



THE YOLO GARDENER

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION BY THE U.C. YOLO COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS
Spring 2008

Look It Up on the IPM Web Site

Barbara Ohlendorf, Yolo County Master Gardener

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is all about managing pest problems in safe, ecologically sound ways. The first step of any IPM approach is to correctly identify the pest. Once you know what the pest is, you can plan how and when to strike back.

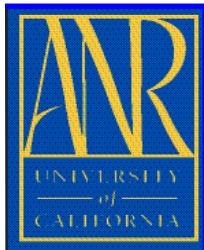
Sounds simple? Perhaps for someone who is trained, but what about gardeners who have no training? How can they be expected to know the difference between a good bug and a bad bug? Well, it is now a whole lot easier with the incredible website developed by the University of California's Statewide IPM Program.

IPM's Website provides a wealth of information about major pest problems and how to tackle them with environmentally friendly methods. Chocked full of color photos, illustrations, and easy-to-find information, the web site is a major source of pest management information for the Master Gardeners in the state of California; it is also available to anyone at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu.

When you get to the IPM home page, select the very first option called, "Home, gardens, landscapes, and turf (including Pest Notes). Common trees, shrubs, ornamentals, vegetables, fruits, and flowers are listed along with their major pest problems.

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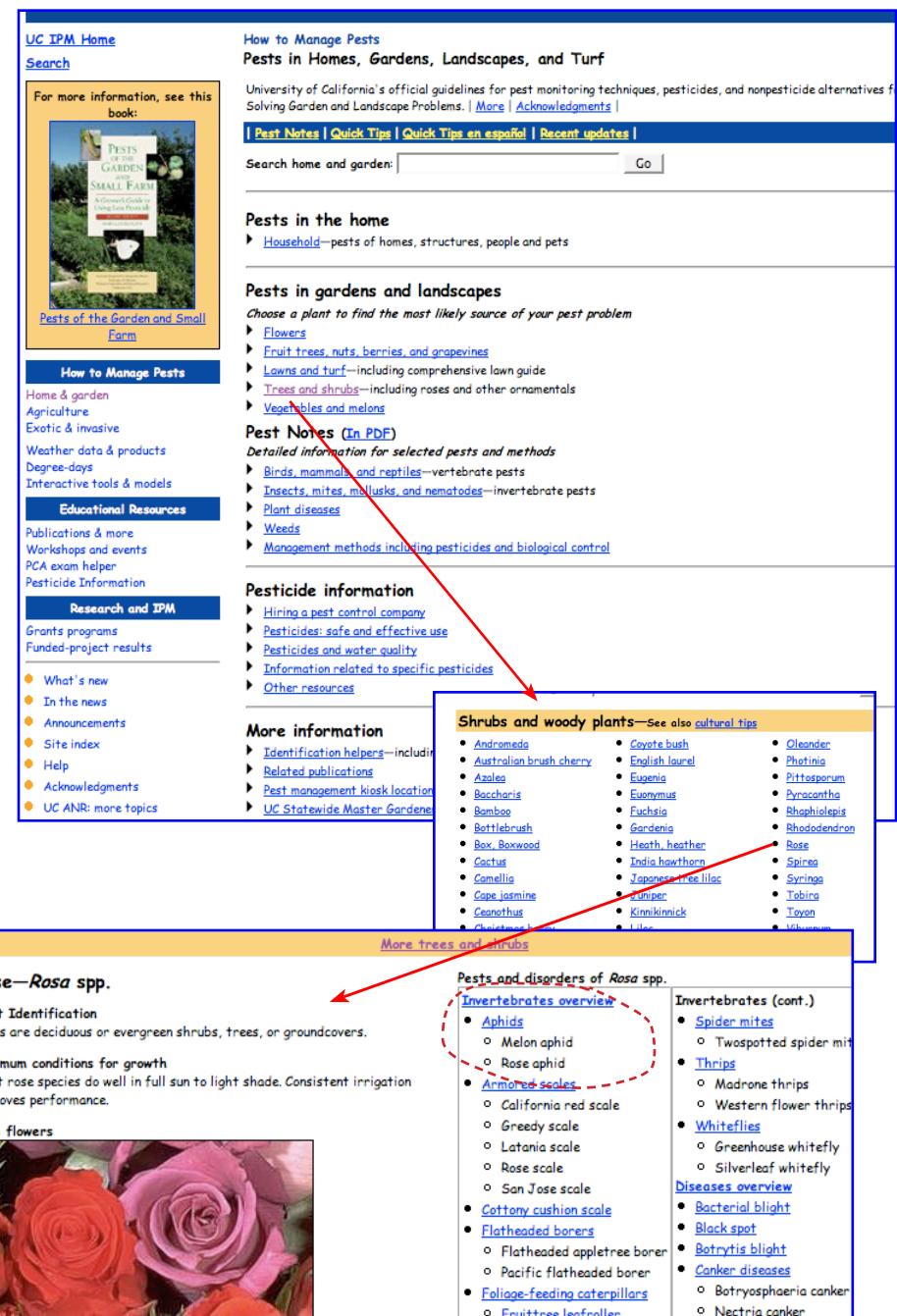
The very first item on the page is a search function. If you know what your problem is (for example, aphids on roses) you could type in “aphids”, “roses”, or “aphids roses.” But if you don’t know what those little, crawly bugs are on your roses, go down to the section called “Pests in gardens and landscapes,” and click on “Trees and shrubs.”

In the first section on that page, “Shrubby and woody plants,” you will find a link for “rose.” If you select that, you will see a menu of invertebrate (insects, mites, nematode) pests, diseases, environmental disorders (frost, mineral deficiencies, poor water management), weeds, and vertebrate pests. Because you are fairly certain that what you are looking at is an insect, clicking on the very first item in the menu, “Invertebrates overview,” will help you narrow down your search.

While you’re at it, check out some of the other sections on the “Home Garden, Landscape and Turf” page. Under “Lawns and turf,” for example, you will find a wealth of information on maintaining a healthy lawn. Not only can you find out the best types of lawn grasses for your area, but you can learn everything you need to know about how to successfully grow a lawn there as well.

If you go to any of the fruit, nut, or vegetable crops, not only can you find out about pest problems, you will discover all kinds of cultural information on how to successfully grow the plant. You can also find a section on managing common household pests and other pest problems (ants, clothes moths, poison oak, cockroaches, rats, mice, Lyme disease -- almost 150 pest related problems in all!)

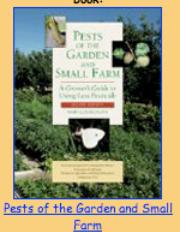
Scrolling down on the main menu reveals information on using pesticides responsibly as well as links to photo galleries of natural enemies and common weeds. And these are just some of the highlights of what is available. So the next time you see something wrong with your roses or something strange on your tomatoes, and you are not able to visit your friendly Master Gardener at the Farmer’s Market, give the IPM website a try. 



UC IPM Home

Search

For more information, see this book:



How to Manage Pests
Pests in Homes, Gardens, Landscapes, and Turf

University of California's official guidelines for pest monitoring techniques, pesticides, and nonpesticide alternatives for Solving Garden and Landscape Problems. | More | Acknowledgments |

| Pest Notes | Quick Tips | Quick Tips en español | Recent updates |

Search home and garden: Go

Pests in the home

- Household—pests of homes, structures, people and pets

Pests in gardens and landscapes

Choose a plant to find the most likely source of your pest problem

- Flowers
- Fruit trees, nuts, berries, and grapevines
- Lawns and turf—including comprehensive lawn guide
- Trees and shrubs—including roses and other ornamentals
- Vegetables and melons

Pest Notes (In PDF)

Detailed information for selected pests and methods

- Birds, mammals, and reptiles—vertebrate pests
- Insects, mites, mollusks, and nematodes—invertebrate pests
- Plant diseases
- Weeds
- Management methods including pesticides and biological control

Pesticide information

- Hiring a pest control company
- Pesticides: safe and effective use
- Pesticides and water quality
- Information related to specific pesticides
- Other resources

More information

- Identification helpers—including
- Related publications
- Pest management kiosk location
- UC Statewide Master Gardener

Shrubs and woody plants—See also cultural tips

• Andromeda	• Coyote bush	• Oleander
• Australian brush cherry	• English laurel	• Photinia
• Azalea	• Eugenia	• Pittosporum
• Baccharis	• Euonymus	• Pyracantha
• Bamboo	• Fuchsia	• Raphiolepis
• Bottlebrush	• Gordenia	• Rhododendron
• Box, Boxwood	• Heath, heather	• Rose
• Cactus	• India hawthorn	• Spirea
• Camellia	• Japanese tree lilac	• Syringa
• Cape jasmine	• Juniper	• Tilia
• Ceanothus	• Kimkinnick	• Toyon
• Chaste tree	• Lilac	• Viburnum

Rose—Rosa spp.

Plant Identification

Roses are deciduous or evergreen shrubs, trees, or groundcovers.

Optimum conditions for growth

Most rose species do well in full sun to light shade. Consistent irrigation improves performance.

Rose flowers



Pests and disorders of Rosa spp.

Invertebrates overview

- Aphids
 - Melon aphid
 - Rose aphid
- Armored scales
 - California red scale
 - Greedy scale
 - Latania scale
 - Rose scale
 - San Jose scale
- Cottony cushion scale
- Flatheaded borers
 - Flatheaded appletree borer
 - Pacific flatheaded borer
- Foliage-feeding caterpillars
 - Fruittree leafroller

Invertebrates (cont.)

- Spider mites
 - Twospotted spider mite
- Thrips
 - Madrone thrips
 - Western flower thrips
- Whiteflies
 - Greenhouse whitefly
 - Silverleaf whitefly

Diseases overview

- Bacterial blight
- Black spot
- Botrytis blight
- Canker diseases
 - Botryosphaeria canker
 - Nectria canker

Art in Gardening

What do spade and paintbrush have in common?

by Jan Bower, Yolo County Master Gardener

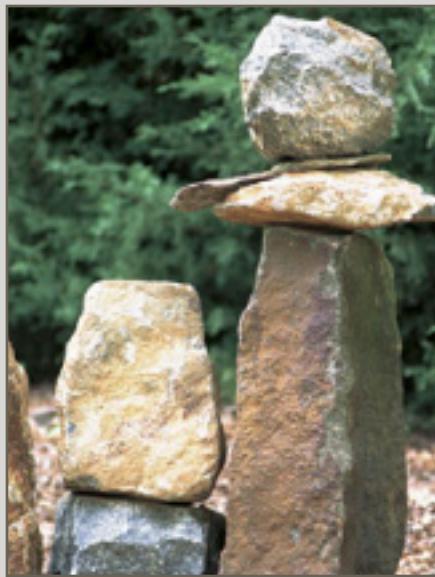
The building blocks of art include color, form, line, shape, space, texture and value. Widely known as the Elements of Art, they are organized and manipulated by artists to establish impressions or moods in their paintings with which viewers can identify.

The Elements of Art also exist in gardening, and one of the main sources of inspiration for landscape gardening is landscape painting. For example, the gardener can plant flowers with an explosion of color, just two colors or different shades or hues of one color. Red, yellow and orange flowers make a garden seem warm, exciting, small, cozy and close, while blue and purple flowers create a cool, relaxing and serene mood as well as a perspective of distance. In both oil painting on canvas and gardening composition, green, white and shades of gray serve as background and contrast for features of more sensory interest. The color wheel can be used to pair plants that look stellar side-by-side, considering their bloom and foliage colors. A limited color palette can be compensated for by the use of a variety of textures from delicate and fine to coarse and bold. The way light is reflected off a surface and absorbed to form shade and shadow is also considered in color selection in gardening, as it is in painting.

The similarities between painting and garden design are also striking. The gardener, like an artist, plans and sketches a still-life picture or map of the garden as a whole before even taking out the first garden tool or buying the first seed or plant. A list is made of everything to be included in the garden, and the garden divided into various shapes and spaces to accommodate different plant themes. Tall plants form boundaries. Smaller plants make good borders and

ground cover along meandering paths that guide the foot and eye to spaces filled with colors and textures, which are carefully chosen to create floral vignettes and vistas. Evergreen and deciduous shrubs and trees create the garden's structure and a sense of permanence.

Plants are placed in straight or diagonal lines to create coherent patterns through the repetition of these lines. Scale is also important so that everything fits together well. An example of the use of patterns in art are California artist Wayne Thiebaud's famous paintings of cakes, slices of pie and sandwiches, which he painted to scale in repetitive rows with realistic colors that looked good enough to eat.



Artfully placed rocks in a garden

Gardens are often embellished with ornaments, such as bird and frog statuary, artistic groupings of rocks, urns and pots, ponds, fountains, murals and benches. These art items serve as focal

points in gardens and are usually placed to complement or harmonize with the color, texture, shape and size of the surrounding plants. Various materials, such as wood, stone, marble, tile and ceramics, are also used for artistic effect in the garden, contributing to its evocation of mood and fantasy. Bonsai and topiaries are living sculptures and often compared with painters' creations. Artists work with oil colors, marble and metal; bonsai and topiary artists work with wood, bark, leaves and color. Here the observer sees beauty in three-dimensional form and geometric or organic shapes.

It can be said that everyone who creates a garden is building a work of art, using many of the same compositional elements a painter employs on canvas to express a theme, mood or aesthetic value. 

Aphids

Peggy Smith, Yolo County Master Gardener

It's spring and our roses' vibrant green shoots and buds, harbingers of summer blooms, seem to be covered overnight by myriads of tiny, slow-moving insects. These little critters are known as aphids. But why are there so many and what do we do?

Aphids are defined as small, soft-bodied insects that suck plant juices. As they feed, they secrete a sticky clear liquid known as honeydew, which lands on plant parts underneath their feeding sites. Often a black sooty mold grows on the surface of the honeydew.

In addition to looking ugly it can limit the photosynthesis of the plant. As they grow, aphid cast their old skins, which can stick to the leaves and be cosmetically unsightly. Some aphids also carry and transmit viral plant diseases when they feed; this can be a particular problem with some vegetable plants and ornamentals.

The two hundred species of aphids come in many colors and are often specific to a particular host e.g. the yellow aphid is specific to the oleander. If an aphid is host-specific, it will not feed on a different species of plant; many of these aphids spend their entire life cycle on one type of plant. In fall they lay eggs that over-winter on the plant.

Other aphid species are polyphagous (move through a variety of hosts). These aphids tend to feed and reproduce all year, and in regions of mild winters do not have a dormant stage. In ideal spring weather conditions, a complete generation of aphids can develop in two weeks. As the temperature becomes more extreme in the summer, the reproductive cycle slows down. Aphids have the ability to reproduce without mating, and many species only mate in fall before they lay the over-wintering eggs.



Aphids

<http://ipm.ucdavis.edu/>



Photo by Peggy Smith

Aphids on squash blossom in Davis' Central Park.

Should we be concerned by an aphid infestation?



Photo by Patt Tauer Pavao

Aphids on a rosebud

Management of aphids on an established tree or woody perennial: An established plant or tree will probably handle the infestation with no significant damage or set back. The cosmetic effects of an aphid infestation are often of more concern. The honeydew produced by the aphids attracts ants, allows black sooty mold to develop and is of great nuisance value if you happen to park under a hackberry tree that is dripping honeydew from a heavy infestation.

Management of aphids on trees and woody shrubs: If the aphid is one that over-winters as an egg on the plant, a dormant spray of a light oil such as Neem oil will help in the control of the over wintering eggs. Ant trails on trunks and branches are often an indicator of an aphid infestation as ants feed on the honeydew and tend to chase away aphid predators. The use of sticky barriers on the trunks or branches can reduce the ant activity. A direct

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hose spray will dislodge many aphids, but this is only useful for shrubs and small trees that can be easily reached with a spray of water. Selected pruning will remove heavily infested parts. Aphids are attracted to new growth so by not over fertilizing (slow release fertilizer is preferable) or over watering, the shrub or tree will not be over stimulated to produce excess new growth.



14. Sharpenie IPM Project
© 2000 Regents, University of California

Management of aphids on ornamentals: If each new shoot or bud is covered with aphids, selective pruning is not a good option because it will remove many potential blooms. Check early in the day and if aphids are present, use a direct hose spray of water to remove large numbers of aphids and their cast skins. Most infestations on ornamentals can be controlled in this way. Extensive infestations can be treated with a spray of insecticidal soap; only treat the actual infestation and not the entire plant. After spraying with water or insecticidal soap, beneficial insects such as lady beetles or soldier (leatherback) beetles may move in to help control the remaining aphids. Using an insecticide more toxic than insecticidal soap for the treatment of aphids is counterproductive because it will also kill the beneficial insects.

Ants herding aphids
<http://ipm.ucdavis.edu/>

Beneficial insects: Lady beetle adults and larvae, soldier (leatherback) beetles, lacewing and syrphid fly larvae will all consume aphids. There is also a small parasitic wasp that lays its eggs in aphids. After the parasitic larvae pupate they chew a hole in the aphid and emerge, leaving behind the mummified, tan or black remains of the aphid. Nectar-producing flowers will attract many of the beneficials such as adult lacewings, parasitic wasps and syrphid flies. Some adult beneficial insects, such as the lacewing, are also attracted by and feed on the honeydew. Another natural control, is a fungus that is active in humid weather and is lethal to the aphids.

The overall approach to controlling aphids is to make sure your problem is aphids, use water or insecticidal soap sprays, selectively prune, attract beneficial insects, fertilize conservatively, and water adequately. ☺

Questions about your garden? We'd love to help!

Master Gardener Hotline..... (530) 666-8737

Our message centers will take your questions and information. Please leave your name, address, phone number and a description of your problem. A Master Gardener will research your problem and return your call.

E-Mail..... mgyolo@ucdavis.edu

Drop In..... Tuesday & Friday, 9-11 a.m.
70 Cottonwood St.
Woodland, CA 95695

The Westfield Village Elementary School Community Garden

Diane Rake, Yolo County Master Gardener



photo by Steve Radosevich

Sister Cora (center) helps to plant the first fruit trees in the new Westfield School community garden.

West Sacramento is a melting pot of immigrants who bring with them their gardening traditions. The Hmong and Mien people are especially clever at vegetable gardening, as are Hispanic immigrants.

All they need is a place to exercise their knowledge. Providing such a place for them to get started is FISH (Families in Self Help). FISH is overseen by Sister Cora, a tireless and dedicated Nun on a mission to assist refugee/immigrant families by helping them move from public assistance to self-sufficiency.

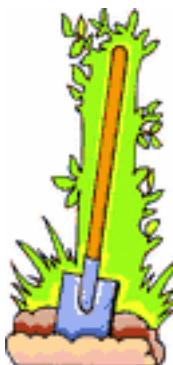
When it was determined that the existing community garden located at Evergreen Elementary School in West Sacramento was to be closed, a replacement garden was needed. Most immigrants do not drive so the new location had to be within walking distance of Evergreen School. Sister Cora was aware of the community garden at Westfield Village Elementary School, located about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the Evergreen garden. This garden has been in existence for about 10 years, but of late, fewer families were taking advantage of it.

In early September, Sister Cora and I had an initial meeting with the Principal of the Westfield Village Elementary School, Joaquin Hagedorn to reevaluate the Westfield School garden's potential. Principal Hagedorn escorted us back to the community garden, which is located directly behind the school. It was overgrown, filled with weeds, and in desperate need of cleaning up. However, we could see the garden's potential. That, plus its location and size, made it a viable solution to the Evergreen garden closure.

A second meeting took place in late October. This meeting was attended by Mario Moratorio, University of California, Cooperative Extension Urban Horticulture Advisor (Mario is also on the FISH Board of Directors), Sister Cora, Principal Hagedorn, a few concerned parents, and me. The purpose of that meeting was to finalize plans to re-open the garden and to get the FISH families involved in tending it.

After that meeting, we were able to locate a list of families who currently use the Westfield garden. Those families will be contacted and will be asked to help with the clean up. Sister Cora was able to garner the assistance of the West Sacramento Parks and Recreation Department for help in loading and hauling out a huge pile of debris collected in the garden. While these two events might not seem very significant because wheels often turn slowly, it felt like a huge accomplishment to have them happen in rapid succession.

Once the debris is hauled away, the families will be able to work the soil after Sister Cora allocates 10' x 10' plots. The vegetables grown will be used by the families to improve their diet and save money. Any extra vegetables will be provided to the school cafeteria for their use. 



Plan a Garden—Then Plant It

Willa Pettygrove, Yolo County Master Gardener

“Make your head save your heels.” My Mom’s advice is useful in many situations, and an apt way to summarize some of the best lessons from Dr. Robert Norris, a UCD Emeritus Professor and famous vegetable gardener. Making the right choices, plans, and decisions saves so much work in the long run when growing vegetables. Here are some of my favorite Dr. Norris’ lessons.

“If you don’t enjoy it, don’t do it.” The corollary would be *“make the first year vegetable garden small.”* With Community Supported Agriculture, farmers markets, and other sources for fresh local produce, vegetable gardening doesn’t have to produce all your food. It can be fun. If you are new to gardening, don’t set yourself up for failure by making overly ambitious plans.

When to plant: Follow the chart of recommended planting dates (you should be able to find one at a garden center, Master Gardener table, or at <http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/files/filelibrary/2557/8232.pdf>). Gardeners who think they can fool Mother Nature often ignore the importance of timing. She is no fool! If it is too late to plant seeds, try transplants; if too late for transplants, wait until next year. Failure to meet deadlines with vegetables can result in bolting plants and other stress symptoms.

Take care of the soil: Avoid compacting the soil by not walking on planting beds. In my experience this is as important as careful cultivation and composting. This means making a diagram of your garden, and paying attention to it.

Record keeping: Write stuff down and go back and read it. So my first diary entry was, “MG lecture with Dr. Norris was an inspiration!...Warm weather crops: Most successful was Waltham Butternut...” One thing I manage to consistently record is a diagram of my whole plot. It helps me remember what went where so I avoid replanting the same vegetable in the same area, which might promote plant diseases.



Dr. Robert Norris teaching about gardening in his own garden in Davis.

photo by Jim Fowler

Know your varieties, and try something new: I had avoided growing English peas because shelling them seemed like work, but I tried planting them based on Dr. Norris’ recommendation. Wow! The taste is incomparable. Alderman is a good variety because it does well in Yolo County; it forms up to 10 peas per pod, so even shelling them isn’t much trouble. Compare notes with other gardeners and be open to suggestions. Share what you have learned.

Black plastic mulch gives a jump start to early spring planting: Every winter I get the flu (or something) and by the time I get to the garden there is a forest of weeds and heavy, soggy soil. Not any more! Major digging and cleanup is done in fall before rains and then the soil is covered with plastic. In spring, the soil is ready to go with minimum work.

Planning is ongoing, and you can start at any time of the year. Try some of these tips in your garden now, and have fun. ☺

Spring Tomato Fever Hits Yolo County

Steve Radosevich, Yolo County Master Gardener

Just when you start believing that you successfully snuck through the cold, wet dreary months dodging colds, flu, and other maladies, the dreaded spring tomato fever gets you again. Unexplained excitability, uncontrolled vibrant red and yellow flashbacks, surprise salivations - all warn you that spring tomato fever is here. Worst of all, the fever will not subside until you get those plants in the ground and are well on your way to mid-summer juicy-sliced tomatoes and fresh salsa cruda.

Yes, Yolo County tomato fever has struck. Big-time growers are gearing up to plant over 40,000 acres of machine-harvested processing tomatoes, the County's largest cash crop. Mid-size growers are putting in their rich selections of heirloom and modern hybrids that we later enjoy at our great local farmers markets and roadside produce stands. Home and community gardeners are pondering variety selection and determining how many plants they can squeeze into their postage stamp-sized plots this spring.



Photo by Albert Crepeau

Yolo County Master Gardeners prepare tomatoes for tasting at the Woodland Farmers' Market

In an effort to help gardeners and consumers compare the many tomato varieties that are locally available, Yolo County Master Gardeners have conducted tomato "tastings" at the Woodland Farmer's Market the

past three summers. At each of these tastings, the public was invited to taste, score, and comment on as many as 25 heirloom and contemporary hybrid varieties grown mainly by farmers selling at the market. Each year these scores were tabulated, and the top five tasting varieties announced at the market the following week.

The following 14 varieties (listed alphabetically) are the top five tasting tomatoes selected from each of

these past three years:

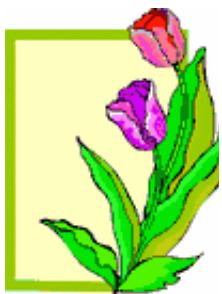
**The People's Choice!
Top Tasting Tomatoes**

- Big Rainbow
- Black Krim
- Black Prince
- Brandywine
- Celebrity
- Druzba
- Early Girl (selected twice)
- Juliet
- Lemon Boy
- Pineapple
- Pink Brandywine
- Shady Lady
- Sungold
- Sweet Tangerine.

Fortunately, you'll find some of these varieties readily available at your local nursery, and a visit to the Davis Farmers Market in March or April should reward you with plants of some additional varieties.

However some of these varieties, and hundreds of others, may be available only as seeds that you will have to start yourself next year about eight weeks before spring planting. A web search for "heirloom tomatoes" will get you in touch with these seed companies, who have descriptions of the varieties and instructions on how to start your own seeds on their Web pages.

For those tomatoes you don't get around to growing yourself, expand your appreciation of this most popular vegetable by tasting some new varieties from your local farmer's markets this summer. Also join us for our free fourth annual tomato tasting at the Woodland Farmer's Market on Saturday, August 23rd. ☺



Spring Gardening Tips

Linda Parsons, Yolo County Master Gardener

Each spring, I look about my garden with a sense of optimism. Signs of new growth, spring blossoms and swelling buds are promises that my garden will awaken soon.

SPRING CLEANING

Although March brings breezes loud and blustery, this is the time to get out into the garden for spring-cleaning.

- Examine trees and shrubs for winter damage. Prune damaged foliage and branches.
- If you haven't pruned your roses and fruit trees, this is the last month to ready them for their spring bloom.
- Do not prune early flowering rhododendrons, magnolias, camellias, azaleas, viburnum and forsythia. It is best to prune them after the blossoms are spent or wait until early fall.
- Apply the final application of dormant spray to all fruit trees before the buds swell. Roses need to be sprayed to prevent over-wintering insects and fungal spores.
- Weeds are starting to sprout, so take care of them before they take over.
- Once your spring bulbs have finished blooming, dead head (remove blossom ends), however, don't remove the leaves until they turn yellow. This will help the bulbs store energy for next spring's bloom. If they are unsightly, braid them or fold them over and secure with twine, until you remove them in late spring.

FERTILIZING, COMPOSTING AND MULCHING

Your plants are hungry. Begin to lightly cultivate your perennial garden, being careful not to dig too close to your plants. Loosen the soil as soon as it is not too wet to work.

- Add soil amendments, such as compost, peat moss and organic fertilizer.
- Roses and fruit trees need special attention now. In addition to organic rose food and soil amendments, I add a cup of alfalfa pellets and two tablespoons of Epsom salt to each rose plant. These help the rose to produce more basal breaks (new growth) and more chlorophyll.
- Be sure to use fertilizer that is recommended for each plant type. In particular, too much nitrogen will make the plant grow too quickly, producing growth which will not be as sturdy and which is more susceptible to sucking insects.
- Resume your feeding schedule for your lawn and fruit trees.
- Fertilize your spring blooming plants, such as camellias and azaleas after they bloom and repeat for the next three months.
- Fertilize your houseplants.
- Mulch your garden to a depth of 3 inches. The reward will be fewer weeds and less watering in the months ahead.

PLANTING

Your perennial plants need attention now.

- Remove any old growth.
- Dig and divide crowded perennial plants.

If you want early blooming annuals,

- plant candytuft, pansies, violas, dianthus, Iceland poppies and primroses.

If you are thinking of planting or replacing a shrub, this is the best time.

- Visit your local nursery, the UC Davis Arboretum plant sale (March 15), or consult garden catalogs or books to find the perfect plant. Be sure that the plant you purchase will thrive in the garden area you have selected. Most shrubs need little care if they are thoughtfully selected.



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- Summer blooming bulbs, corms, tubers can be planted now. Some colorful choices are cannas, begonias, lilies, and dahlias.
- If you are looking for shade plants, astilbe, columbine, coral bells, dicentra, foxglove, hostas, nepeta, pulmonaria and ferns are good choices.
- For drought tolerant and sunny location plants, consider one of the popular grass plants such as Russian Sage, Muhlenbergia and Rabbits Tale Grass.
- After you have completed your planting, be sure to lightly fertilize your plants and mulch well. Remember that plants do better if they are planted at or slightly above grade.
- If you are planning to grow your vegetables from seed, begin your seedlings indoors under lights. By late April or early May you can harden off and plant the seedlings in your vegetable garden. The soil temperature needs to be 50 degrees Fahrenheit before you set out your young plants.



DISEASE AND PEST CONTROL

- If you have applied your dormant oil and fungicide, your plants will be off to a good start.
- Periodically check plants, especially roses, for signs of black spot, rust and mildew. These often appear first on the interior or lower parts of the plant. If the spring is especially rainy, you will need to be more vigilant and spray more often.
- While you are checking for disease, note whether slugs, snails and earwigs are munching on your plants. As the weather warms, aphids, mites, thrips and scale creep into your garden. These pests are usually kept in check by a variety of beneficial insects such as lacewings, mantises, ground beetles, tachinid and robber flies.
- Consult <http://ipm.ucdavis.edu/> for excellent information on controlling pests and diseases.

LAWN CARE

- Lawn is often the forgotten plant and one of the most neglected plants in the garden. Lawn does surprisingly well if given a modicum of care. Most importantly, it needs to be fed and watered regularly.
- Check your irrigation system and be sure that the lawn is getting the proper amount of water. The amount will gradually need to be increased as the days become longer and warmer.
- You will also need to raise the mower blade to a height of 3 inches, as spring gives way to summer.
- Re-seed thin spots in your lawn and begin your fertilizing and mowing schedule in March.
- While it is easier to use commercial fertilizer, applying a light topcoat of compost to your lawn will greatly benefit your lawn's growth and health.

FINAL SPRING TOUCHES

- Paint the lower trunks of young trees with water thinned white latex paint to prevent sunburn and borer problems.
- Stake tall growing perennials and vegetables before they begin to bend over in late spring.
 - In late spring, thin fruit trees, leaving 4 to 5 inches between each fruit. This will help the remaining fruit to mature properly and keep the branches from being over-weighted and splitting.
 - Deadhead spent flowers to assure a long blooming season in your garden.
 - Plant containers with your favorite annuals and herbs.
 - Clean and re-stock bird feeders. Sharpen and maintain garden tools.
 - Hang the hammock. Make some lemonade and try out the hammock. Re-test it frequently throughout the spring and summer to make sure it remains in perfect working order!



ASK URSULA



Dear Ursula,

With spring just around the corner, I am thinking of planting impatiens on a shady slope in my garden. How do I take care of them?

There are hundreds of species of impatiens, but the most popular ones in our area are New Guinea hybrids and Impatiens walleriana, also called "busy Lizzie." New Guinea hybrids are striking plants that can be upright or spreading and look great in pots or as color spots in your shade garden. Leaves are larger than Impatiens walleriana and are often variegated with cream or red; flowers are larger but not as dense. There are also semi-double and double impatiens whose flowers resemble rose buds. These varieties look best in pots and hanging baskets where they can show off their flowers from close up. Busy Lizzie is my choice for mass plantings. If you have time, you can start your plants from seeds. When sowing them, be sure you do not cover them; they need plenty of light to sprout.



Impatiens require little care other than rich well drained soil and some humidity. Before you plant incorporate lots of compost and make sure the area drains well. During hot weather deep water often and give them a light overhead sprinkling. Impatiens have few diseases and are not bothered by most pests, except snails. If the plants get leggy pinch them to encourage bushy growth. The removed material can be cut below nodes and rooted in water. These cuttings should be placed in bright indirect light and in no time you will have more little plants to put in your garden. Impatiens will bloom all summer and into late fall. If you touch the seed capsules, they will explode, sending the seeds on their merry way, often reseeding themselves for next years crop!



Dear Ursula,

I love wisteria and would like to have one; however, I know these plants can be very vigorous. My trellis is not too large. What care and pruning tips do I need before I plant this beautiful vine?



Wisteria is a fast-growing deciduous vine. If you want a big flower show in spring, choose a Chinese variety; it is less fragrant, but it blooms before it leafs out, and all the flowers open at once. Japanese wisteria is the most fragrant, but the flower clusters open gradually, beginning at the base and gradually to the tip; blooming occurs simultaneous with leaf-out, which can partially obscure the flowers. Young nursery plants will require three to four years of growth before they bloom.

Plant your young wisteria vine in the spring, when plants are available in nurseries. Fertilize young plants with low nitrogen fertilizer; mature plants do not require feeding. If the plant fails to bloom after several years, root prune by cutting a circle with a flat-edged spade four feet in diameter around the trunk, cutting through any roots you encounter, to at least one foot in depth.

Wisteria can outgrow its bounds and latch onto gutters and shingles. It can literally pull apart all but the strongest trellis! If you want to enjoy your wisteria, regular pruning is a must. Pruning not only keeps the vine contained but also will promote next year's blooms. To prune, cut long stringy shoots to six buds (these are larger and rounder than leaf buds) in summer. Then shorten to three buds in winter. Also cut off any side shoots from the main trunk that develop below the level of the trellis. You also can train wisteria as a tree but you will need very heavy staking until a sturdy trunk has developed.

**HAPPY GARDENING!
URSULA**

Ask Ursula features gardening advice from our own Ursula Hartmann, Yolo County Lifetime Master Gardener. Send any questions for Ursula that you may have to Thelma Lee Gross at tleeegz@dcn.org

HOW TO Spring Gardening Classes

The Yolo County UC Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners will present seven 25 minute “**how to**” classes at its Spring Gardening Festival on March 29, 9am-12 noon at Woodland Community College Orchard, 2300 E. Gibson Rd., Woodland

- Building & Maintaining Healthy Soil 9am & 10:45 am
- Fruit Bush Culture 9 am & 10:45 am
- Planting Spring Vegetable Gardens 9:30 am & 11:15 am
- Drought Tolerant Gardening & Design 9:30 am
- Cover Crops for Healthy Gardens 10 am & 11:45 am
- Rose Disease Detection & Treatment 10 am & 11:45 am
- How to Select Qualified Tree Care Professionals 11:15 am

Class reservations are not necessary, but an RSVP to Cooperative Extension (530-666-8143) is requested in case of class cancellation.

Other classes of interest this Spring include:

March 15th & 16th Worm Composting, Organic Vegetable Gardening, cut Flowers That Do Well in Davis, & Information Booth at the Davis Green Home & Garden Show – ARC Pavilion, UC Davis campus.

March 22nd Composting, 10:00 a.m. - Noon at Woodland Community College

April 5th Vegetable Planting and Designing and Installing Drip Irrigation, 9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. at Davis Central Park Garden

April 12th Composting, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at Woodland Community College

May 10th Summer Pruning of Fruit trees and Fruit Bush Culture - 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at Woodland Community College

May 10th All About Roses, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Woodland Library, Leake Room (\$5.00 charge; more info on next page)

May 17th The Benefits of Mulch, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. at Davis Central Park Garden

May 17th Plants to Attract Beneficial Insects to Your Garden, 10:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. at Davis Central Park Garden

*Have the quarterly **Yolo Gardener** delivered to you by mail (\$10.00 for four issues to cover the cost of printing and postage) by filling out the form below*

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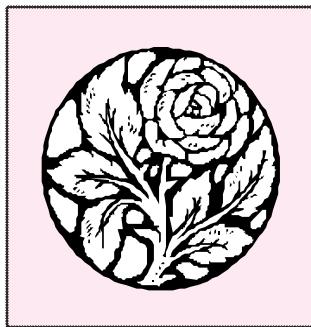
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Or, download it for free from <http://ceyolo.ucdavis.edu/newsletterfiles/newsletter1460.htm>

From Woodland Library Rose Club
Yolo County Master Gardeners

By Betty Bigelow
co-chair, "All About Roses"

All About Roses



Immerse yourself in an afternoon of rose education and fun! "All About Roses" is an afternoon filled with rose gardening education, garden related venders, books and two powerful speakers, both of which are avid rose gardeners and renowned authors.

This spring event is sponsored by the Woodland Library Rose Club and the Yolo County Master Gardeners. Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 10th, 1 to 5 PM. The event will be held at the Woodland Public Library. Venues will be in the Leake Room, and also in the Patio and the Rose Gardens located at 250 First Street, Woodland. A donation of \$5.00 requested for admission.

Lance Walheim is scheduled to speak at 1:30PM. on "A Fresh Look at Roses for the Sacramento Valley" Lance Walheim graduated from the University of California at Berkeley and has authored or contributed to over thirty gardening books including *Sunset*, *Ortho* and *HP* books. He was staff editor at *Sunset Magazine* for five years and still contributes to the magazine as a free lance writer. He also served as contributing editor to the 10th through the 13th editions

of *Sunset Western Garden Books*. He has authored several garden books published by IDG Books. Lance is currently a Garden Expert for Bayer Advanced Lawn and Garden Products and appears regularly on national TV and radio shows.

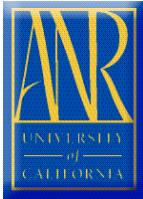
Carolyn Parker speaks at 3 PM. on "R is for Rose." Carolyn Parker transformed herself from a New York fashion designer to a suburban gardener. The transition of grooming women in colorful silks to growing rose blooms came easily. Inspired by the rose, its color and bloom led Carolyn to discover rose gardening and rose photography. She used her presentation of rose photographs in the same manner she had introduced buyers to a fashion collection.

Her first book was *The Poetry of Roses* (1995). Her love for roses is found in her present business "Rose Place Garden Design". Her latest book is *R is for Rose...an elegant book featuring the entire alphabet in roses that grow in her own garden*. The book contains stories, histories, rose photographs, practical tips on gardening and flower arranging and places a focus on how unique one rose is from another.



Photo by Patt Tauzer Pavao

You are invited to join us for this special time "All About Roses." Space is limited so call early for further information or ticket donations. You can reach Betty at 530-662-6277.



U.C. Cooperative Extension
Yolo County Master Gardeners
70 Cottonwood Street
Woodland, CA 95695



The Yolo Gardener

Spring 2008

Send a Letter

email: mgyolo@ucdavis.edu

Please put: *Yolo Gardener* in the subject line

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Yolo County Master Gardeners



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This newsletter is a quarterly publication of the University of California Master Gardener Program of Yolo County and is freely distributed to County residents. It is available through the internet for free download:

<http://ceyolo.ucdavis.edu/newsletter.htm>

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