



HOE! HOE! HOE!

Grimes County Master Gardeners Newsletter

*Winner of the Texas Master Gardener Association
2nd Place Newsletter Award 2006*

Officers, 2010

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Ongoing Projects:

- *Rose beds and landscaping at Go Texan Building, Fairgrounds.
- *Landscaping at Texas Agri-Life Extension Office.
- *Painting Texas with Wildflowers

At each meeting there will be a suggestion box available for your ideas on programs, projects, field trips, what you like about GCMG and what you don't like.

We also participate in once-a-year activities such as Farm Bureau Ag Day, Senior Day and horticulture judging at the County Fair, Boy Scout programs, Courthouse rose beds.

We have a dedicated email address for gardening questions from the public, and a Panel of volunteers to answer the questions:

grimesmastergardeners@gmail.com

VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE SEPTEMBER

Beans, bush: Green	8/15-9/15
Lima	8/10-9/10
Pinto	8/15-9/05
Beets:	9/01-10/20
Broccoli:	9/10-11/15
Brussels Sprouts:	9/10-11/15
Cabbage: American	9/15-12/31
Chinese	9/01-10/15
Carrots:	9/15-11/30
Cauliflower:	9/20-10/31
Garlic:	8/10-10/20
Greens: Celery	9/20-10/31
Swiss Chard	8/20-11/15
Collards	8/20-9/30
Kale	9/20-11/30
Kohlrabi	9/20-11/30
Lettuce: Head	9/10-11/15
Leaf	9/15-11/30
Mustard	8/20-11/15
Spinach	9/5-11/23
Turnips	8/20-11/20
Onions	10/01-10/31
Radish	9/01-11/30



Use row cover to help reduce heat and viral infection.

For list of suggested varieties suitable for USDA Hardiness Zone 8b , see our website., txmg.org/grimes. Make sure you select varieties with a shorter time to maturity, for example, under 75 days. Try something this fall that you have not grown before!

September is the best month in which to sow wildflower seeds – clean the planting area just as you would for planting vegetables , and keep evenly moist to ensure good germination. Plant a mix of varieties known to do well in this area, then sit back and wait for a glorious explosion of color in Spring!

ON THE CALENDAR : September/October 2010

- Sep 16 GCMG Field Trip to Colony Cellars Winery 3.p.m
- Sep 18 Fall Planting Seminar with private pesticide applicator CEU's available
- Oct 9 Central TX MGA Conference, Shertz, TX
- Oct 12 Evening meeting/social at Cosgroves. 6 pm – bring a potluck dish to share.
- Oct 16 MCMG Plant Sale 9 – 1, Ext. Office, Conroe

NEWS FLASH : 2011 CLASS WILL START ON JANUARY 18TH, AT THE GO TEXAN BUILDING. START RECRUITING NOW!!!

Applications are available on our website txmg.org/grimes and at the Extension Office, and in October will be distributed to area nurseries and businesses.

Regular meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Go Texan Building, Grimes Co. Fairgrounds, 9.00 am., except as noted below. Two field trips are planned annually, and two evening meetings held at members' homes enable members who work to participate.



Spring flowering bulbs will soon be appearing in the nurseries and garden centers. It is too early to plant them, but go ahead and buy them while the selection is best. Store them in a cool, dark, place for a couple of months – late November, December, January are the best months to plant for most varieties. Bulb planting is great exercise after that huge Christmas dinner!!





SMILE GARDEN

Submitted by: Connie Arden

Do You Know.....

1. Of all vegetables, only two can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted every year. What are the only two perennial vegetables?
2. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
3. In many liquor stores, you can buy pear brandy, with a real pear inside the bottle...the pear is whole and ripe, and the bottle is genuine; it hasn't been cut in any way. How did the pear get inside the bottle?
4. Name the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form except fresh.

Answers.....

1. Only two vegetables that can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons: Asparagus and Rhubarb.
2. The fruit with its seeds on the outside: Strawberry.
3. How did the pear get inside the brandy bottle? It grew inside the bottle. The bottles are placed over the pear buds when they are small, and are wired in place on the tree. The bottle is left in place for the entire growing season. When the pears are ripe, they are snipped off at the stems.
4. The only vegetable or fruit never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form: Lettuce.

SMILING IS THE BEGINNING OF LAUGHTER.....PLANT SOME SMILE SEEDS TO GROW INTO LAUGHTER AND REAP BLOSSOMS OF POSITIVE PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SOCIAL BENEFITS.

More things to do in September

We always talk about “Fall Gardens” and think of vegetables, but this is also a time to plant herbs. Many of the herbs that faded out in the Heat of the summer can be successfully replanted now. Basil, chives, cilantro, dill, oregano, mints and many others are herbs to look for in the nursery or garden center as transplants. They will quickly grow to harvest size, and be ready to enhance your Thanksgiving feast!

Keep your hummingbird feeders filled with fresh nectar. It was always the practice to take the feeders down in October, but due to climate and migration changes, many people keep them up year round. Quite a few hummingbirds overwinter in the area now and they must really appreciate the feeders once their nectar flowers have finished blooming.

Keep your eyes open for plant sales, and don't forget our own Fall Planting Seminar on September 18th at the Fairgrounds.



August monthly meeting

Members enjoyed a program on Drip Irrigation presented by Martin Thomas. We learned all about the maze of rules and regulations, and things to come! Mr. Thomas explained how by using drip irrigation we can conserve a tremendous amount of water, thus doing our part to ensure a good supply of water for our children and grandchildren in the future.



SOME LIKE IT HOT!!



Submitted by Peggy Sloan

In the dog days of summer what is doing well in the vegetable garden? Peppers, hot peppers. Cayenne and jalapeno peppers are turning red and habanero peppers are turning orange. The redder the cayenne pepper, the hotter it is. Red or green, the jalapeno remains hot. Habaneros, well they are just real hot.

The cayenne pepper (*Capsicum frutescens*) is a hot red chili pepper commonly used in cooking those wonderful spicy chili and stews as well as Szechuan cuisine. What you may not know is that it is high in vitamin A. It also contains vitamins B6, E, C, riboflavin, potassium and manganese. Capsicum may sound familiar. That is because a derivative, Capsaicin, is used in topical pain relievers. Cayenne also soothes the digestive tract and aids in circulation. Drying them in a dehydrator and then grinding them into powder is one way I like to preserve them. You can also dry them whole and then use them in wreaths or crafts. It is the one pepper I have to wear a mask when preparing them for drying as the fumes can be very strong once you cut into the fresh pepper. I also put my dehydrator out on the screen porch as the fumes can be pretty strong too.

Habaneros (*Capsicum chinense*) claim to be one of the hottest chili peppers around. The oil in the habanero, as well as many other hot chilies, can be very painful if you get it in your eyes or an open wound on your hands. Wearing gloves when handling them will help you avoid that painful lesson. Habaneros actually have a fruity, citrus like flavor to begin with and then you taste the heat. The Scotch Bonnet is very similar and is commonly called Habaneros too. The difference in the two is the pod. Habaneros are widely used in South African, the Yucatan and Virgin Islands diets. While I only have grown the orange Habanero, it is known to have counterparts in white, dark brown and pink, with the dark brown variety thought to be over 7000 years old. When using in stews, soups, and chili's you only need to add a small sliver to get their flavor into the dish. A mango salsa is a good blend as the fruit tones down the fire of the pepper. Habaneros freeze well to go in winter stews and soups.

Jalapenos (*Capsicum annuum*) are of course a Texas staple used in anything and everything, especially Tex-Mex foods. The jalapeno's seed give the pepper its heat. Jalapeno and habanero jellies over cream cheese works well as a tasty appetizer. An apricot habanero jelly or habanero honey is great to add flavor to chicken, shrimp and pork. So if you like it hot, sample some of the fresh peppers available this time of year and preserve some as jellies, hot sauces, vinegars or pickle them to enjoy later in the year.



Interesting informational websites:

growingstrawberriesguide.com

ghorganics.com

flowers-plants-gardening-advice.com

Dear Miss Garden Lady:

It was good to see you at the WalMart a few weeks ago. I just want to tell you about an adventure my momma had last weekend. As you know, Momma is a gardener. Well, not a Master gardener, but she always had a beautiful garden when I was growing up. She was a seed saver and people all around knew that and would come to our house and say, "Myrtle May, you got any seeds today?" My mother's name is Myrtle May too, only her May was "May" like the month. My Mae is "Mae" like the . . . well I don't know like what exactly. But, I digress. Momma used those little paper bags that the men carry their beer in to collect her seeds, only she called them soda pop bags. She'd tie one loosely around a plant when she knew they was about to spit their little seeds and she'd catch 'em and put 'em in a jar and label 'em. Sometimes she'd use bigger bags, like when the bluebonnets were about to go to seed. Man, you could sure hear them a-poppin when they went to seed. Sounded like popcorn goin' off all over the place. Course now, it didn't smell like popcorn, but I expect you knew that. Anyway, it got so bad with the neighbors askin' Momma for seeds that sometimes she'd go to plant something and find that she'd given all the seeds away. Seemed like she could never say "no" to them. Mind you, she never had any trouble saying "no" to me when she wanted to. But, boy howdy, you shoulda heard her when she run out of seeds.

Anyway, she read in the paper that they was fixin to give a class on plant propagation over at that new garden center that opened near where momma lives, and it was for free. So she thought that if she learned how to make new plants without worrying about the seeds, she wouldn't never have to worry about the neighbors gettin' all her seeds anymore. So, after she checked with Brother Allen at the church to make sure it wasn't anything about "sex," she and another lady, Freda Jane, from the church got their Big Chief pads and a pencil and took themselves to the garden center. They both paid real good attention and when it was over, the man teaching the class asked if anyone had any questions. Well, Momma, wanton' to be sure she got it right, held up her hand and said, "So, let me see if I got this part right. You take this piece of plant with a little root on the bottom and dunk it in this white powder here that you called "hormone" and then make a hole in the dirt in this pot with what you call a dribble or something but it looks like a No. 2 pencil to me, and then plop the plant in the dirt and tuck it in and that's all you need to do except to water it?" Well, this teacher feller drew himself up, all 5 foot 4 of him, and looked down his nose at my Momma and said, "Madam, that which is under your fingernails is dirt; that which is in that pot is soil."

He call my Momma a Madam!!!!!! Well, Momma didn't get her certificate in spite of listening to all that stuff for over two hours and they told her not to come back ever, but she had the satisfaction of seeing that little man with a dribble up his nose before she left.

So that's what happened to Momma. Hope all is well with you and yours and maybe we'll bump into each other again at the WalMart.

Your friend,
Myrtle Mae Hawkins

POLLARDING AND COPPICING : MINDING YOUR Ps and Cs

Centuries ago in the times of the Great Oak Forests of England, the Coppicing and Pollarding methods of training and shaping trees were commonly practiced on such lesser trees as Hazel or Holly. The peasants weren't allowed to cut the Royal Oaks, but they could eke out an existence by harvesting the Hazel, Holly, and other trees.

Coppicing entails cutting the young tree just above the ground, causing it to send up several shoots, which could be harvested every few years. These saplings were often used for fencing small areas to keep the deer out of their meager vegetable gardens and to stop them eating the new tree shoots. These areas later became known as "Coppices", sometimes shortened to "Copse". Another reason for the demand for timber was to make charcoal to fuel the ironworks. Most of the woodlands near to Iron producing areas were managed as coppices, being cut on a cycle of about 16 years.



Popular in Europe for centuries, the practice of Pollarding, also known as "High Coppicing", especially nowadays where street-side trees need to be kept in bounds under power lines, street lamps, etc., always draws attention from visitors who are not used to this kind of tree-treatment. If flowers are required on these pollarded trees, the procedure is a little different from the non-flowering version, because some of the branches need to contain the buds which will produce flowers. Street trees are usually pruned yearly for non-flowering trees and every two years for flowering trees. The off the ground, which produces the thick mass of the tree. The prunings have much the same uses as the usually pruned yearly for non-trees are cut about 6 ft or so spreading shoots at the top of the coppiced trees, with the addition of providing fodder for livestock. "Pollard livestock feed, came from trees that were pruned at intervals of 2-6 years so that their leafy material would be most abundant. Wood pollards were pruned at longer intervals of 8-15 years, a pruning cycle that tended to produce upright poles favored for fence rails and posts as well as boat construction. hay", which was used as



Pollarding can be used in your own backyard on almost any tree, including the crape myrtle. "Topping" a tree doesn't count – it must be done properly according to the tree's growth structure, and should be started while the tree is young. It is not a procedure that should be undertaken by the amateur.

Coppiced and pollarded trees usually live for many, many more years than an untreated tree. They never grow old. They are the trees of eternal youth!

