



So you want to be a Volunteer Master Food Preserver

We are glad that you are interested in being a Volunteer Master Food Preserver and Food Safety Advisor. UW-Extension's Volunteer Master Food Preserver organization is filled with dynamic, service-oriented individuals who are interested in helping others safely preserve the bounty of their gardens and local markets.

In order to be certified as a Volunteer Master Food Preserver and Food Safety Advisor, you must begin by successfully completing a 3-day hands-on training program. This 3-day program will bring you back to the classroom with a pre-test, homework each day, and a final exam. Over the 3 days you will find yourself with a group of other volunteers-in-training in the kitchen where you will process approximately 300 jars or packages of food ranging from canned carrots to pie filling, along with a variety of dried products.

As part of your commitment, you are required to volunteer 20 hours annually in support of local Cooperative Extension food preservation and food safety programming. The Family Living agent/educator in your county, or a neighboring county, is asked to sign your volunteer agreement and approve your volunteer plan. The Family Living educator who recommends you for training also agrees to support you as a trained volunteer. [Note: staff of UW-Extension who attend training must sign a volunteer agreement and develop a volunteer plan in collaboration with a Family Living educator.]

As a trained volunteer, your service must be through the local Cooperative Extension program. Volunteer activities are as varied as the many interests of program participants. Successful volunteer program ideas include:

- Offering a food preservation program at the local library or community center.
- Serving as a judge at the local fair.
- Training 4-H youth in the area of food preservation and food safety.
- Working with UW-Extension Volunteer Master Gardeners to host food preservation workshops at a community garden.
- Assisting the county Family Living agent/educator in a series of food preservation workshops.
- Testing dial-gauge pressure canners at the county Extension office, the county fair, or farm market.
- Staffing a resource booth at a local farmers' market or fair....And more!

Before you begin training, you will work with your Family Living agent to develop a volunteer plan that you will submit with your application and bring to the 3 day workshop. At the workshop you will have the chance to meet other volunteers, and perhaps add some new ideas to your volunteer plan. Thank you for your interest in being a Volunteer Master Food Preserver and Food Safety Advisor. We look forward to having you join our team!