

## **CHECKLIST FOR WRITING AN EFFECTIVE AWARD NOMINATION** **Washington County Master Gardeners**

**Only ONE nomination in each category will be accepted from each AR MG Program –  
which only nominates people within its own program.**

**Click on the Awards link to view winning nomination highlights, a sample nomination and judging scoresheet for  
guidance: <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/yard-garden/master-gardeners/awards.aspx>**

### **PLAN – START EARLY**

1. WCMG members of WCMG sanctioned projects, committees, subcommittees, and general membership are authorized to submit nominations in **any/all** WCMG award categories.
2. Criteria for each award is found at [wcmgar.org](http://wcmgar.org) website, Member Portal, Award Forms Section.
3. Start early in the year – discuss with and invite input from other members of a project/committee about potential nominations.
4. Washington County Awards Committee requires all award nominations be submitted prior to **October 15**.
5. Digital copies of all nominations are to be emailed to Colin Massey, [cmassey@uada.edu](mailto:cmassey@uada.edu), with “Awards Committee” in the subject line.
6. Give yourself time to read the nomination criteria, gather information and lots of action images, draft the nomination, check it for errors and word counts, etc., to ensure your nomination qualifies.

### **GATHER INFORMATION**

1. Make notes about contributions/achievements/measurable results against goals, etc., of individuals/teams and project(s) all year long. **Use statistics to track measurable results.**
2. Take action-oriented photos throughout the year and ID all in each photo and each person’s role. State winners will need at least 40 images to represent the work done to achieve the awards.
3. Parent/guardian-signed UADA media release forms are required for minors; if these forms are not on file, blur their facial features.
4. Gather lots of action images or newspaper articles – images make an award nomination stronger.
5. Invite input from the potential nominee individual/team. Doing so can help create a unique story of your nominee and provide detailed examples you may not have known.

### **DRAFT DOCUMENT**

1. Think of your nomination as an investigative story record: **Who, What, When, Where and How**.
2. Use the nomination guidelines to create headings to make it easy for the Judges to find the information.
3. **Group ideas for your nomination as outlined in the nomination criteria headings**, i.e., Project Start & Evolution, Need, Objectives and Goals, Hours Worked, Impacts on Intended Audiences, How Evaluated, Stats, etc.
4. **Address all award criteria** to have your nomination go to the Judges.
5. Focus on how the nomination’s contribution/achievement/skill is significant and deserving of recognition, using specific details and descriptions to show nominee’s impacts.
6. Use data (number of people served, money earned, hours worked, etc.) to measure nominee’s impact against goals. Judges want to know evaluation data.
7. **Use action verbs and action photos to tell the narrative**. Be a storyteller. Draw the Judge in.
8. Avoid using acronyms or nicknames, especially on first reference. Spell things out for those who may not know us or our state.

## **DRAFT DOCUMENT** *(Continued from page 12)*

9. Use a standard word processing software in at least 11-point type. Microsoft Word, Google Docs, and Apple Pages have word count, spelling, and grammar features. Most judges deduct points for grammar mistakes.
10. Use our standard nomination title, so the judges see consistency across all the nominations:

**[Last Year] Arkansas Master Gardener – [Category] of the Year Nomination**  
**[Nominee Name]**

**Submitted by the [Program Name] Master Gardeners with [#] active and [#] total members**

### **EDIT DOCUMENT**

1. Have “fresh eyes” (i.e., other Master Gardeners or non-MGs who may not know MG lingo) read and critique the document.
2. Check for word count to ensure it is at or under the limit. Build in a cushion by being a few words below the maximum because different programs and versions count differently; the RRR reviewers’ software word count is the final authority.
3. Word counts are just for the body of the nomination, not the entire nomination. Therefore, headings, subheadings, footers, page numbers, bullet points/numbered lists, and photo captions are NOT part of the word count. The above-mentioned items help the judges by chunking the nomination into parts rather than one long narrative, making it easier for the judges to read and judge.
4. Embed 5 fully captioned images as JPEGs at the end of the nomination. Some judges deduct points if 5 images are not included.

### **SUBMIT EARLY**

1. Record all the necessary information on nomination (i.e., names, email addresses, phone numbers, etc).
2. Washington County Awards Committee requires all nominations forms be submitted prior to **October 15**.
3. Digital copies of all nominations are to be emailed to Colin Massey, [cmassey@uada.edu](mailto:cmassey@uada.edu), with “Awards Committee” in the subject line.

Randy Forst, the AR MG State Coordinator & Consumer Horticulture Expert, as well as Julie Treat, Horticulture Program Associate, have access to these files.

The AR MG Awards judging panel is comprised of experienced horticulture experts across the United States, most of whom serve in Randy Forst’s role as their respective state’s MG Coordinator. While horticulture experts, many judges are not familiar with our state, so be sure to describe clearly. AR MGs have NO input into the judging panel’s decision.

**Please nominate! You can’t win if you don’t enter.**

**~ Your Arkansas Master Gardener County 76 Recruiting, Retention & Recognition Project Team ~**