



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
ST. TAMMANY MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION



THE GARDENGOER

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March 2009



Hi Everyone,

Just when you thought it was safe to enter the garden Mother Nature changes the weather. I was having the ultimate planting experience when I noticed the wind was picking up and the temperature was starting to drop. As the day progressed I added clothes and continued to revel in the soil. Windbreaker, chap-stick, hoe, rake, gloves, earmuffs, I-pod, and boots were my weapons of choice. All was going well until my nose started running. You would know I forgot the kleenex. It was now lunchtime. I became sidetracked by crawfish and shrimp. Next was naptime and when I went outside to finish my gardening it was winter again. Curses foiled again. Maybe next week will be spring again. I think this is what is known as living in the moment.

The plant show is progressing on schedule. You still have time to sign up for a volunteer slot. Call Rusty 875-2635.

Congratulations to the new class on their overwhelming success. The veggie seminar was spectacular. Linda's lunch was incredible. Everyone had a great time.

April will be our plant swap meeting.

Starting seeds indoors is a perfect activity for this time of year. Tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants enjoy kitchen weather conditions better than garden conditions. Weeds are sprouting with a vengeance. Greens, onions, peas, and potatoes can be planted at this time. Neeps are still being harvested along with cabbage and broccoli.

Please keep our Master Gardeners in your thoughts and prayers. We have a couple that would appreciate our help.

thanks, aj

Lawn Care Calendar

By Rusty Batty

Happy New Year! I know...its March, but March is the beginning of the new lawn season. There are weeds to control, insects to look for, diseases to manage, fertilizing, mowing and the list goes on. All of the activities, done correctly and timely, will be steps to a healthy lawn. Use the calendar (below) follow these management tips beginning now (March) for a better lawn all year. Happy New Year, again!



Care Calendar for Warm-season Grasses

Management	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Comment
Fertilization													
Liming	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	According to soil test
Mowing													Throughout growing season
Watering (general)													As necessary, water deeply
Aerification													Coring is best
Dethatch	•••	•••	•••										May be necessary in Aug-Sep if overseeding
Weed Control													Broadleaf weeds
	•••												Crabgrass preemergence
	•••												Crabgrass postemergence
Insect Control													Identification is critical
Disease Control													Identification is critical
Overseeding													Perennial rye works best
Sodding													Avoid Oct and March
Seeding													Late Spring is best

recommended might be done





BACKYARD VEGETABLE GARDENING WORKSHOP

By Nan Balfour

On February 13, 2009, my fellow 2008 Master Gardeners and I had the pleasure of hosting the Backyard Vegetable Gardening seminar at the Greater Covington Center. With great enthusiasm from my class and great informational guidance by Rusty Batty, the event was a huge success. 168 people registered and 153 people showed for the day's events.

J.B. Anders of the LSUAgCenter started the day talking about the importance of getting soil samples prior to planting. From the number of questions being asked, it was obvious that J.B. was getting across the importance of laying the right foundation to successful crops.

Our own classmate, Pete Pericone, came to the rescue when the scheduled presenter became ill. Pete presented his class show and tell presentation on creating low-cost, effective earth boxes to grow vegetables. At the end of his talk, Pete was surrounded by many attendees who wanted to get a close-up look at his handiwork.

Linda Franzo presented the topic on growing heirloom plants in her typical lively and exuberant style. Everyone was treated to a taste of sunflower seed sprouts tossed in olive oil and kosher salt. Yum! Linda pulled double duty that day by also providing a delicious lunch of turkey or Cuban sandwich, pasta salad, zucchini chips with cucumber dip and a brownie through her Passionate Platter catering company.

Another 2008 Master Gardener graduate, Sharon Murphy, gave a very informational talk on what vegetable and herbs to plant in the spring. As a certified herbalist, Sharon shared her wealth of knowledge on the practical and medicinal uses of herbs.

The after lunch talks by speakers Dr. Tom Koske and Dr. Carl Motsenbocker, both with the LSUAgCenter, finished the seminar. They talked about new vegetable varieties and organic growing considerations, respectfully. From the questions and comments, they both kept the audience awake and interested after our delicious lunch.

It was obvious from the participation that St. Tammany Parish citizens are very interested in growing their own vegetables and herbs. Thanks to this joint effort by the Master Gardeners/LSUAgCenter, the participants now have the knowledge to get started.

Newer Home Vegetable Cultivars for 2009

Keeping up with the latest vegetable cultivars is about like keeping up with the latest pop hit. University research takes time and money, so cultivar evaluation is not always on top of things that the seed companies are promoting.

This is a list of home garden vegetable cultivars that are new for our VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE and not yet in print for 2009. The choices recommended in the guide are good to excellent, but these are the latest additions to that list as recommended by several universities in this southern region. They are also selections that are more commonly available through major home gardening seed suppliers.



New cultivars are not always better than the old, but they are new.

Snap Beans:	Valentino, Ambra, Caprice, Dusky, Grenable, Lynx, Nash, Shade
Pole Snap Beans:	Volunteer, State
Beets:	Scarlet Supreme
Broccoli:	Windsor, Patron, Triathlon, Greenbelt, Diplomat
Cabbage:	Golden Dynasty, Royal Vantage, Silver Dynasty
Cauliflower:	Freedom, Fremont, Graffiti (purple), Minuteman, Symphony
Collards:	Champion, Morris Heading, Top Bunch
Corn:	White Out se, Avalon se, Silver King se, Devotion sh, Xtra Tender 372 and 378 sh, Accelerator sh, GSS 966, Gold Queen, Passion sh
Cucumber:	Daytona, Stonewall
Pickles:	Eureka, Jackson, Sassy, Vlasstar
Eggplant:	Gretel AAS, Casper, Ghost Buster, Night Shadow, Rosita, Pingtung Long
Garlic:	German Extra Hardy
Mustard:	Red Giant
Lettuce:	Mighty Joe head; Grand Rapids, Tango and Salad Bowl leaf; Ideal cos; Adriana, Bennett, Ermosa and Nancy butterheads
Onions, green:	Emerald Isle, White Spear
Onions, bulb:	Century, Yellow Granex
Cilantro	Jantar, Santo
Pea, English	Novella II, Sparkle
Pea, So.:	Top Pick Brown Crowder, Top Pick Pinkeye
Pepper, bell	Declaration, Enterprise, Lafayette, Purple Bell; Tequila, Purple Beauty
Pepper, frying	Aruba
Pepper, hot	El Rey, Grande, Ixtapa, Mesilla, Nazas
Sweet Potato:	Bienville
Pumpkins, mini-small	Baby Boo, Bumpkin, Gooligan, Prankster, Trickster
Pumpkins, xlarge:	Mammoth Gold, Phantom, New Moon
Summer Squash	Medallion crookneck, Fortune and Lioness straight necks, the zucchinis of Cash Flow, Justice, Lynx and Leopard plus Green Tint Patty Pan
Winter Squash	Honey Bear AAS, Butternut Supreme
Tomatoes	BHN 640 or 669, Florida 47, Carolina Gold, Mountain Fresh Plus, Talladega, Marcelino cherry, Smarty grape, romas of BHN 410 and Picus
Watermelon	Juliette, Mardi Gras, Top Gun; seedless types- Gypsy, Imagination, Liberty, Matrix, Millennium

Spring Herb Festival

Tuesday, March 31, 2009

4 to 7 PM

Slidell Library Herb Garden

555 Robert Boulevard

A fun filled evening for the whole family
provided by
The Herb Committee of the St Tammany Parish Master Gardeners

Children's Activities

Stories about herbs and gardening
An Herbal Tea Party

Herbal Dips for Tasting

Dips using herbs including recipes

Make an Herbal Sachet

Supplies provided to make and take home a lovely scented sachet

Herb Gardening

How to grow herbs
demonstration and suggested spring herbs for our climate
Container gardens
Herb gardens in the ground

Herbs for sale

To volunteer to assist with this project contact

Judy Wood

jazzwood@charter.net

985-882-5353



PLANT SHOW UPDATE



STRUT YOUR STUFF

Master Gardeners,

Please let me know the number of plants and what kind of plants you have for the Master Gardener Booth at the Plant Sale. Label the plants with common names and indicate sun or shade. I used plastic knives and forks and a Sharpie to label mine.

Make sure you use a bleach solution to clean your pots. All the proceeds will be used for new books for the MG library at the AgCenter or for a new microphone system.

Let's show everyone just what Master Gardeners can do!!! Please e-mail me at tvkpam@bellsouth.net with your info or call 892-4445.

Thanks, Pam Keating

Everyone Welcome!

You are all welcome to submit articles for inclusion in the monthly newsletter. It can be about a gardening topic that you would like to share, a review/critique of a gardening event that you attended or a public garden that you visited. Just e-mail to: zuzumae@charter.net (Terry Farrar). Deadline for publication is the 25th of the month. Articles received after this date will be included in the next month's newsletter.

FUTURE MEETINGS

St. Tammany Master Gardener meetings are held at the LSU AgCenter Office in Covington and begin at 10:00 a.m. Be sure to wear your name badge to the meetings to be eligible for the door prize. The next Master Gardener meetings will be:

March 18

April 15

May 20

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