



As the Garden Grows

*A Publication of the Gonzales Texas Master Gardeners
December 2021 Issue 10*

President's Message

2021, the year of the jab, mask mandates, shutdowns, and nationwide vaccinations to counter the COVID virus. Over two hundred million persons in the United States, received at least one anti-virus shot in the arm.

From March 2020 through March 2021 GMG, as well as individuals throughout the country had to adjust and deal with the pandemic. In February, gardeners had to contend with an extended below thirty-two-degree Fahrenheit temperature freeze. Frozen home water pipes, a propane shortage and Texas electric power grid lengthy interruptions were further complications. Many plants that normally survive winter were lost.

The result was that by the time of the March tomato and vegetable Spring plant sale, the public was ready to stock-up on plants for Spring gardening. The GMG vegetable grow team grew numerous varieties from seeds. The public response to our inside event at the PACE building was overwhelming. In April, the Spring plant sale concluded with annuals, perennials, succulents and hanging baskets at Texas Heroes Square in downtown Gonzales. Plants grown by GMG members were supplemented with trees and plants available from nearby nurseries.

In the Fall we were gratified by twenty students signing up for the Master Gardener training program. The Gonzales grade school resumed in-school instruction. GMG's grade school horticultural instruction at PACE and Eggleston were up and running. The year concludes with our traditional December member/guest lunch.

On behalf of the GMG Board of Director's, HAPPY NEW YEAR, and successful gardening in 2022.

Nick Wentworth, GMG President

GMG Board

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GROW TEAM LEADERS

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SPS Leader- Shirley Frazier,



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VEGETABLE SALE COMING IN MARCH

Submitted by Shirley Frazier

March the fifth we will again have an outstanding vegetable sale. Last year was our first veggie sale that was held earlier than our spring sale. Customers always wanted to have their veggie plants before April. The sale went very well, and we had LOTS of veggies. The sale will be in the PACE building. The plants that had to be on the floor, under the tables, soon replaced plants on the table tops as they were bought. The sale will be March 5th and go from 8:30 to 1:00.



Sandy Llewellyn will be heading up the grow team for vegetables. There are several that are assisting her on the grow team, but anyone who wants to grow vegetables is more than welcomed to do so. Matter of fact, we are counting on you. Seeds for the growers will be available at the Christmas luncheon. Sandy will be handing them out. The selections are based on what has sold well in the past, and the varieties that customers have requested. Sandy is very knowledgeable and can answer any questions that you may have.



Vegetables that will be grown include a lot of varieties of tomatoes, peppers, squash, eggplant, and cucumbers. There will also be cantaloupes and tomatillos. There will not be vegetables for sale at the spring plant sale in April.

The spring plant sale will be April 9th, downtown on Heroes Square from 8:30 – 1:00. There are several grow team members that have signed up to help, but everyone is asked to take part, and there are lots of areas that master gardeners will be needed. Everyone is encouraged to propagate plants from their yards. Some of us have neighbors and friends that would be happy to share their plants with you and now is the time to start getting cuttings or transplants. Also, you can use the propagation tent to start cuttings for some plants.

The greenhouse is looking good, getting full of plants. I just ask that you let me know what you are bringing to the greenhouse, so I can let Cheryl Hillman know and she can make the labels for all the plants.

There will be more information coming, for both sales, at the noon master gardeners' lunches each month. We have several projects on the calendar, and scads of volunteer hours to be earned. We have a large, energetic, class this year, and all your work is appreciated.

In the Garden Landscape

Lawns: Rake, weed, and mow if necessary.	Potted Plants can still stay outdoors until frost date. Water thoroughly and bring inside if necessary.
Divide and/or Move: Shrubs, roses, trees, evergreen, spring-blooming perennials: Asters, and other fall bloomers while dormant.	Mulch cold-tender plants like Gingers, Esperanza and semi-tropical to prepare for the colder temperatures of late fall and winter.
Select and prep with compost or organic matter spots in your landscape for trees, grapes, and berries for January planting if this is of interest to you.	Cool Weather Vegetables, Fruit, and Herbs: Water them as needed, mulch and fertilize on your schedule. Vegetables to plant from now through winter: Winter Greens. You can plant ornamental and wildlife crops, hardy perennials, shrubs, trees, roses, and winter annuals. Herbs except Rosemary (prepare to cover in case of freeze.) Water all plants as needed.





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OVERTON — December is the time to plan and prepare for spring gardens, said Dr. Joe Masabni, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service small-acreage vegetable specialist, Overton.

East Texas spring gardens are finished producing and the fall garden should be in full swing, he said. So, in down months like December, it's best to get organized and ready for spring planting.

"Now is the best time to be preparing for next year," he said. "It's time to clean out gardens, prepare the soil, clean gardening tools, restock your supplies and put together a plan for spring planting."

Masabni said spring gardens should be cleared of all plant debris and weeds. Soil should be prepared with added nutrients to improve soil health, which increase the chances of better quality and quantity vegetables next year.

He recommends mixing in composts or a combination of compost and cow, chicken or horse manure based on soil tests.

"You can add as much compost as you like but add manures sparingly because they are rich in phosphorous," he said. "Get a soil test to confirm that your phosphorous is not exceedingly high. Too much phosphorous can cause nutrient deficiencies such as zinc and iron in plants."

Masabni said it's also a good time now to clean and maintain gardening equipment, such as sprayers and shears.

Sprayer nozzles and hoses should be cleaned or replaced to ensure they spray evenly, he said. Masabni recommends gardeners have two backpack sprayers on hand – one for herbicides only and the other for fungicides or insecticides.

"I like to separate herbicides because you can't clean the sprayer completely and there may be residue left, then you are killing your plants when you mean to protect them," he said.

Masabni also recommends gardeners sanitize tools with a bleach solution to prevent any transfer of diseases from season to season. He recommends a rate of one cup of bleach per gallon of water and dipping the tools into the solution. Tools should then be rinsed and stored.

Winter months are also a good time for gardeners to plan their spring plantings by going through their notes on last year's garden, Masabni said. Keeping records of successful and problematic varieties, harvest yields, pest, and disease problems, including the date a disease or insect was first noticed, can help gardeners make decisions that can improve the likelihood of success.

Knowing when pests or disease pressure started the previous year can prompt gardeners to begin scouting before that date to reduce pest populations or spray for diseases, he said.

"If you know you had stink bugs on April 15 then you might want to start scouting closely on March 30," he said. "That first generation of insects is much easier to control because they are small and in fewer numbers. Catching them early can reduce their effect dramatically."

Having records should also direct gardeners on crop rotations, Masabni said. It's important to plant varieties from different families in a location each year to reduce disease and pest pressure.

Finally, preparations for spring gardens should also include purchasing supplies, such as seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides.

Gifts for the Gardener on your Christmas list.



<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/products/>

Trend in Nutrition 2021 and Beyond

The COVID-19 pandemic has made consumers more aware of the importance of nutrition in a healthy immune system.



“Eating a healthy diet is one way to support a healthy immune system,” said Jenna Anding, Ph.D. professor and AgriLife Extension specialist in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science in Texas A&M’s College of Agriculture and Life Science. “There are many nutrients that benefit the immune system and overall health.” nutrition provided by an assortment of lean meats, vegetables, fruit, and nuts.

Consumers are now more aware of the importance of foods that serve to boost the immune system. For example, Anding said the protein found in lean meats, poultry, eggs, seafood, beans, peas, and nuts can help support the immune system. “So does vitamin A, which is found in carrots, broccoli, spinach, sweet potatoes, red bell peppers, apricots and other foods fortified with vitamin A such as milk,” she said. “The same goes for vitamin C, which you get from citrus fruits, strawberries, bell peppers and tomatoes.”

Anding also noted that vitamin E, which is found in sunflower seeds, almonds, peanut butter, and avocados, works as an antioxidant, and can also help support immune function. Zinc, found in poultry, seafood, lean meats, milk, whole grains, beans, seeds, and nuts, also supports the immune system, and plays a role in wound healing.

“These are just some of the nutrients that can play a role in supporting a healthy immune system,” she said. “Other beneficial nutrients include vitamins B6, B12 and folate as well as minerals such as copper, selenium and iron.”

Anding noted the best way to obtain these nutrients is through food.

“No single nutrient is going to protect you from illness,” Anding said. “Choose a diet that includes a variety of nutrient-dense foods, including fruits, vegetables, lean meats, whole grains, nuts, seeds and low-fat dairy products. And check with a registered dietitian or your health care provider before taking any nutritional supplements.”

[Paul Schattenberg Texas A&M Extension](#)

[Excerpt from Full Article: “Trend in Nutrition for 2021 and Beyond” https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2020/12/25/trends-in-nutrition-for-2021-and-beyond/](https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2020/12/25/trends-in-nutrition-for-2021-and-beyond/)



FREE, Informal and FUN!

Topics Covered:

- Riparian 101
- Grazing Management in Riparians
- Impacts of Deer on Riparians
- Restoration in the Riparian
- Update on Freshwater Mussels in Texas

Event Details:

Cost: Free

Time: 10 - 11:30 AM CST

To register (this is a virtual event):

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PlantParty5>

GREAT DOOR PRIZES will be given away throughout the party! Register for your chance to win.

For more information:

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The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 12:00 p.m. Members can invite guests. 	3	4
5 Deadline November Volunteer Hours	6	7	8	9 Papier Mache Making with Second Graders	10	11
12	13	14 Class: Seed Starting and Ornamentals 	15	16 Black Walnut Planting with Kindergarten Class	17	18
19	20	21 Winter Solstice 9:58 a.m.	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day
26	27	28	29	30	31 Happy New Year!	

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL OUR DECEMBER BIRTHDAY MEMBERS AND STUDENTS!





"Texas Master Gardener Association

about 2 weeks ago

The November issue of the TMGA newsletter is now online!

The health of Texans is of utmost importance to Texas A&M AgriLife. The state of COVID-19 evolves daily, and it is important that you make informed decisions based on facts, not fear." FACEBOOK

To subscribe to the Texas AgriLife Newsletter, click the link: <https://signup.e2ma.net/signup/1948046/1765568/>

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