

**Home Grounds & Gardening Committee**  
**Minutes**  
**Tuesday, October 23, 2007**  
**Extension Meeting Room**

Meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m. with light refreshments being served. Those present were Jim Summers, Extension Agent, Linda Franks, Andy Dunn, Cindy Powell, Janice Bennett, & Robert Day.

Summers welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked each one to introduce themselves.

He then invited everyone to the 4-H Birthday Celebration being held at Camp Grant Walker on Saturday, October 27, 2007.

Summers read minutes from the last Home Grounds & Gardening Advisory Meeting.

Summers then discussed the situation statement for 2006.

The 2006 gross farm value of home vegetable gardens in Louisiana was estimated to be \$60.5 million. As with many commodities, home vegetable garden production in this post-hurricane year was difficult to evaluate.

Parish reports indicated 302,720 home gardens statewide, suggesting that garden interest was down 10% from last year. The reason this figure does not show a greater reduction in gardening is that many South Louisiana residents who gardened were displaced, but not removed from Louisiana.

Vegetable gardening is a way of extending the family food budget or freeing up some limited funds. Every parish reported home gardens.

LaSalle Parish was estimated to have 800 vegetable gardens in 2006. These were gardens of all types consisting of plants grown in containers to a large garden. Producer inquiries were concerning diseases, insects and weed control in all areas.

Homeowners continue to have problems with diseases and insects affecting lawns, shrubs in the landscape and trees. Diseases appear to be worse in tomatoes, cucurbits and lawns.

Brown patch related diseases seem to be the most troublesome problem in lawn grasses.

In hot dry weather, chinch bugs are a problem.

Fire ants are a persistent problem in lawns, gardens of all type and home landscapes.

Summers asked members if they knew of any problems that needed to be addressed concerning gardens and lawns. Last year an ant product called "Over & Out" was mentioned. Janice Bennett said she has used the product for several years and it has seemed to help, however, ants seem to return after a period of time. She said broadcasting had to be done regularly with this product.

Summers said that there might be a possibility of having some test plots done for ant control.

Several people said they had Dogwood trees that were looking distressed, not really knowing if it might be blight or a disease of some kind attacking the trees.

Cindy Powell spoke of problems and control of Chinese tallow trees in her yard.

Summers asked for suggestions as to what programs he could offer the public. Lawn Care, Lawn Equipment Maintenance, Dogwoods & other Ornamentals were suggestions members made that they thought would be of interest to the public.

Nominations were made for Chairman of the committee. Linda Franks nominated Cindy Powell to serve as Chairman another year. Bobby Day seconded motion. Committee elected Cindy Powell to serve as Chairman. Committee elected Linda Franks to serve as secretary of committee.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.