

# SEMG PROJECT AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

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# SEMG PROJECT AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

## Education and Integrity Aspects of Approving an SEMG Project or Volunteer Activity

1. Sandoval County Extension Master Gardener (SEMG) approved projects and volunteer activities “embrace the horticultural education objectives of the Cooperative Extension Service, in cooperation with NMSU and the United States Department of Agriculture.” (Source: *NMSU EMG State Advisory Council Bylaws 09/1/2018, 1. EMG Program Mission Statement, Page 4 of 24*)
2. SEMG “volunteers may not provide commercial recommendations or endorsements”. Thus, SEMG volunteers should not participate in projects or activities that may give the impression that they are recommending or endorsing a commercial business or product. (Source: *NMSU EMG State Advisory Council Bylaws 09/1/2018, 3. EMG Program Integrity, Page 4 of 24*)
3. Requests for SEMG volunteer labor to perform commercial or private garden work are generally not appropriate and should be discouraged.
4. Notices of horticultural related employment opportunities may be shared with the SEMG membership, but an EMG may not use their title or badge while engaged in such employment. An EMG may not personally or financially benefit from their title.

## Budgetary Aspects of Approving an SEMG Projects and Volunteer Activity

5. SEMG Project or volunteer activity budgets should not finance a commercial or other non-profit organization’s (permanent) landscape infrastructure. **Exceptions may be made for specific plants and items that are part of the educational scope of the project.** Donations or financial support to other entities, as deemed appropriate, must be approved by the SEMG Advisory Council.
6. A budget must accompany a new project submittal as needed in order to request SEMG funding. Annual budgets for existing projects and committees are to be submitted and approved by the SEMG Advisory Council by the start of the fiscal year.

7. SEMG volunteers, project and committee chairs should not be unduly burdened by personally financing activities related to NMSU Extension Master Gardening and its partners. Requests for reimbursement should be encouraged via a check request. Non-budgeted item reimbursement should be addressed with the SEMG Advisory Council. (Reference: SEMG Check Request Form)

## Strategic Aspects of Approving an SEMG Project or Volunteer Activity

8. The volunteer resources of the SEMG organization must be taken into consideration when reviewing a new project or volunteer activity request. The project or activity under consideration should not interfere with or destabilize existing SEMG projects and volunteer activities by diluting the pool of available volunteers, unduly burdening a few volunteers, and distracting from the County EMG focus.
9. A project or activity under consideration should have at least two SEMG project co-chairs. Exceptions for the latter may be advised by the Outreach Committee and subsequently approved by the Advisory Council. Project and volunteer collaborations/partnerships should be identified and scrutinized for conflict-of-interest issues. The number of SEMG and public volunteers needed to effectively carry out the stated objectives of the project must be identified. (*Reference: SEMG New Project Submittal Form.*)
10. Each current and proposed project or volunteer activity should have a strategic plan indicating the probable or desired longevity of SEMG volunteer involvement and the benefits to the SEMG organization.
11. Educational and strategic audits of SEMG projects and annual volunteer activities by the County EMG Agent and an assigned SEMG committee should take place at least every 5 years, or more frequently as needed.
12. If a current SEMG project has no volunteer hours to report for at least a year, the project will be considered on hiatus. The project leaders must resubmit a project approval form to reactivate.