

# Urban Dirt

Spring Vegetable Gardening

Gardening Events and Information for Texans

## Vegetable Trivia

by Terri Simon, Master Gardener

At this time of year many of us are either already working on winter vegetable gardens or planning our spring and summer gardens. Thanks to globalization vegetables have nearly gone full circle. The variety of vegetables available to us as consumers and gardeners is astonishing. We can order seeds, cuttings, and starts of common or rare types through the internet. Many grocery stores now include vegetables from around the world. Eating vegetables has become popular. We are a long way from medieval times when root vegetables and other vegetable diets were associated with poverty. For centuries the wealthy ate primarily meat diets. Onions were used often but mainly vegetables were used as garnishes or minor side dishes at banquets.

Some sources say the pea is the oldest known vegetable since traces have been found in stone age settlements dated 8,000-10,000 years ago. Peas are one of the earliest crops man has grown. Greek and Latin writers mention them. The truth is we may never be certain. Some vegetables such as onions, garlic and lettuce have been documented during 500-1000 BC and we know that potatoes existed during that era yet there is no written proof of their existence.

It's believed the first carrots came out of Afghanistan. There is an early reference to carrots by an Arabic gardening expert in the twelfth century that mentions red and yellow carrots that were grown in the sixth century. It is rumored that Agamemnon's



Photo courtesy [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu)

men ate carrots while inside the Trojan Horse to halt their bows. Orange colored carrots appeared around the 17th century. We know this because several Flemish painters featured them in their paintings. A single carrot can provide an adult with the daily required amount of vitamin A.

Potatoes, those of French fry fame, were domesticated 10,000 years ago in the Andes mountains of Peru. These potatoes were small- some the size of peanuts. Sir Francis Drake is believed to

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HARRIS COUNTY  
*Master Gardener*  
ASSOCIATION

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## Upcoming Events

### February 2019

#### Green Thumb Gardening Series

##### Spring Vegetable Gardening

**Feb. 7,** Barbara Bush Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Feb. 16,** Maude Smith Marks Library, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Feb. 19,** Spring Branch Memorial Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Feb. 21,** Freeman Branch Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

#### Open Garden Day

**Feb. 26,** 10:00 - 11:15 a.m., Weekley Community Center **Registration required by Sunday, Feb. 24th to: [ogd.harrishort@gmail.com](mailto:ogd.harrishort@gmail.com).** Weekley Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Rd., Cypress, TX

#### Master Gardener Lecture Series

**Feb. 14, GFG Second Thursday** 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. *Healthy Soils* by Sherrie Harrah, Plants for All Seasons. Genoa Friendship Gardens Education Center building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd.

### March 2019

#### Green Thumb Gardening Series

##### Herbs

**Mar. 14,** Barbara Bush Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Mar. 16,** Maude Smith Marks Library, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Mar. 19,** Spring Branch Memorial Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Mar. 21,** Freeman Branch Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

#### Open Garden Day

**Mar. 26,** 10:00 - 11:15 a.m., Weekley Community Center - Open Garden Day Children's Activities. **Registration required by Sunday, Mar. 24th to: [ogd.harrishort@gmail.com](mailto:ogd.harrishort@gmail.com).** Weekley Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Rd., Cypress, TX

#### Master Gardener Lecture Series

**Mar. 14, GFG Second Thursday** 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. *Small Scale Backyard Composting* by John Ferguson, Nature's Way Resources. Genoa Friendship Gardens Education Center building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd.

### 2019 Plant Sales

#### Genoa Friendship Gardens

**Location:** Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds  
7600 Red Bluff Rd.

##### Fruit Tree & Tomato Sale

**Feb. 23,** 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

##### Perennials, Herbs & Peppers Spring Sale

**Mar. 30,** 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

#### Bear Creek – West Side

**Location:** Cy-Fair Home and Garden Show  
Berry Center, Cypress, TX

**Feb. 16 & 17,** Sat. 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

**Location:** Richard & Meg Weekley Park, 19110 Longenbaugh Road, Cypress, TX

##### Tomato/Pepper/Herb, Roses & Perennials Sale

**Mar. 9,** 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

## Have Garden Questions?

Email your questions and photos to: [phone hcmga@gmail.com](mailto:hcmga@gmail.com) or  
Call us Monday – Friday 9:00 am to Noon at 713-274-0950

# Plant of the Month - Sweet Olive (*Osmanthus fragrans*)

by Beth Braun, Master Gardener

*The genus name comes from the Greek words osme meaning fragrant and anthos meaning flower. Fragrans also means fragrant.*

“Our sense of smell is our most primal sense and it alone can change our mood in an instant and whip our olfactory receptors into a frenzy.”<sup>1</sup>

That perfectly describes my experience when I first caught a whiff of a blooming Sweet Olive in Houston. I recognized the scent immediately from my childhood in Japan. Decades had elapsed, but the fragrance was unmistakable. That is one of the mysteries of memory; perhaps you’ve experienced it too.



*Sweet Olive bloom*

This native of Asia is known in Japan as ginmokusei (silver osmanthus) and kinmokusei (gold osmanthus), depending on the color of their blooms. Cities in both China and Japan have chosen this plant as their “city flower” or “city tree”.

The flowers are tiny but “loaded with fragrance”, according to local garden writer and expert Kathy Huber. Former Smith County Master Gardener Jackie Hope begins her article on the Sweet Olive with these words: “How tantalizing, seductive and elusive Sweet Olive is – elusive because the fragrance of its flowers can be experienced several hundred feet from the plant.”<sup>2</sup> Intoxicating is another descriptor for this otherwise unpretentious plant.

You may roll your eyes—as I do—at the flowery and sometimes far-fetched language used to describe wines, but there is no way

to exaggerate the bouquet of the Sweet Olive. It’s been described as a blend of jasmine, gardenia and ripe apricots. Some people are reminded of roses, scented geraniums, or ripe peaches.

Native from the Himalayas through southern China to Taiwan and southern Japan, and into Cambodia and Thailand, Sweet Olive is also known as Tea Olive and Fragrant Olive. In China, flowers are used as flavoring for green and black tea, in jams, sweet cakes and other foods. It has medicinal uses as well. In northern India, flowers are used to protect clothes from insects.<sup>3</sup>

Sweet Olive is included in favorite fragrant plants lists of several local writers, in the company of Almond verbenas, Gardenia, Night-blooming jasmine (jessamine), Virginia sweetspire, Angel’s trumpet, Banana shrub, Buddleia, and Carnation of India.<sup>4</sup> Roses, orange blossoms and Star jasmine also make the cut.<sup>1</sup>

Enough about its fragrance; Sweet Olive can also boast about its easy-care habits and pest-resistance too. In our region, it grows to about 12’ tall and about half as wide. It can be clipped to encourage a bushy growth, trimmed up into an attractive small tree, grown as a hedge, or espaliered. With its long life span, it’s also an excellent substitute for the traditional ligustrum. It’s not a fast grower, so it won’t demand constant shaping.



*Sweet Olive*

Photo courtesy <https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu>

Local sources agree that the Sweet Olive enjoys full sun to bright shade, but there is some disagreement as to soil preference.

*cont'd on pg. 9*



## Vegetable Trivia, *cont'd from pg. 1*



*Photo courtesy vegetablegardener.com*

have taken potatoes back to England. He passed some to Sir Walter Raleigh who grew them in Ireland. Potatoes are classified in the Solanaceae family with tomatoes and eggplants. Today, due to the Irish Potato Famine in the 1840's, potato cultivars number in the thousands. In Peru alone a collection of 5,500 cultivars exists. Potatoes rank fourth on the list of staple crops.

Today 90 percent of home gardens in the U.S. have tomatoes. They are originally from the Andes in South America yet the Incas ignored them. The Mayan Indians cultivated tomatoes. The Mayans grew them in a spectrum of colors and shapes. The explorer Hernando Cortes may have introduced them to Spain on his trip home. It was a few centuries before they were included in European diets. Spaniards and Italians ate them first. Jefferson grew them at Monticello. Today we can grow literally thousands

of tomato varieties. Americans eat approximately 71 pounds of tomatoes a year.



*Photo courtesy aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu.*

By the way- for those of you interested in vegetable sales, we have several upcoming sales where you can purchase tomatoes and other plant varieties as well. On Saturday, February 23, 2019, the Genoa Friendship Gardeners will have their fruit tree and tomato sale from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fair Grounds, 7601 Red Bluff Road, Pasadena, TX 77505. Their Spring Sale for Perennials, Herbs & Peppers will be held Saturday March 30th, 2019 at the same time and location.

Bear Creek - West Master Gardeners will have their 2019 *Tomatoes, Peppers, Herbs, Vegetables & Perennials Sale* will be held Saturday March 9th, 2019 from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Check the Master Gardener website, <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/> for the sale location.

## Did You Know?

- Peas crossed the Atlantic with Christopher Columbus.
- We know that by the 17th century orange carrots were available because Flemish painters captured them on canvas. Until that time carrots were white, yellow or sometimes red. Joachim Wtewael's *Kitchen Scene* (1605) painting features orange carrots.
- Between the seventh and the tenth century the population doubled. Bean cultivation had spread across Europe. Beans and peas have 17-25% protein and are a good substitute for meat. Better nutrition meant a healthier population.
- On average a cucumber is 96 percent water.
- Thomas Jefferson enjoyed vegetables and grew 250 varieties at Monticello. This included 15 types of lettuce.
- The sweet potato was found by Columbus on his second trip to the New World and he sent some home to Spain.
- We do not know how the sweet potato made its way to Polynesia in the Pacific. Research shows sweet potatoes were growing there in 1000 AD.
- Home grown tomatoes possess more vitamin C than store varieties.



Ask A Master  
Gardener Booth as  
well various Fruit  
Trees & Vegetables



# Harris County Master Gardener Association

2019 CY-FAIR HOME & GARDEN SHOW

*Saturday & Sunday February 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> 2019*

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

The Berry Center Cypress, TX 77433

Selected Hardy Perennials, Fruit Trees and Garden Vegetables Available

100% of proceeds fund HCMG AgriLife Horticulture Programs



HARRIS COUNTY  
*Master  
Gardener*  
ASSOCIATION

*Get a jump on Spring with  
a great assortment of  
perennials specially selected  
for the Houston area.*

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Ask A Master  
Gardener Booth as  
well as vendors

Harris County Master Gardener Association  
Genoa Friendship Gardens  
presents

## 2019 FRUIT TREE & TOMATO SALE



Saturday **FEBRUARY 23<sup>RD</sup>**, 2019

9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fair Grounds  
7601 Red Bluff Road, Pasadena, TX 77505



HCMGA  
SALE LOCATION:  
7601 Red Bluff  
Rd.  
Pasadena, TX  
77505



TEXAS A&M  
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EXTENSION



It's that time again! The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ will be in town from February 25th to March 17th. Each year, Master Gardeners host an Ask a Master Gardener table to answer questions, talk plants and have fun. We'll have popular

handouts like the *Harris County Vegetable Plant Chart*, *Citrus Production*, *Tree Problems*, *Fertilizing Lawns* and *Making a Rain Barrel*. Our table will be in the same location as last year, in AGVENTURE with MGs on hand from 10:00am to 7:00pm.



# Herb of the Month - Borage (*Borago officinalis*)

by Karen McGowan, Master Gardener

Beloved bee favorite, borage, is the February Herb of the Month. Usually the first to bloom in the spring, borage produces small sky-blue flowers in the shape of a star. Borage is so alluring to bees that the English call it “bee bread”. Borage attracts not only honey bees, but also bumble bees and small, native bees.

Borage is a common Mediterranean herb thought to have originated in Morocco and Spain. Many centuries ago, Europeans concocted a tea from the leaves of borage by soaking them in wine to “allay boredom and melancholy.” Whether the effect was rightly attributable to the wine or to the herb is not known; however, what is factual is that the result of this mixture would create a significant rise in adrenaline levels in the blood, resulting in something akin to a “fight or flight” response. Perhaps this riotous effect proved handy in the British Isles for both the fight and the celebration afterward. The Celtic name “borracha” for the herb translates as “courage,” while the Welsh name for borage translates to mean an “herb of gladness.” Borage’s flowers were often floated in stirrup-cups and given to Crusaders before their departure as an emblem of courage. “I, Borage, bring always courage,” was a familiar rhyme for centuries.



*Borage flower*

In the garden, borage is said to not only stimulate the growth of strawberries, but also assists in combatting tomato worm when grown directly adjacent to tomato plants and is also a great companion plant to squash. Tolerant of poor soil and drought, borage



*Borage plant*

can thrive in light conditions from full sun to light shade with minimal watering. A sprawling annual reaching a mature height between one and three feet tall depending upon conditions, this annual will reseed itself year after year, remaining in the garden with little care. Other than occasional powdery mildew, the herbs suffers almost no routine disease or insect issues.

With a taste comparable to that of cucumber, both the foliage and flowers of borage have many culinary applications. The leaves can be used as a salad green and the flowers as edible decorations.

Borage can also be used



*Borage compliments a cantaloupe and ham dish*

in soups, salads, borage-lemonade, strawberry-borage cocktails, preserves, borage jelly, various sauces, or used in desserts in the form of fresh or candied flowers. The flowers of borage are particularly beautiful when frozen in ice cube trays, with the finished product providing a graceful addition to lemonades or water.

Now is a great time to consider adding borage to your garden. Happy February!

#### Citations:

<https://permaculturenews.org/2011/01/21/all-about-borage/>

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=b765>



# My Front Yard Kitchen Garden

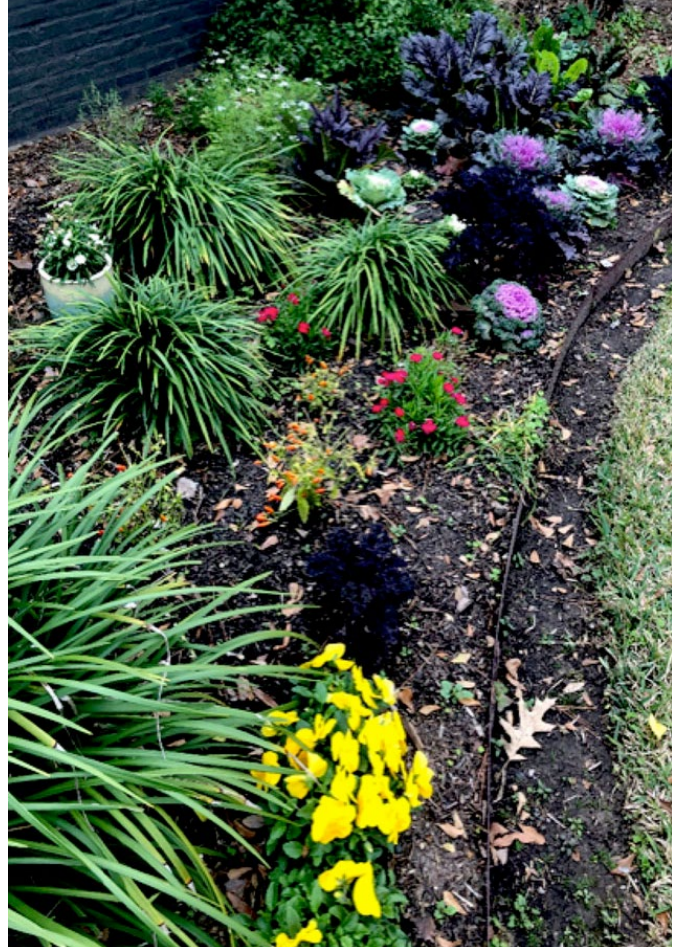
by Dianne Lawrence, Master Gardener

Last February I attended classes in Dallas for the Advanced Vegetable Training. I was very interested in edible gardening, and my project to use the training was to do a brochure on edible gardening to be distributed to our members and to the public at educational presentations.

I planted a garden in my front yard last spring and another one this fall. Having learned a lot after my first effort, I used that knowledge to create this fall's garden. Still learning, and next time will include more non-edible items.

Herbs are easy to grow and probably the most useful to me in my cooking. I have rosemary, basil (purple and green), thyme, cilantro, dill, and ornamental fennel. It is so nice to be able to go the garden for an herb and harvest only what's needed for a recipe and know that what I don't use will be fresh on the plant and not wilting in the refrigerator.

I also planted ornamental vegetables, which are lovely and also edible. Some of the ornamental cabbages and kale are spectacular in color and look very different from their usual counterparts in my backyard vegetable garden. The cabbages run to pink, purple, and white. The kales are tall and range from dark purple and curly to spikey with pink and white centers. I haven't been able to harvest and eat any of them, as yet, because they are so pretty I don't want to ruin their look in the garden.



*View of my front garden with pansies, ornamental kale, peppers, Swiss Chard, purple mustard, cilantro, dill, ornamental cabbages, Dianthus, and mounding grasses.*



*Ornamental cabbage*

My garden also contained red and yellow stemmed Swiss Chard, which I have harvested and sautéed with garlic and olive

oil. Two kohlrabi plants produced beautiful purple bulbs, which match their stems and contrast with their green leaves. These are a particularly good look in the garden because the bulbs are showy and above ground. Lots of peppers were in each of the gardens, some red and some yellow, some hot and some not. The various shapes and sizes gave a splash of color to the parts of the garden which were more subdued in purples and greens.

Several varieties of orange, lemon, and grapefruit trees populate my backyard garden, and recently I added a nectarine tree to the front yard. My primary vegetable garden is also in the backyard. There are cabbages, Brussel's sprouts, kale, bok choy, collards, and broccoli. I will be planting carrots and beets in the

*cont'd on pg. 9*



## My Front Yard Kitchen Garden, *cont'd from pg. 8*

coming weeks. Part of the plan for my next front yard garden will be to include fewer ornamental varieties of vegetables and move some of my backyard veggies to the front leaving room in the back to try some new things. The fall gardens have been my most successful and require much less time outside in the heat watering than in the spring and summer, although I miss my tomatoes.

One of my learning experiences through this project was to find out firsthand what the Black Swallowtail Butterfly caterpillars like to eat. There was a clump of parsley, ornamental fennel, and dill in one area. One morning I came out to find most of my 4-foot dill plant almost totally consumed by 10 fat caterpillars. The second day there were only five, and the third day all were gone, as well as my dill plant which had been cropped to about 2 feet tall and stripped. I hoped that the caterpillars were somewhere making chrysalises and not in the stomachs of local birds.

These first efforts were more to try out different colors and looks for the garden and less about having a lot of harvesting for the kitchen, except for the herbs. My next endeavor will include more colorful, if non-edible, flowers to make the garden more luxurious and full. I plan to include more of the vegetables for eating rather than just one or two plants for show.

Edible gardening is fun and educational. I don't think my neighbors have noticed that my front yard garden is also my



*Black Swallowtail Butterfly caterpillars chomping on my dill*

kitchen garden. I'll continue to plant in my front yard kitchen garden and try new things as I expand the the plot. Hope some of you will try it also.

## Plant of the Month, *cont'd from pg. 3*

Local nurseryman Jim Maas describes it as an excellent shrub for our clay soil and as drought tolerant once the plant is established, as does the Missouri Botanical Garden<sup>5</sup>. Others recommend a fertile, moist, but well-draining soil. My 3-year-old specimen is in native soil amended with organic matter, and it handles afternoon sun quite well with just a touch of leaf burn. An added benefit is that it's an evergreen. I learned the value of sturdy evergreen plants the hard way, after a freezing spell decimated a bed planted entirely with tender perennials, tropicals, and deciduous trees.

Where space is limited and in zones north of 8b, Sweet Olive can be grown in a container and protected when the temperatures drop. In the ground, an established plant can tolerate temperatures down to 10°F.

Heavy flushes of blooms appear off and on during late winter and early spring, but the Sweet Olive will reward the gardener with scattered blooms during the warmer months too. This may be the best time of year to scout it out in reputable nurseries—just follow your nose.

<sup>1</sup> *The Nose Knows*, by Jackie D'Elia, <https://buchanansplants.com/the-nose-knows/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu/2014/06/16/sweet-olive-2/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osmanthus\\_fragrans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osmanthus_fragrans)

<sup>4</sup> Melissa Aguilar of Houston Chronicle

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=282983&isprofile=1&basic=Osmanthus%20fragrans>

*Visit the Harris County Master Gardeners  
Facebook page for event details!*

*[www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners](http://www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners)*



**Texas A&M AgriLife Extension**

in partnership with

**Hermann Park Conservancy**

are please to present

## **Master Gardeners in the City at McGovern Centennial Gardens**

**Saturday, February 9th & 23rd**

**McGovern Centennial Gardens at Hermann Park**

**1500 Hermann Drive**

**Houston, Texas 77004**

Events include garden tours and children activities.

**These educational programs are FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.  
The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.



## Ask a Master Gardener

Ask a Master Gardener is a volunteer program offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Volunteers staff booths and tables to provide free, research-based horticulture education to the public throughout Harris County.

In February we are going to be in the following locations!

- Feb. 2**      **Urban Harvest** - 1st Saturday, 7:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
3401 Westheimer Rd. (corner of Buffalo Spdwy. & Westheimer)
- Garden Oaks/Heights** - 1st Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. at The Farmstand,  
938 Wakefield, Houston
- Feb. 9**      **Tomball** - 2nd Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at 205 W. Main Street, Tomball
- Feb. 21**     **Westchase** - 3rd Thursday, 3-7 p.m. at 10503 Westheimer Rd, Houston
- Feb. 23**     **Memorial Villages** - 4th Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at 10840 Beinhorn Rd.,  
Houston
- Feb. 17**     **Town Lake** - 3rd Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. at 9955 Barker Cypress Rd.,  
Cypress

# Open Garden Days at Genoa Friendship Gardens



The Orchard



The Water Garden



The Greenhouse

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Harris County Master Gardeners  
invite you to join us

## ***Open Garden Days***

on the 3rd Monday of the month, March through October, 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
Admission to the Exhibit Gardens is free, and register at the Welcome Table  
to receive additional monthly notices for children and family events.

## **The Genoa Friendship Gardens**

is located at

1202 Genoa Red Bluff Road

Houston, Texas 77034

**Email:** phoneHCMGA@gmail.com **Phone:** 713.274.0950

*To schedule a special event for your garden club, school or professional  
organization please contact us to make your arrangements.*

- Tour the variety of exhibits to inspire you with vegetable, perennial, rose, tropical and native gardens.
- Meet and talk with a Master Gardener about planting citrus, fruit or berries for your home orchard.
- Contemplate the joy in the Serenity Garden and catch a view of the Water Garden.
- Don't leave the GFG until you have shopped the Greenhouse where seasonal herbs, vegetables and perennials are available for sale until September.

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### ***2019 Monthly Open Garden Days & Special Events***

<b>February 23</b>	<b>Fruit Tree Sale</b>	<b>June 17</b>	<b>Open Garden Day</b>
<b>March 18</b>	<b>Open Garden Day</b>	<b>July 15</b>	<b>Open Garden Day</b>
<b>March 30</b>	<b>Spring Plant Sale</b>	<b>August 19</b>	<b>Open Garden Day</b>
<b>April 15</b>	<b>Open Garden Day</b>	<b>September 16</b>	<b>Open Garden Day</b>
<b>May 20</b>	<b>Open Garden Day</b>	<b>October 21</b>	<b>Open Garden Day</b>

***Second Chance Sale*** bargains can be found in the Greenhouse after our February and March plant sales.

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# Open Garden Days at The Weekley Community Center

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Harris County Master Gardeners  
invite you to join us for

## Open Garden Days

one Tuesday each month, January through November, 10:00 –11:00 a.m.

## Open Garden Day Activities

is located at 8440 Greenhouse Road, Houston, Texas 77433

*For information about upcoming topics, dates and registration, please email us at [ogd.harrishort@gmail.com](mailto:ogd.harrishort@gmail.com). Registration is required before each program.*

Children and their parents looking for hands-on ways to learn, create, and have fun inspire our Open Garden Day volunteers to offer programs that do just that.

This FREE monthly children's event includes a variety of activities:

- Planting seeds, veggies or ornamentals into pots so children can continue to grow them at home.
- Creating a "nature theme" craft project with materials that are provided.
- 30-40 minute hands-on lesson that focuses on a single topic each month.

Previous lessons have included making a worm farm, putting together a compost bin, learning about the importance of butterflies, and making a feeder to attract pollinators.

### Past projects



Seed Pod mobile



Fantasy Garden



Recycled soda bottle


## 2019 Monthly Open Garden Days

**February 26** Registration required by Sun. Feb. 24  
**March 26** Registration required by Sun. Mar. 24.  
**April (TBD)** Registration required TBD  
**May 28** Registration required by Sun. May. 26  
**June 25** Registration required by Sun. June. 23

**July 23** Registration required by Sun. July. 21  
**August 27** Registration required by Sun. Aug. 25.  
**Sept. 24** Registration required by Sun. Sept. 22  
**October, November and December** dates are TBA at this time.

# Gardening Tools

This chart is a handy guide for knowing the best times to plant in Harris County.

<div>  <div> <b>Vegetable Garden Planting Dates</b>                      for Harris County                 </div> <div>                     Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service                      Harris County Office                      713-274-0950  <a href="https://harris.agrilife.org/hort/">https://harris.agrilife.org/hort/</a> </div> </div>												
<div>                     Ideal Planting Time                     Marginal Planting Time                 </div>												
Planting times are for seeds unless otherwise noted	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Artichoke	Dormant Crowns								Transplants			
Asparagus (dormant crowns)												
Beans - Snap & Lima (Butterbean)			Snap&Lima					Snap				
Beets												
Broccoli (transplants)												
Brussels Sprouts (transplants)												
Cabbage (transplants)												
Cabbage - Chinese (transplants)												
Carrots												
Cauliflower (transplants)												
Chard, Swiss												
Collards (transplants)												
Corn												
Cucumbers												
Eggplant (transplants)												
Garlic												
Kale (transplants)												
Kohlrabi (transplants)												
Leeks	Transplants								Seeds			
Lettuce - also Arugula, Mache, Sorrel												
Melon - Cantaloupe, Honeydew												
Mustard												
Okra												
Onion - bulbing	Transplants								Seeds			
Onion - multiplying/bunching												
Peas - English & Snap												
Peas - Southern												
Pepper (transplants)												
Potato - Irish (cut pieces)												
Potato - Sweet (slips)												
Pumpkin												
Radish												
Spinach												
Squash - Summer												
Squash - Winter												
Tomato												
Turnips												
Summer Greens - Malabar, Amaranth												
Watermelon												

Average Last Freeze Dates (Hobby 2/8, Bush 3/1)    ↑    ↑    Average First Freeze Dates (Bush 11/30, Hobby 12/20)    ↑    ↑  
 Plants grown over winter may require protection during freezing weather.    Seeds and transplants started in the heat of summer will benefit from shading during establishment.

Download the  
Vegetable Garden  
Planting Guide here!



TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

3033 BEAR CREEK DR.

HOUSTON, TX 77084

713-274-0950

[harris.agrilife.org/program-areas/hort/](http://harris.agrilife.org/program-areas/hort/)

[hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

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The Harris County Master Gardeners as well as Texas A&M AgriLife Extension - Harris County Horticulture are actively participating on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram offering tips, lists, news and plant advice almost daily. The best part, instead of locating planting guides or insect documents, and sale dates for individuals, you can add the HCMG site to your account and easily share information with others. This is a definitely timesaving for these busy garden days and helps promote our organization.



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## Green Thumb Gardening Series

### *Spring Vegetable Gardening*

**February 7**

**Barbara Bush Library**

**6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**February 19**

**Spring Branch Memorial Library**

**6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**February 16**

**Maude Smith Marks Library**

**10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

**February 21**

**Freeman Branch Library**

**6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**