



# Guidelines for Volunteer Leaders

## Who can participate in the Mississippi 4-H Junior Master Gardener® program?

- Public schools
- Private schools
- Home schools
- After-school groups
- Public/botanical gardens
- Youth clubs
- Scout groups
- Church groups
- Boys or girls clubs

## How is a 4-H JMG group started?

- A teacher, scout leader, Master Gardener, or other volunteer serves as the adult leader for a group of five or more youth.
- The leader uses the 4-H JMGsm Teacher/Leader Curriculum for instruction.
- Use of the Level 1 Youth Handbook is encouraged but is not required for participation.
- The leader registers herself/himself.
- The leader registers the 4-H JMGsm group.
- The county Extension 4-H JMGsm coordinator provides registration forms.

## What does the “®” mean after the terms JMG and Junior Master Gardener?

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## Why is it important to register my group?

- Registered groups are eligible for certification in the national program.
- Registered groups will have a web page on the JMG website. This site will be maintained by the JMG web manager.
- Registered groups are eligible for contests, awards, and certification.
- Registered 4-H'ers can receive recognition by becoming certified Junior Master Gardeners or by completing Golden Ray Series certification.
- Registration allows the group to receive program updates and information from the state and national headquarters.
- Registering does not obligate the group to complete the entire 4-H JMG program or become certified.

## What is the cost of the program?

Registering a group is free. The only cost of the program is the curriculum and activity supplies. The 4-H JMG curriculum can be ordered from <http://jmgkids.us/curriculum/>. There are quantity discounts. Activities in the curriculum require miscellaneous supplies. Most of the activities use recycled materials or items that can be purchased at minimal cost.

## When can the program be started?

The teacher/leader can decide when to begin because the activities are flexible. Groups can start the program in the fall or in February, just before the spring gardening season. The group can plant a fall garden, do most of the inside activities during the winter, then go back outside in the spring. Groups can have a successful experience without an actual garden plot. Schools can use containers for gardening, avoiding building or cultivating flower beds. Having a garden plot is not a requirement.

## **Is 4-H JMG training required for leading a 4-H JMG group?**

No. Training is beneficial for an individual, but it is not required.

## **Does a person have to be a Master Gardener to lead a 4-H JMG group?**

No. The only requirement is that the 4-H JMGsm teacher/leader be interested in youth development.

## **How does a young person become a certified Junior Master Gardener?**

He/she must

- belong to a registered 4-H JMG group.
- complete one individual activity per learning concept.
- complete one group activity per learning concept.
- complete one community service project.
- complete one life skill and career exploration activity.

For the Level 1 curriculum, youth must complete 44 individual activities, 44 group activities, and 8 community/leadership projects. For the Level 2 curriculum, youth must complete 8 individual activities, 8 group activities, 1 life skills and career exploration activity, and 1 community/leadership project.

## **Is there a time requirement for 4-H JMG certification?**

No. The 4-H JMG program is flexible. Registered groups can achieve certification within one school year, but this isn't always feasible. All groups are encouraged to set the goal of becoming certified Junior Master Gardeners, but certification is not a requirement for registered 4-H JMG groups.

## **How is the curriculum organized?**

Level 1 (grades 3–5) contains eight chapters in the Youth Handbook and the Teacher/Leader Guide.

The Teacher/Leader Guide contains the group activities from the eight chapters, which are integrated into math, science, language arts, and social studies. They also include corresponding work sheets, fun pages, songs, and additional resource materials for the instructor.

The Youth Handbook contains hands-on activities for young people and complements the Teacher/Leader Guide. Level 2 (grades 6–8) combines the Teacher/Leader

Guide and reproducible pages of independent student handbook activities into a single book. Each level of curriculum offers ideas for leadership/community service projects.

## **What is a Golden Ray?**

It is a recognition offered to 4-H'ers who complete a small part of the 4-H JMG Program. Groups can choose to focus on one chapter or topic to achieve Gold Ray certification in that particular chapter. There are two options to choose from. Option One: Choose one of the eight chapters in the handbook, and do two group activities, two individual activities, and one service learning project. Option Two: A thematic unit can be completed. These units combine a variety of activities from all subject units to focus on one topic. Health and Nutrition from the Garden is the first installment of this series.

## **What age 4-H'ers can be registered in this program?**

Young people in grades K-12 can be registered as 4-H JMG members. 4-H'ers of all ages are welcome in the program.

## **Does the program have to be completed one chapter at a time, beginning at Chapter 1?**

The chapters do not need to be completed in any order. However, it is suggested that the program begin with Chapters 1 and 2. They are the basis for many of the other activities within the program and may provide a greater understanding of gardening if followed in that order. The teacher/leader of the group makes the decision based on the climate and the needs of the group.

## **What can participants do after they receive Level 1 certification?**

Youth can continue in the 4-H JMG program by

- working as junior leaders with teachers, Master Gardeners, and others to start 4-H JMG groups.
- recruiting new 4-H JMG members.
- participating in additional volunteer opportunities.
- being local spokespeople for the 4-H JMG program in their communities.
- completing Golden Ray Series certification for any of the eight chapters in Level 1.
- completing a stand-alone Golden Ray Series curriculum.
- working on Level 2 4-H JMG certification.

## **What are the responsibilities of a 4-H JMG program volunteer leader?**

- Participate in program training and 4-H club management as needed.
- Complete and return all registration forms (Form 1041, Form 1042, and Form 1043) to the county 4-H agent.
- Register yourself as a 4-H volunteer leader (forms provided by/returned to county 4-H JMG coordinator).
- Register the club members as 4-H'ers (forms provided by/returned to county 4-H JMG coordinator).
- Get the appropriate curriculum.
- Serve as the instructor or coordinator.
- Distribute the provided letter to parents, giving information and seeking permission (a parent must sign a provided form and return it to the leader for the child to participate).
- Distribute information to 4-H JMG participants.
- Participate in evaluating and reporting 4-H JMG activities.
- Return borrowed 4-H JMG manuals or materials to the county Extension office when the program is completed.
- Encourage young people to participate in related 4-H programs.
- Cooperate with the county 4-H JMG coordinator if participation in other 4-H activities is required by the coordinator.
- Use the expertise of Extension faculty, Master Gardeners, and other community and horticultural leaders as resource people for the 4-H JMG program.
- Provide recognition for 4-H JMG participants.
- Publicize the club's achievements.

## **Who are resource people for the 4-H Junior Master Gardener program clubs?**

- County Extension 4-H agents (county 4-H JMG coordinators)
- Area horticulturists
- State Extension specialists
- Green industry personnel
- Community and civic leaders
- Master Gardeners
- Garden club members

*extension.msstate.edu*  
*www.jmgkids.us*

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Information Sheet 1626 (POD-08-18)

Distributed by **Jeff Wilson**, PhD, Regional Extension Specialist, Northeast Region.



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Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. GARY B. JACKSON, Director