



American Horticultural Therapy Association®

AHTA's Definition of a Horticultural Therapist

As the American Horticultural Therapy Association strives towards certification for horticultural therapists, public awareness of what is, and what is not, a horticultural therapist is essential for professional recognition.

Horticultural therapists have a foundation of knowledge in plant science, human science, and horticultural therapy principles and experience in the application of horticultural therapy practices. The American Horticultural Therapy Association supports the definition that a horticultural therapist is someone who:

- Has a minimum of a bachelor's degree in horticultural therapy, or the minimum of a bachelor's degree with additional coursework in plant science, human science, and horticultural therapy.
- Has completed a 480-hour internship in horticultural therapy.
- Is professionally registered as a horticultural therapist with the American Horticultural Therapy Association as an HTR, Horticultural Therapist-Registered.

To advance the profession, it is important that the public recognize horticultural therapists as professionals with specific education, training, and credentials in the use of horticulture for therapy and rehabilitation. Professional registration informs the public that the horticultural therapist has met the required education and experience to practice horticultural therapy.

The American Horticultural Therapy Association recognizes that there are individuals without professional credentials who represent themselves as practicing horticultural therapists having completed a certificate in horticultural therapy. While a certificate is of value in providing the horticultural therapy education, a certificate does not provide education in horticulture, human science, nor provided practical experience. The Association does not support the use of horticulture as therapy by individuals who do not have the required educational background nor possess professional credentials.

The Association recognizes that there are professionally credentialed practitioners who use horticulture as a therapeutic tool in their practice. Many credentialed professionals have completed a horticultural therapy certificate program. While the AHTA accredited certificate coursework provides valuable education, to develop a thorough understanding of the discipline, coursework in horticulture and human science is necessary. The Association welcomes, and encourages, credentialed professionals to pursue professional registration with the American Horticultural Therapy Association.