



HOE! HOE! HOE!

July 2012

GRIMES COUNTY MASTER GARDENER'S NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 8, ISSUE VI

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Texas AgriLife Extension

MG Coordinator: Shane Jennings
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Newsletter

Editor: Nicky Maddams

Article submissions, photos and information due by the 25th of each month

Send to: biplanechik@yahoo.ca

Website: txmg.org/grimes

Email: grimesmastergardeners@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

July 10 9:00am Monthly Meeting
 Ann LaLeon (Texas Master Certified Nursery Professional) will present "Heat Tolerant Plants/Plants that Survived 2011 Drought"

August 14 9:00am Monthly Meeting
 Joe Floyd will present "Moths"

September 11 Field Trip to Chappell Hill
 Lavender Farm (details to follow)

October 9 Fall Social – home of Ann DeWitt

November 13 9:00am Monthly Meeting
 Grace Smarsh will present "Bats"

December 7 Christmas Party



Recipes

Master Gardeners can cook!



Get to Know Your Fellow Master Gardeners!

Visit with Kathy Laughlin and Jamie Bruns



July Vegetable Planting Guide

7/15-7/31 Melons, Okra, Peppers, Pumpkins, Tomatoes **

7/20-8/15 Cucumbers

7/15-7/31 Eggplant **

7/15-8/31 Peas (Southern, Edible Pod)

7/15-8/20 Sweet Corn

7/15-8/20 Squash (Summer & Winter)

7/1-8/31 Romaine Lettuce

** Use plants rather than seed

Use protective floating row cover to help reduce heat and viral infection, and to provide a little shade to young plants.

EXTEND YOUR TOMATO SEASON

Submitted by Helen Quinn

Now is the perfect time to take cuttings of your favorite tomatoes to have ready to plant in the middle of summer when the feed stores don't have plants. Late summer/fall is a great time to have new plants in the garden because they are less troubled by insects and diseases, and generally the weather is slightly more pleasant!

Plants seem to have an innate desire to live, root, seed, and go forth and multiply, and tomatoes are no different. Tomatoes will happily grow roots all along their stems, so one way of making new plants is to "tip layer" by bending over a long stem and pinning it into the ground, putting some kind of weight on the point of contact. When it starts growing a new plant from its roots, gently sever it from the mother plant, and replant it in its new home.

Another method is to cut a piece about 6" long, about the diameter of a pencil, strip all the leaves except for a pair on the top (make sure there are no flowers or fruit on the pieces you select). Make a clean diagonal cut just below a node (not really critical since the cutting will put roots out all along the part of the stem that is in the potting soil.) You can dip the cut end in rooting hormone powder if you wish, tapping gently to shake off any excess. Then make a hole in the potting soil in the pot and gently insert the cutting. Firm the soil and water. Keep these pots in a partly shaded place until rooted and ready to plant. Be prepared to shade the newly planted tomatoes from the blistering summer sun, and keep evenly watered.

You can also root cuttings by simply sticking them in a jar of water on the window sill in the kitchen where you can watch the progress. Remember, though, these "water roots" are very delicate because they have no soil around them to support them, and must be very gently removed from the jar and even more gently placed in soil. A better way is to use a wide-mouth jar, and once the roots are appearing, gradually add soil to the water so that when it is time to plant, the roots will have some support and be stronger.

The first picture below is of two branches of Heirloom tomato Gold Currant

The second picture is of cuttings of my favorite Heirloom tomato, "Black Cherry".



RECIPES

Master Gardener's know how to cook! It only makes sense that those who grow bountiful gardens also know how create delicious things with that harvest!

There have been requests for the "pea salad" brought to the graduation luncheon. Since we're not sure which one it was, we've included BOTH! As well as eggplant bruschetta and chicken tetrazzini

from the evening social. We are still seeking the person who brought the chocolate rum cake! If that's you, please submit to Nicky for the August newsletter.

I have left the recipes in the format in which they were submitted.

Cathey's Pea Salad

Three cans of sweet peas, drained
 Three boiled eggs, chopped
 ¾ cup cheddar cheese, small cubes
 ½ cup bacon bits
 ¼ cup onions, finely diced (red onions are pretty)
 ¼ cup parsley
 2 TB pickle relish
 Mayo, to desired amount
 Salt and pepper to taste

Cathey says this salad is something she throws together and did her best to put it "on paper".

The amounts listed are for a rather large bowl and can be changed for a smaller gathering.

Sharon's Garden Salad

Bring to boil and let cool:

1-1/2 c. Vinegar
 1 C. Salad Oil
 1 C. sugar
 2 tsp salt
 2 Tbsp green bean juice

When cool, pour over the following:

2 C. tiny peas (Green Giant LeSuer)
 2 C. french style green beans
 2 Cans (Green Giant) white shoepeg corn
 1 small jar pimentos
 1 C. diced onions
 1 C. diced green pepper

Refrigerate overnight. Keeps in refrigerator for several days.

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MEET THE MASTER GARDENERS



KATHY LAUGHLIN

Where were you born and how long have you lived in Texas?

I was born in Huntsville, TX and have lived somewhere in Texas for all but 6 of my 60 years.

Where is the farthest you have traveled from Texas?

I lived for 1 year in Saipan, a tiny island (12 mi in length & 5.6 mi in width) in the Mariana Islands in the Pacific.

Where would you go on your dream vacation?

I would go island hopping in the Pacific.

What is your favorite flower and tree? Do you grow them?

I LOVE everything that blooms, but I guess I would say the Confederate Rose and the Crape Myrtle. I grow them both.

What is your favorite season?

Spring and Fall of course, I like to be outside all day.

Why are you a Master Gardener or Intern?

Initially to gain knowledge for my own benefit, but I stayed involved because of friendships I made and cherish.

What is the closest you have been to a natural disaster?

I experienced a typhoon while living in Saipan.

What vegetable do you hate?

Beets!

What do you love the smell of?

Rosemary

What electronic gadget could you not live without?

iPhone :)

Name one wonderful childhood memory involving gardening.

Helping my Dad pick vegetables in the garden and smelling his prize winning roses, OK that's two.

What would you say is your garden style?

My garden style is Rustic Country.



Kathy's greenhouse

Nicky's Eggplant Bruschetta

- 2 T olive oil
- 1 firm eggplant (about 1 1/4 pounds), cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 medium-sized onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 medium-sized ripe tomatoes (about 3/4 pounds total), cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped
- 3 T fresh lemon or lime juice
- 2 T balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 cup crumbled tomato and basil feta

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add eggplant, onion, garlic and salt to taste, and cook, stirring often, about 7 minutes, or until eggplant begins to brown. Reduce heat, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes more, or until eggplant is tender. Transfer to bowl, and let cool.

Add tomatoes, basil, parsley, lemon/lime juice, vinegar, remaining 1 tablespoon oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Blend well. Serve at room temperature with bagel crisps.

Last year's rain gauge (unused)



This year's rain gauge (courtesy Marguerite Corbello)



*Step into the garden,
Lift your face to the sun
And just breathe...
It will help you remember
All that is beautiful.*

Marguerite's Chicken Tetrazzini

- 2 cups chicken, cooked
- 1/2 lb. mushrooms
- 1 1/2 cups chicken broth
- 1 onion, sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 lb. pasta or noodles
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons flour
- salt and pepper, to taste
- paprika
- 3 tablespoons butter
- cheese, for topping

Melt butter in a heavy pan which can be used on the stove or in the oven. Add onions; sauté over high heat for 5 minutes. Reduce heat; stir in garlic. Sauté for 2 minutes. Sprinkle mixture with flour; slowly stir in broth, whisking quickly to avoid lumps.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil; put pasta or noodles into boiling water and cook for only half the amount of time specified in the package directions.

Add milk to the chicken broth and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to low and let simmer for 5 minutes, and then stir in the cooked chicken.

Transfer the half-cooked pasta or noodles, while still hot, to the pan with the chicken and broth. Combine well and top with any kind of cheese. Mozzarella, provolone, Swiss, Parmesan, Monterey Jack cheese all work well for different variations.

Bake in a 350°F oven for 35-45 minutes. Cover with foil and reduce heat if top begins to brown too quickly.

*** Marguerite added 1/2 cup white wine to the recipe and subtracted 1/2 c milk and also added 1 cup frozen green peas.*

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JAMIE BRUNS

Where were you born and how long have you lived in Texas?

I was born in Odessa, Texas. I have lived in Texas all my life.

Where is the farthest you have traveled from Texas?

Tanzania, Africa

Where would you go on your dream vacation?

Nepal

What is your favorite flower and tree? Do you grow them?

My favorite tree is a Pecan Tree and we have 2 right now. My favorite flower is probably any wild flower. I am not a big flower person and I do not have any wild flowers because all of my animals would eat them.

Where is the prettiest garden you have ever been to and what made it so?

The University of Santa Clara in Santa Clara, California because it was perfectly manicured but the design was everything from formal to wild. It is breathtaking.

What restaurant do you go to more than any other?

We do not eat out much at all. But my favorite restaurant right now is Senaris Italian in College Station.

What is your favorite season?

Because I have lived in Texas all my life I have not really had fall or spring and winter is usually not very cold so I would have to say "not as hot" opposed to "hot"

Why are you a Master Gardener or Intern?

I started a very small veggie garden in 1987 when we first bought our place in Grimes Co and have enjoyed the gardening and eating all the produce so I was interested to learn more and find friends that were interested in the same thing.

What is the closest you have been to a natural disaster?

I lived through numerous tornados when I lived in far west Texas and also several hurricanes while living in Houston but the worse one of all was Hurricane Alicia in 1983

When in your life have you needed an alibi?

More times than I would care to admit!

When was the last "back to nature" experience you have had?

When we were walking the dog in the forest in Montana and came upon Mountain Lion tracks.

Where would you like to go that is "off the beaten bath"?

Alaska

What vegetable do you hate?

Cilantro

What do you love the smell of?

Leather and horses

Are you a social butterfly or do you prefer solitary endeavors?

Solitary but I do like butterflies!

What would you say is your garden style? (Country, cottage, formal, sculptural, etc.)

Most of my gardening tends to be edible; you could call my style gastronomic!

“Scene” at the Grimes County Fair



Senior Day at the fair with Scotty Bennett and Kat McMullen in the background.



Linda Jolly and Connie Arden bravely tasted and judged the baking entries. Fun at first, but after the first 84, not so much!



Jennifer Corzine and Kathy Laughlin go over the presentation for Big Backyard



Dianna Westmoreland with one of her rescued fawns.



Extension Agent Shane Jennings with son Konnor - starting 'em young, showing animals!

dandelions, crabgrass, grass burrs and many other troublesome annual weeds.

It works on seeds, not on established plants. It inhibits seed germination by drying out a seed as soon as it cracks open to sprout. It does not kill the existing weed; rather it keeps the weeds seeds from further germination. However, tests have shown that if corn gluten is applied regularly, in the spring and fall, dandelion infestations have been reduced by 100% in a period of 4 years. It is also a powerful natural fertilizer and will create large healthy weeds if you apply it at the wrong time. The key is to apply the corn gluten meal before the weeds germinate. Broadcast it at a rate of 20 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft. on your lawn.

As a plant food, corn gluten has an N-P-K ratio of 9-1-0 or 10% nitrogen by weight. It can also be used in vegetable gardens as a fertilizer and to help weed control after your vegetable seeds are up, have true leaves and plant roots are well established. The treatment will last 5-6 weeks. After this time seeds can be planted in the treated areas without being effected. It is a good fertilizer and weed control for around well-established vegetables, flowers, fruit trees and shrubs. Corn gluten releases nutrients into your soil over a long period of time and results improve with repeated use. It will not work until wetted, so wet it down using a fine, soft spray after applying. Consider it a natural “weed and feed”.

You may also use the same treatment on your lawn in early October or 4-5 weeks before cool season weeds emerge.



Corn Gluten Meal

Submitted by Sharon Murry

Corn gluten meal is a natural by-product of the wet corn milling process and should not be confused with corn meal. It is regularly used in cattle, dog, fish, poultry and other animal feed because of its high protein content.

It was discovered by Dr. Nick Christians of Iowa State University in the 1980's and a patent issued in 1991, that corn gluten meal may be used as a natural non-toxic pre-emergent herbicide. In our area, it can be applied in late February and March. It is used on lawns to reduce the establishment of

See you next month!

Keep cool and hydrated!

Nicky Maddams