erin Spaniel        |            |  |
| Phone Number:                     | 858-822-7854        | Mail Stop: |  |
| Email:                            | enspaniel@ucanr.edu |            |  |

|                        |                     |            |  |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------|--|
| Volunteer Coordinator: | Erin Spaniel        |            |  |
| Phone Number:          | 858-822-7854        | Mail Stop: |  |
| Email:                 | enspaniel@ucanr.edu |            |  |

**10. DEPARTMENT CERTIFICATION:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE