

A Garden Runs Through It

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UCCE Master Gardener Program



Colusa County

Whether it's a vegetable garden, houseplants or a landscape...

August 2017

Cooperative Extension,
Colusa County

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Upcoming events



August

Arbuckle Farmers Market
Wednesdays

Colusa Farmers Market
Thursdays

Stonyford Farmers Market
Sundays

September

Colusa County Employees Benefit Fair
Wednesday, September 6
Colusa County Fairgrounds, Festival Hall



Advice to Grow by ... Ask Us!



MASTER FOOD PRESERVER

The UC Cooperative Extension of Colusa County is exploring the possibility of starting a Master Food Preserver program in Colusa County.

About the UC Master Food Preserver program

The UC Master Food Preserver program teaches communities how to safely preserve foods, because we believe everyone should have access to safe and healthy food.

For more than 25 years, the UC Master Food Preserver program has been a leader in food safety and food preservation. Located at UC Cooperative Extension offices across California, its dedicated volunteers teach people practical food preservation so they may safely preserve foods at home.

By adopting UC recommendations, food preservers can eliminate some of the most common mistakes and risks associated with home and small-scale preservation. Properly done, food preservation retains not only the nutritional value of food, but also the delicious taste of produce at its peak.

Through extensive training, UC Master Food Preserver volunteers learn the science and best practices of safe home food preservation. After training is completed, volunteers share UC's research-based recommendations on food preservation methods in their local communities.

Nuts and Bolts

- You would train in another county (Sacramento, Yolo or Solano) but volunteer in Colusa County. County of training is still to be determined.
- The training is about 8 days, all day.
- The cost is about \$250.
- You will volunteer 50 hours the first year and 25 hours per year thereafter.
- Take an annual food safety recertification test.
- Attend monthly meetings in Colusa.
- Volunteers teach Colusa County residents through hands-on demonstrations, workshops, and help-lines. We will also staff booths at local events.

[Click here to show your interest in becoming a Master Food Preserver or if you would like to attend workshops.](#)



Book of the Month

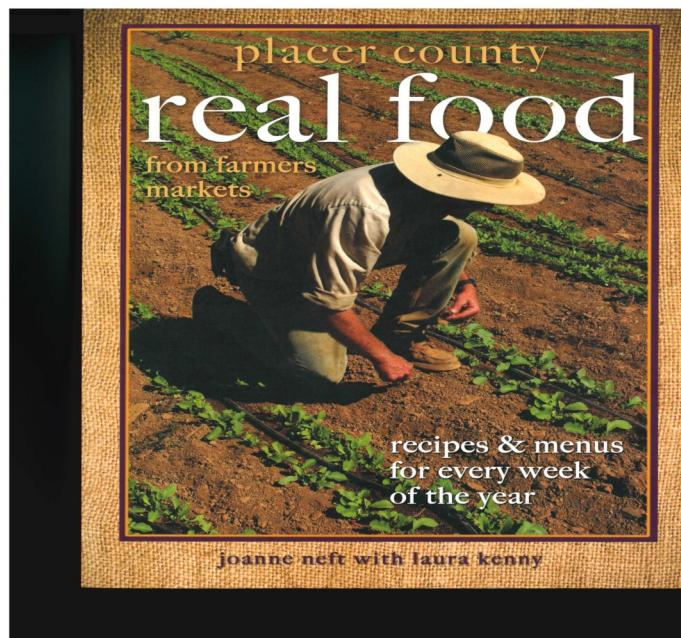
Real Food

Farmers market season is in full swing. Most cities and towns have at least one. Colusa County is fortunate to have four farmers markets (Colusa, Arbuckle, Williams and Stonyford) and several farm stands where you can buy directly from the farmers. Check with colusacountygrown.org for member growers.

Farmers markets are not just summer events. In some areas you can purchase delicious and nutritious produce in whatever season it is harvested. At least some of the Placer County farmers markets are open all year as are the Chico and Davis ones.

So, once you have purchased that fresh food from the farm, you may need some ideas for how to prepare it. Joanne Neft, the founder of the Placer County farmers markets, published *Placer County Real Food from Farmers Markets: Recipes and menus for every week of the year*. Beginning in January with what is available in her markets, she creates menus and recipes that include Cinderella squash soup; lettuce, mandarin and kiwi salad; roasted root vegetables and Meyer lemon tart. She finishes in December with Christmas dinner and New Year's supper using many ingredients from farmers markets.

If you are looking for simple recipes that highlight seasonal fresh food in every month of the year, ...*Real Food*... should fit the bill. This informative, colorfully illustrated book is available from several sellers on Amazon at bargain prices.



Submitted by Peggy Townzen

Ornamental Plant of the Month

Lemon Verbena

Whenever I have someone in our garden that hasn't seen it before they are always amazed at the lovely plant of lemon verbena (*aloysia triphylla*) that gives off such a wonderful aroma. It is a frost-hardy, deciduous shrub with tiny flowers in mid-summer. It can get up to 10 feet tall but is very easy to maintain at a much lower height. It is quite happy with our winters and can even be grown in a pot. Mine grows next to the garden path so I smell it each time I brush by.

The leaves are slender and arranged in threes with a rough texture. The plant is happiest when it gets cut back in early spring to about 12 inches tall. The sideshoots can be cut back to within two or three buds of the old wood. Always cut out any dead wood during the summer months and snip the flower spikes when they whither. Each year when you cut it back you will be forming lovely rings on the main stem that give it a really interesting style. It is easily propagated with stem cuttings. Make it really happy by adding a layer of mulch after trimming in the springtime.

Lemon verbena is used for digestive disorders including indigestion, gas, colic, diarrhea, and constipation. It is also used for agitation, joint pain, trouble sleeping (insomnia), asthma, colds, fever, hemorrhoids, varicose veins, skin conditions, and chills. What more could you wish for!!!

In foods and manufacturing, lemon verbena is used as an ingredient in herbal teas, as a fragrance in perfumes, and as an ingredient in alcoholic beverages.

So grow a plant or two and enjoy whatever properties you want - even if it's just to brush by and enjoy the smell!!



Submitted by Cynthia White

Edible Plant of the Month

There are over 20,000 species of edible plants in the world yet fewer than 20 species now provide 90% of our food. However, there are hundreds of less well known edible plants from all around the world which are both delicious and nutritious.

There are however, alternative edible leaves. Most of the leaf crops we grow for food are annuals. By growing perennials, it would be possible to have salads with an assortment of flavors. Some have mild flavor that can be used in the bulk of your salad, while others have more intense flavors and can be used in a lesser quantity for flavoring. Some have a pungently hot flavor, another a sweet licorice-like flavor, and some can be acidy and have a lemon-like flavor. Some of them have a savory taste with a garlic or mustard flavor. Leaves not only offer a wonderful variety of flavors, but are also the most nutritious food we eat. They are rich in sources of vitamins and minerals, contain a very good quality protein and supple essential fiber.

The range of plants is quite diverse, and species can be found for any niche in the garden. The nicest part is they yield more in year two on.

One such plant is anise hyssop, *Agastache foeniculum*, that prefers sunny and dry well-drained soil. It is hardy to between 14 and 23 degrees F. They have a sweet aniseed flavor and make a delicious addition to a salad.



Then there is the Allium species that are all edible and include onion, leek and garlic. Of course we all know about these so I won't go into detail.

Then there is the Salt Bush, *Atriplex halimus*, an evergreen shrub. It requires a sunny location in well drained soil. You can trim it by harvesting the young growth for use in salads as a spinach substitute. The leaves have a distinctly salty taste. When lightly steamed, the leaves retain their flavor and texture, making it an excellent spinach substitute.



Brassica oleracea includes some of the most common vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts. While these plants are biennial, there are a few perennial forms. They grow best in a sunny area and succeed in most soils, doing well in heavy clay soil. They do not like very acidic conditions, though.

A tree collards is one worth mentioning as it lives for up to 20 years. It has a mild flavor, dark green leaves and looks like Savoy cabbage leaves. Also a variety of Kale called Daubenton is another very good perennial plant.

Turkish Rocket, *Bunias orientalis*, grows into a clump, and is a very easily grown plant that prefers a sunny location but can also succeed in the light of a woodland garden. It produces leaves that have a mild taste that is a cross between cabbage and radish. It goes well in a mixed salad, but can also be cooked making an excellent vegetable.

These are just a few of the perennial leaf plants for your garden. Others are Musk Mallow, *Malva moschata*, Miner's Lettuce, *Montia perfoliata*, Sweet Cicely, *Myrrhis odorata*, Iron Cross Plant, *Oxalis depppei*, Garlic Cress, *Peltaria alliacea*, *Reichardia picroides*, that looks something like a dandelion, Sorrel, *Rumex acetosa*, Dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale*, the Lime Tree, *Tilia cordata*, and Stinging Nettles, *Urtica dioica*.

Submitted by Lynne Spivak

Recipe of the Month

Summer means tomatoes at our house. I am always looking for new and creative ways to use tomatoes. This is a great side dish with grilled meat. It was breakfast the next morning warmed in the microwave with a fried egg on top.

BEST SUMMER TOMATO GRATIN

Serves 8 to 10

6 Tlbs extra-virgin olive oil
6 oz crusty baguette cut in 3/4' cubes (I used parmesan herb ciabatta)
3 garlic cloves sliced thin
3 lbs ripe tomatoes, cored and cut into 3/4" pieces
2 tsp sugar
1 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper
3/4 cup Parmesan cheese grated
2 Tlbs basil chopped



Preheat oven to 350 degrees and adjust rack to middle position.

Heat 4 Tlbs olive oil in a 12" oven safe skillet (I used cast iron) over medium heat. Add bread and stir to coat, cook until bread is brown, about 5 minutes. Stir constantly. Transfer bread to large bowl.

Reheat the skillet and remaining 2 Tlbs of oil, add garlic. Cook until golden at the edges stirring constantly, about 30 to 60 seconds. Add Tomatoes, sugar, salt & pepper. Increase to medium-high and cook for about 10 minutes until the tomatoes have started to break down and release juice.

Remove skillet from heat and gently stir in all but 1 cup of the bread cubes, be sure all the bread is soaked and stirred into the juice. Arrange remaining 1 cup of bread evenly over the surface, pressing to partially submerge. Sprinkle evenly with parmesan.

Bake until top of gratin is deeply browned, tomatoes are bubbling and the juice has reduced, 40 to 45 minutes. After 30 minutes, run spatula around edge of skill let to loosen.

Remove skillet from over, (Gratin will appear loose and jiggle around outer edges but will thicken as it cools.) Let stand for 15 minutes. Sprinkle gratin with basil and serve

Submitted by: Sherry Maltby

August in the Garden

- ◆ You can plant directly in the garden seeds of carrots, beets, lettuce, spinach and turnips. Indoors you can start seeds for broccoli, cabbage, kale, bunching onions, and radicchio.
- ◆ Be sure to monitor your watering system. Check for coverage and watch for plugged or blocked sprinklers.
- ◆ Continue to weed. Be especially sure to get weeds before they flower and set seeds.
- ◆ Check the mulch you have spread around and be sure it is thick enough to suppress weeds. (3 to 4 inches)
- ◆ Cut off spent flowers of perennials and annuals for continued bloom.

In today's fast paced, social media way of life, fake news has become normal.

This includes fake gardening advice.

UC Master Gardeners use cutting edge, research-based information to help you garden better.

We are practical, connected and trusted.

Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us!

[Small gifts can make a difference.](#)

[Click here to support us!](#)

Science word of the Month

Translocation—The movement of a substance such as water, carbohydrates, or a pesticide from one part of a plant to another.

Garden Club of Colusa County activities

- Monday August 28, 6:30
- St. Stephens Church, Colusa

Additional Links

Integrated Pest Management ipm.ucanr.edu

UC Davis Arboretum arboretum.ucdavis.edu

Invasive Plants www.cal-ipc.org

Plant Right www.plantright.org

Save Our Water saveourwater.com

California Garden Web cagardenweb.ucanr.edu

McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens turtlebay.org

UCANR Colusa County cecolusa.ucanr.edu

UC Master Gardener Program (statewide) mg.ucanr.edu

California Backyard Orchard homeorchard.ucanr.edu

ANR publications anrcatalog.ucanr.edu

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Website: http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative_Action/.

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