



Here's the Dirt "Leaflet"



March 2014

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Officers for 2014

President: Jamie Bruns
Vice President: Cathey Hardeman
Secretary: Nicky Maddams
Treasurer: Dianna Westmoreland

Committee Chairs

Administration: Nicky Maddams
Timekeeping: Martha Brogdon
Awards/Social: Scotty Bennett
Children's Activities: None
Communications: Nicky Maddams
Intern Class: None
Co-op: Fred Vesperman
Anderson Beautification: Janeth Nevill
Publicity: Peggy Sloan
Awards: Jamie Bruns/Nicky Maddams
Go Texan Landscaping: Mike Brame
Fundraising: None
Demo Gardens: Fred Vesperman
County Fair Judging: Marti Luedtke
Historian: Sharon Murry



Texas AgriLife Extension
Extension Agent: Kimberly Hall
MG Coordinator: Jayla Fry
Secretary: Sandra Cook

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GCMC Volunteer Management System



**Texas
Master GardenerSM** 

<https://texas.volunteersystem.org>

This is the website now available to our Master Gardeners to have the opportunity to keep a record of their volunteer hours, add events, projects, and have access to the member roster completely online. As per the GCMG monthly meeting each member will have access after an email has been entered and a password has been assigned to them. Master Gardeners will then be able to change and personalize the pass code by clicking on the edit profile tab.



This website will be a great resource to the Master Gardeners in keeping everyone connected and displaying a wealth of information that can be accessed at any time.



Mark your Calendars

Dates:

*3-8-14 Walker Co. MG Spring Plant Sale 8am-2pm
Huntsville TX.*

*3-10-14 Planting Containers ABP
9am-1pm downtown Anderson*

*3-11-14 Monthly Meeting 9am-11am
GC Fair grounds*

Helen Quinn, Grimes Co. Master Gardener (Navasota Garden Club, A&M Garden Club,) and National Garden Clubs Speakers Bureau member will present a program on native the BeeGAP Solution. The BeeGAP (Gardeners Adding Pollinators) Solution educates gardeners on how to raise gentle native mason bees to increase the rapidly declining bee population.

Discover:

- *The power of the backyard gardener to protect our food source by attracting pollinators*
- *The vital role of bees for 1/3 of our food pollination*
- *The need to create eco-balanced yards and gardens for the environment*

Please remember to check the website for other calendar events!

<https://texas.volunteersystem.org>



When determining the best planting dates in the spring for seeds, the date of the last spring frost is important to your success. NOTE: Our chart calculates U.S. frost dates only, based on historical data. Other factors can also influence planting dates, including soil temperature, altitude and slope of land, nearby waters, and day length. Keep records of your garden's conditions each year to plan more accurately.

- *Seeds for plants with a long growing season should be started indoors during the periods shown below.*
- *Seeds for plants sown in the ground should be planted during the periods shown.*
- *When no dates appear in the chart, that starting method is not recommended for the particular vegetable.*
- *To start transplants, see our Best Dates to Transplant (by region).*



Planting by the Moon?

Above-ground crops are planted during the light of the Moon (new to full); below-ground crops are planted during the dark of the Moon (from the day after it is full to the day before it is new again). Planting is done in the daytime; planting at night is optional!

Old Farmer's Almanac planting calendar

March Calendars



1st-2nd -Are good days for planting aboveground crops, Fine for vine crops, and setting strawberry plants.

3rd-4th -Cultivate and spray, do general farm work, but no planting.

5th-6th -Favorable for planting crops bearing yield above the ground.

7th-9th -Seeds planted now tend to rot in the ground.

10th-11th - Best planting days for aboveground crops, especially peas, beans, cucumbers, and squash where climate is suitable, also plant seedbeds and flower gardens

12th-16th - a most barren period, best for doing chores around the farm.

17th-18th -Favorable days for planting root crops, fine for sowing hay, fodder crops, and grains. Plant flowers now.

19th-21st -Excellent time for planting root crops that can be planted now and for starting seedbeds, also good days for transplanting.

22nd-23rd -These are poor planting days.

24th-25th - Any root crops that can be planted will do well.

26th-27th - A barren period, best suited for killing pests. Do plowing and cultivating.

28th-29th -Favorable days for planting beets, carrots, radishes, salsify, turnips, peanuts, and other root crops, cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, and other vine crops, setting strawberry plants and good days for transplanting.

30th-31st Cultivate and spray, do general farm work, but no planting.

Monthly Gardening tidbits

Gardeners know the importance of enriching the soil. So, here's an easy, natural and inexpensive way to give your vegetable plants a great start and enrich your garden bed in the process. Eggshells are an organic, biodegradable plant pot that adds calcium, nitrogen and phosphoric acid to your garden soil. Eggshells are also useful as a snail deterrent, protecting tender garden plants.



FAQ's

Questions that have been presented to the GCMG office via e-mail or phone call will be recorded here and kept on record to reference should the same question arise.



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2014 Herb of the Year – Artemisia
Submitted by Helen Quinn

The name Artemisia derives from the Goddess Artemis, the Greek equivalent of the Roman Goddess Diana the Huntress, and from Artemisia II of Caria, a renowned botanist and

medical researcher who died in 350 B.C.

Artemisia is a large genus of plants, with between 200 – 400 species belonging to the daisy family, *Asteraceae*. Common names for various species in the genus include mugwort, wormwood, and sagebrush. *Artemisia* comprises hardy herbaceous plants and shrubs, which are known for the powerful chemical constituents in their essential oils.

Artemisia species grow in temperate climates of both hemispheres, usually in dry or semiarid habitats. Notable species include *A. vulgaris* (common mugwort), *A. tridentata* (big sagebrush), *A. annua* (sagewort), *A. absinthum* (wormwood), *A. dracunculus* (tarragon), and *A. abrotanum* (southernwood). The leaves of many species are covered with white hairs. Most species have strong aromas and bitter tastes. The small flowers are wind-pollinated.

Artemisia species are used as food plants by the larvae of a number of Lepidoptera species.

A. absinthum, wormwood, was used medicinally to expel worms, to aid in digestion and appetite, and homeopathically to treat epilepsy. It was one of the original flavors of Vermouth, and was also used in the liqueur Absinthe (which is now banned.) Wormwood is sometimes grown alongside other plants for its insecticidal properties.

A. vulgaris, mugwort, is now primarily used in the garden as an attractive ornamental, as part of a dried arrangement or for making wreaths. The leaves have a sage-like smell and are said to repel insects. Other common names include St. John's plant and felon herb, and it is unsafe when taken internally.

A. dracunculus, French tarragon, has a heavy licorice flavor which holds up well in cooking. It is a favorite in the kitchen, but in this part of Texas it doesn't grow too well and Mexican Mint Marigold, *Tagetes lucida*, is used as a substitute.

A. abrotanum, southernwood, is an ornamental and hardy perennial through zone 8 and was once used as an aphrodisiac and to stimulate the growth of men's beards. Another common name is Old Man.

A few species of Artemisia are grown as ornamentals, such as Dusty Miller, and Senecio.