



A Garden Runs Through It

December 2024

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

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Constant Contact

THIS WILL BE THE LAST ISSUE THAT WE EMAIL THROUGH OUR WEBSITE, SO PLEASE BE SURE TO SUBSCRIBE THROUGH CONSTANT CONTACT! You should have received and email from UC Cooperative Extension - Colusa County asking you to "Resubscribe me!" Please make sure you click the link so that you continue getting our newsletter in the new platform.



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Upcoming Event



Hosted by the UC Master Gardeners of Colusa County

Saturday, December 7, 2024

1:00pm - 3:00pm

CIP Conference Room
100 Sunrise Blvd in Colusa

Sign up using the link on our website,
Facebook or Instagram

\$30 per person
<https://cecolusa.ucanr.edu/>

This event will only take place if we have a minimum of 10 participants

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources | UC Master Gardener Program

Wreath Workshop

Saturday, December 7

Morning Session

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Afternoon Session

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

CIP Conference Room

\$30 per person

[Click here](#) to sign up for the Afternoon Session. Our Morning Session sold out

Plant of the Month

Bacon Avocado



Winter Fruit – Behold the Bacon Avocado!

Here we are in mid-November, and this morning I sliced open my first Bacon avocado that fell from the tree about 8 days ago in the wind. I start looking for them in the yard after Halloween and the one I opened today was sheer bliss.

In Northern California the trick is finding a variety of avocado that can go below 32 degrees without suffering damage. My experience as a Master Gardener has taught me that in order to have success with avocados, frost is the evil menace. The next lesson on the avocado is that there are two types, and each type has over a dozen varieties. Type B, Bacon, is perfect for our gardens here in the Colusa area. They will sustain themselves when temperatures drop below 32 and will also withstand the blistering heat of our summers. I've made note of the importance of the "Type A or B" information because it lets you know the pollinating characteristics that will allow you to actually produce avocados. Type B bacon is one of the least affected varieties when you don't have a Type A in proximity. The flowers actually change sex from morning to evening and provide a challenge to the bees to come back later for a good crop.

The Bacon avocado tree can get to be about 20 feet tall, which is about the size of mine now, after about 12 years. Other varieties can get to be over 50 feet which is a challenge for most home gardens. It is cold tolerant to 24 degrees Fahrenheit. The fruit is large and smooth and remains green as it ripens. The skin is relatively thin which makes it a bit difficult to peel and the flavor is milder than the Haas. The flesh is yellow and creamy and will ripen in late winter to spring. I leave mine on the tree as long as possible but high winter winds can send them tumbling to the ground – one must keep a watchful eye.

I fertilize the trees with a high acid citrus type fertilizer after they finish producing in late winter and increase the water in the hottest days of July, when we have repeated days over 105 degrees. I was heartsick when we returned after a 6-day spell last summer and there were dozens of the immature fruit blackened and lying on the ground. I stepped up the water for a few days and was relieved when the fruit drop stopped – there would be avocados for Christmas after all!

The avocado is very responsive to trimming to support the area it needs to be successful. Lots of sun, and you have gorgeous ever-green addition to your landscape. I would not recommend having it in the lawn area – that's too much water and your production will suffer. A thing to remember – trees do not like being in competition with lawn or other grasses!!

My final favorite thing about the Bacon avocado is that it was named after James E. Bacon who grew the original seedling tree on his ranch in Buena Park right by Knott's Berry Farm. The seed was said to have been planted in about 1928. My two favorite fruits – avocados and boysenberries –

Activities at the Donna Critchfield Demonstration Garden 499 Margurite Street in Williams



Expanding

What a lovely month in the garden! We have added a cinder block raised bed to our demo garden and filled it with herbs! We have also refreshed our mulch path to make our garden easier to navigate, with the heavy rains making it muddy.

Seeding and Planting

From September through November, the Master Gardeners were busy in the garden planting lettuce, beets, kale, radishes, carrots, broccoli, cabbage, cilantro, spinach, chard, and celery!

Growing and Harvesting

Most vegetables that we planted in the fall are growing and thriving! The cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli starters that were planted directly into the garden rows are growing more every day. In November we were able to harvest some broccoli, cauliflower, radishes and kale. We donated these vegetables to the cafeteria at the Colusa County Office of Education Community School. The beets, lettuce, celery, carrots and cilantro that were planted are making steady progress as well!

Gardener's Corner

Plant a Persimmon



Plant a Persimmon

If you're looking for an amazing tree that not only has delicious fruit, beautiful fall color, tolerates different types of soil, and is nearly pest free—plant a persimmon.

There are two main types of persimmons—the Hachiya and the Fuyu. Fruits of the Hachiya persimmon are large deep red/orange and are usually harvested when firm and allowed to ripen off the tree. When soft and squishy, the very sweet fruit is used in cookies, cakes and my favorite—persimmon pudding.

Fruits of the Fuyu are medium, flattish red/orange and are crisp and firm—crunching almost like an apple. Use them raw in salads or eat them like an apple. Dehydrated Fuyu persimmon slices are a great snack.

Both types of persimmon fruits begin to ripen in September and last through November. If not harvested, they are beautiful ornaments on the bare tree branches. The fruits also make perfect Thanksgiving table decorations.

Persimmon trees range in size from 14 feet for the Fuyu to around 20 feet (wide) for the Hachiya. No cross-pollination is required, and full sun is important. Pruning persimmon trees mainly involves thinning out crossing or misshapen branches. Thinning the fruit may be necessary as persimmons can be quite prolific.

Submitted by Bonnie Rose

Penny Pinching Tips from a Master Gardener's Kitchen



Chapter 6

Even a well-stocked kitchen does not always have everything the cook wants or needs on hand and it helps if you understand a few basics about commonly used ingredients. My daughter has always said "Mom, you consider a recipe nothing but a SUGGESTION!" She's right!! That said, most any

recipe can be modified to use what's on hand or to suit your taste and/or dietary restrictions. Think about what you are trying to make and what you like to eat. If you are missing an ingredient, think about what you have that is similar in flavor and could be a tasty replacement. The exception is baking - the balance between fats, liquids, flour/starch, and leavening is critical for good results! Until you have some experience, follow the recipe and measure carefully for best results.

Most people do not have such a discriminating palate that they will be put off by the swap of a similar ingredient. For example, no crème fraiche at \$8/cup? Substitute sour cream or full fat Greek yogurt for about \$1/cup. No goat cheese? Cream cheese will work, just plan to up the flavor profile - more salt? acid? herbs or spices? No sausage? Ground beef, pork or chicken will fill the bill - find a sausage recipe and season the meat you have. No pepper jack cheese? Use jack or mozzarella and add some chili flake.

Most good cookbooks have a section at the back with common substitutions and amounts to use, so I've attached a list of possible substitutions for you. (continued in the complete article)

[Link to the complete article](#)

Submitted by Penny Walgenbach

Recipe of the Month

Beer Bread Recipe



Beer Bread Recipe

Ingredients

- 3 cups of flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp sugar
- 1 can beer (we recommend Coors, Bud, Miller or the light versions of these. PBR gives it a very beer taste, so I'd avoid this beer)
- 8 tbsp or 1 stick melted butter

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees
2. Mix first four ingredients together
3. add can of beer and mix
4. put in 9x5 loaf pan and pour melted butter over top. Use a deep loaf pan or put another pan under the loaf pan as the butter tends to boil over on a smaller load pan
5. Sprinkle sea salt along the top
6. Bake at 400 degrees for 35-40 minutes

Recipe from Edible Events



Carlsbad Caverns – A Cave Waiting Patiently for Your Visit

If you've yet to experience Carlsbad Caverns in Southern New Mexico you are in for a wonderful adventure. We visited the area in about 2005 on one of our trips to visit family in the Albuquerque area. It was an interesting drive into the cave location which featured lots of desert landscaping, and there wasn't a human in sight for miles.

Carlsbad has been national treasure for nearly 100 years. The area was homesteaded and farmed in 1880 by William Henry Harrison (not the president). Harrison established the Harrison ditch system to irrigate the lands, which remains in existence, and which is responsible for the landscaped appearance of the area today. Harrison died in 1930, and the National Park Service acquired the property as a source of water for the national park, 6 miles (9.7 km) to the north and west.

The Park Service, with assistance from Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) laborers, removed most of the homesteaded structures and continued to landscape the area. A CCC camp was established at Rattlesnake Springs. During the latter part of World War II, the now-abandoned CCC camp was used as a recreation center for military personnel from a nearby airfield, but was demolished by the 1950s.

The cave area is easy to visit with all sorts of handicap assets for all ages. The cave itself was discovered in modern times by a ranch hand searching for deposits of bat guano for the fertilizer market. It is well-visited and offers activities into the evening to watch the bat population leave the cave at sunset to eat the local insect population.

A newly discovered wondrous pool, which lies 700 ft. below Carlsbad Caverns National Park, in New Mexico, had never before been seen by human eyes. This cave pool, which appears to be completely "virgin," was found in Lechuguilla Cave, one of the world's largest and most famous caves.

The cave had not before been touched by humans at all, as scientists found this natural wonder at a depth of 213 meters below the entrance to the cave. This depth also makes it one of the tallest (or deepest) caves in the world.

The amazing 'virgin' pool recently discovered in Lechuguilla Cave of New Mexico is perfectly pristine and appears almost unearthly surrounded by white frosted rock. While the water may look murky with a creamy tint to it, the coloring is actually the product of an optical illusion.

This cave is 203 km long. Geoscientist and expedition leader, Max Wisshak, explained that the water in the pool is actually "crystal clear" and is believed to have come from ancient rainwater that seeped through the limestone lying overhead and dropped or slid along the cave walls into the pool.

"This pool has been isolated for hundreds of thousands of years and had never seen light before that day," said Carlsbad Caverns natural and cultural resources chief, Rodney Horrocks. The uncontaminated pool is so important because almost everything is contaminated with human pollution these days. It's a rare treat for science to be offered a completely clean sample of nature.

Thinking Safe and Green

Master Gardener Program



Pruning Safety

Data available from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission indicate approximately 27,000 people nationwide received hospital treatment for pruning injuries during 2006. Many of the injuries were to fingers and involved lacerations. English and Spanish language safety videos on tree care safety are available for loan from the ANR Environmental Health & Safety Library at <http://safety.ucanr.edu/>.

Click the link below to read this month's safety tip.

[#2 Pruning Safety](#)

Gardening Guide

UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County Zones 8 and 9

	December	January	February
Planting	<p>Bare-root roses</p> <p>Bulbs</p> <p>Camellias</p> <p>Cyclamen</p> <p>Hellebore</p> <p>Living Christmas trees</p> <p>Bare-root fruit and landscape trees</p> <p>Plants and seeds make awesome holiday, hostess and mystery gifts</p>	<p>Plant rhubarb, strawberries, and cane berries. Plant seeds for broccoli, cabbage, parsley, turnips, peas, radishes, lettuce, and spinach.</p> <p>This is the time to plant bare root roses, trees, artichoke crowns, grapevines, and other vines. You can still plant pansies, violas, snapdragons, and fairy primroses.</p> <p>Plant gladiolus every 2 weeks for a succession of blooms.</p>	<p>Plant in vegetable garden by direct seeding: radishes, beets, chard, and peas.</p> <p>Start tomato, pepper, and eggplant seeds indoors.</p> <p>Flowers to transplant or direct seed: snapdragon, candytuft, larkspur, coral bells, and stock.</p> <p>Plant bulbs for summer bloom: dahlias, begonias, gladiolus, lilies, etc.</p> <p>Plant potatoes.</p>
Maintenance	<p>Adjust your irrigation</p> <p>Add mulch to beds</p> <p>Divide perennials</p> <p>Throw out fallen rose leaves</p> <p>Catalogs are arriving to get you excited about what to plant next year. You might want to consider removing some lawn area and creating a new planting bed to make room for all the new plants in the catalogs.</p>	<p>Roses, fruit trees and other perennials can be pruned this month.</p> <p>Do not prune spring flowering shrubs until after they bloom.</p> <p>Prune berry canes that bore fruit last year to the ground.</p> <p>Prune grapevines back, leaving 2 to 3 buds per side shoot.</p>	<p>Finish pruning roses.</p> <p>Prune summer blooming shrubs now.</p> <p>Pest and Disease Control</p> <p>Watch for aphids on spring blooming bulbs; remove with a strong spray of water.</p>
Prevention	<p>Protect citrus and other sensitive plants</p> <p>Apply dormant spray</p>	<p>Spray horticultural oil on pruned fruit trees to control scale, mites and aphids. Thorough coverage will kill over-wintering eggs.</p> <p>Later in the month, spray neem oil on roses to control mildew, rust, and black spot. Do not apply oils unless there will be 24 hours of dry weather following application.</p> <p>Be sure to clean up debris (leaves and twigs) around roses and fruit trees to help prevent</p>	<p>Around Valentine's Day apply dormant copper spray to peach and nectarine trees no later than bud swell.</p> <p>Fertilize mature trees and shrubs after spring growth starts.</p> <p>Be sure to remove and discard (do not compost) fallen camellia blossoms to reduce petal blight.</p> <p>Fertilize spring blooming and fall-planted perennials.</p> <p>Mulch 3 inches deep around plants (without touching stems)</p>

	disease. Order seeds for this year's vegetable and flower garden.	to conserve soil moisture.
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Science Word of the Month

Cyclone: These are storms that form over tropical areas near the equator. Their strong winds rotate at speeds of more than 74 miles per hour. Cyclones often produce heavy rains. We often call cyclones hurricanes or typhoons in the Northern Hemisphere, and cyclones in the Southern Hemisphere.

Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us!



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.

Contact Us

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