



# THE YOLO GARDENER

Spring 2022

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION BY THE UCCE, MASTER GARDENERS OF YOLO COUNTY

## UCCE Master Gardeners – Reaching Out to the Community During a Pandemic

*Michael Kluk, UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County*

The UCCE Master Gardeners of Yolo County are part of the University of California’s Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. UCCE Master Gardeners are all volunteers who are charged with disseminating science-based gardening information to the general public. That effort has continued despite the pandemic. As of this writing, the University is still not permitting in-person training sessions. But the program has continued to further its mission during the pandemic and is now opening in some key areas.

**UCCE Master Gardener website:** The website has a huge amount of gardening information available including information sheets on a full range of gardening topics, videos, a description, and quick access to the services the Master Gardeners provide to Yolo County, and to upcoming events. Set your browser to <https://yolomg.ucanr.edu/> to get started.

**The Yolo Gardener:** This is the digital newsletter of the UCCE Master Gardeners of Yolo, which is published quarterly. In it are articles written by Master Gardeners on a wide range of gardening topics as well as information about upcoming activities and events. You can sign up to receive the publication via your email by going to the Master Gardener website listed above. Click on “Yolo Gardener” in the box on the left side. At the top of that pages is a box where you can enter your email address. Past issues are also available online through the website.

**Help Desk:** Master Gardeners are available to answer your specific gardening questions through the Help Desk. There are three ways to get an answer. Phone the Master Gardener line at (530) 666 8737. You may need to leave a message but will get a call back. Or E-mail your question to: [mgyolo@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mgyolo@ucdavis.edu). Master Gardeners are also in the office at 70 Cottonwood Street in Woodland on Tuesdays between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. You can drop in and even bring a sample. You can find out more, including the type of information you should try to provide as part of your question, on the UCCE Master Gardener-Yolo website by clicking on the “Get Help and Advice” link in the box on the left.



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**Thursday Zoom Workshops:** Since shortly after the pandemic began, Master Gardeners in conjunction with the Yolo County Library have been offering workshops via Zoom. Currently these are presented every second and fourth Thursday from 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. To receive the Zoom link (it changes every session), email Joan Tuss, Librarian at [Joan.Tuss@yolocounty.org](mailto:Joan.Tuss@yolocounty.org) or Jennifer Baumbach, UCCE Master Gardener Program Coordinator at [jmbaumbach@ucanr.edu](mailto:jmbaumbach@ucanr.edu). Ask to be put on the list to receive the Zoom link. After that, you will regularly receive notice of the upcoming topic and link. These workshops originally focused on vegetable gardening and backyard vineyards and orchards. But they have expanded over time with topics as varied as pollinator friendly gardening, drought resistant plants, water saving techniques and the development of the Davis Central Park Gardens. Upcoming are sessions on roses, improving your soil, identifying and managing weeds, and gardening in a time of climate change as well as on backyard food production. The recordings of some past sessions are available on the Master Gardener website by clicking on “Master Gardener Presentation” in the box on the left. These workshops are planned to continue at some level even after in-person workshops are resumed.

**First Saturday Kitchen Garden Class:** Every first Saturday of the Month from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., Master Gardener Treva Valentine hosts a Zoom presentation and discussion with the goal of teaching people how to harvest food from their garden every month of the year. Questions about anything edible are encouraged even if the topic is not specifically covered that month. To receive an email reminder and Zoom link for an upcoming session, send an email to Jennifer Baumbach at [jmbaumbach@ucanr.edu](mailto:jmbaumbach@ucanr.edu). These workshops will continue on Zoom at some level even after in-person workshops are resumed.

Information tables at various public venues have historically been an important and popular part of Master Gardener outreach activities. They provide members of the public with the chance to get gardening advice directly from Master Gardeners on their specific question. These information tables were suspended during much of the pandemic but have now resumed.

**Davis Information Table:** Currently, Master Gardeners are at the Saturday Davis Farmers Market from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. You can find them near the south entrance. Master Gardener Merle Clarke reports a lot of interest with most questions focused on spring planting and other seasonal topics.

**West Sacramento Information Table:** The West Sacramento Lowes is another regular site. The table is located by the outside nursery door every first and third Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Master Gardener Janet Brannaman reports twelve to fourteen people per week asking for information. They also have held “special events” in the past few months including Cactus Day and Bulb Day with up to forty people attending. There are two more events planned, Summer Vegetable Gardening on March 17 and Spring Floral Cones on April 14.

**Woodland Information Table:** There are plans to have an information table at the Woodland Farmer’s Market when it resumes in May.

Plan to take advantage of the many opportunities to learn about gardening offered by the UCCE Gardeners-Yolo, even during a pandemic.



## ***Growing Better Tomatoes, Part Two: Tomato Tips***

***Tanya Kucak, UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County***

**I**n the last issue of the *The Yolo Gardener*, I surveyed tomato gardeners to find out which varieties did well for them in last summer’s scorching heat. This time, I asked several gardeners for their tomato-



growing tips. My panel of avid tomato gardeners includes two UCCE Master Gardeners- Yolo County, Treva Valentine and Steve Radosevich, as well as Robert Norris, professor emeritus in the UC Davis Plant Sciences department who trained UCCE Master Gardeners in vegetable gardening for many years.

### ***Planting Time***

Even though nurseries start selling tomato plants as early as February, the soil is not warm enough to plant them out until late March to late April. If the soil is too cold, the tomatoes won't grow much and will need protection from cold nights and icy winds. When I lived in the Bay Area, I experimented with planting earlier using water-filled season extenders. It was almost worth it to plant one cherry tomato early for the novelty of a few cherry tomatoes a couple weeks earlier, but overall, it was a lot of trouble for little gain. I had to monitor those early plants daily to keep them alive.

Norris plants "by feel" in late March, waiting a few days if it's very cold. The rule of thumb is that the soil is warm enough to plant if you can comfortably sit on bare ground in your shorts for half an hour. Using a soil thermometer is "too scientific," he said. Valentine does use a soil thermometer, also planting around late March. Radosevich waits until about the middle of April. Don Shor, owner of Redwood Barn Nursery, advises waiting until late April, when the soil temperature is 60°F and nighttime lows stay higher than 50-55°F. You can keep potting up your plants -- whether grown from seed or purchased as transplants. Valentine might pot up her seedlings two or three times, yielding "older, sturdier, and healthier plants" by the time it's warm enough for them to thrive.

### ***Crop Rotation***

If you've planted tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and potatoes -- all in the nightshade family -- in the same place year after year, you may have noticed a drop-off in production or an increase in pests or diseases. Farmers rely on crop rotation to prevent diseases and pests from building up in the soil and to avoid depleting the same nutrients. It's important to rotate crops even in small gardens for the same reasons.

Everyone I talked to plants their tomatoes (and other nightshades) in a different garden area each year, usually with a three-to-five-year rotation. Valentine pointed out that the other plant family that can be problematic if planted in the same place every year is the cucurbit family, which includes cucumbers, melons, and squash.

If, like me, you planted nightshades everywhere in your garden last year, you can somewhat mitigate the negative effects by adding lots of compost or worm castings, Radosevich said. Planting different crops in the winter and spring, or using cover crops in the mustard family, can also help. Switching to container growing for a year while you give the soil a break from nightshades is another option.

If you've identified tomato plants with Verticillium wilt (V), Fusarium (F), or root-knot nematodes (N), you may want to select varieties that are V, F, or N resistant. Many Central Valley soils contain those pathogens, Norris said.

### ***Watering***

Deep watering both enables tomato plants to get the consistent moisture they need to avoid developing blossom end rot and helps conserve water by giving the plants only the water they need. It's a cliché in the tomato world that excess watering dilutes the flavor of tomatoes!

Norris is adamant about using drip irrigation. He likes drip tape, which is sold only by irrigation stores, not by hardware or big-box retailers. "Hand watering doesn't make it," he contends. "Irrigating the top inch of soil is useless." With clay soil, he runs his drip irrigation once every five to six days, about two hours each time. On cloudy days he reduces the runtime; during heat waves, he increases it. Of course, the timing and amount of watering depends on your soil type, but even sandy soil requires water only every three days, Norris said.

Valentine suggests using a moisture meter to make sure you're watering deeply enough to get sufficient water in the root zone. Tomato roots can go as deep as three to four feet, according to Robert Kourik in his book

Understanding Roots, although most of the roots are in the top foot of soil. (When you plant your tomatoes, be sure to bury them so that only the first few sets of leaves are above ground. They will grow roots all along the buried stem.)

### **Mulching**

To conserve moisture, reduce weeding, and keep the tomato roots healthy, mulch is essential. Most people use a few inches of straw mulch. You can buy bales of wheat or rice straw.

Norris uses woven, permeable plastic to deter pests that spend the heat of the day in organic mulch.

### **Shading**

Shading may not be needed if you grow tomato varieties that have dense foliage and that can set tomatoes in heat. For instance, Norris swears by the hybrid ‘Fourth of July’ for consistent harvests all summer.

But when daytime temperatures hit 90°F, many varieties won’t pollinate, or they become so stressed they drop their flowers. Furthermore, some of the best-tasting tomatoes have wispy foliage that can’t protect the fruit. Just as gardeners can feel revived by moving into the shade in the heat of a summer’s day, shading can help some of the knock-your-socks-off varieties set fruit. Valentine has “miles of burlap” used primarily for shading peppers, but also uses it for tomatoes. She places it mostly on the south side, but also on top. Radosevich hasn’t shaded his own plants, but a friend plants his tomatoes where they can get afternoon shade.

### **Picking at First Blush**

I’ve grown my edibles mostly in community gardens. Two of my main strategies for dealing with predation have been growing colors other than red and picking my tomatoes at the first blush of color. Recently, during a presentation on tomato growing by Joe Lamp’l and Craig LeHoullier, I learned another reason for picking at first blush (or even earlier, at breaker stage). The tomato has reached its full size, and its seeds are mature, at breaker stage. It will decline in quality if it stays on the plant during a heat wave. If you pick a tomato when it starts turning color rather than waiting for full ripeness, it will ripen sooner, develop better color, and have a longer shelf life after it ripens. Moreover, the flavor difference is negligible, and for larger tomatoes, you’re eliminating the possibility that some critter will peck at or bite into that tomato you’ve been waiting for.

### **Variety Selection**

Norris emphasized that his number-one tip for tomato success is choosing the right variety. Each gardener has different criteria: for Norris, it’s reliability. For me, it’s as many different colors and shapes as I can fit in my garden. To allow for differences in conditions each year, I have indeterminate, determinate, and dwarf varieties; heirloom, open-pollinated, and hybrid tomatoes; and a range of sizes. For hotter summers, cherry tomatoes and smaller tomatoes are likely to be more successful than larger-fruited varieties. 

## ***Plant Now to Provide for Hummingbirds in Winter***

*Sue Fitz, UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County*

**I**n my last article for the *The Yolo Gardener* on best plants to attract hummingbirds, I listed five plants that bloomed for at least ten months out of the year to provide nectar. The remaining two months—December and January, are problematic, it’s cold, and very few plants that feed hummingbirds are in flower. I took a brief walk out to the garden in mid-December, to see what possibilities I could find, and came up with four plants that flower in winter that can tide the tiny birds over. For best results these should be planted now.



*Kniphofia* “Christmas Cheer”

The first plant is *Kniphofia* “Christmas Cheer”, which starts blooming in early November, and finishes sometime in mid-January. This is a vigorous red-hot poker, that increases in size quickly, and is a prolific producer of flower spikes. It produces blooms over a long period of time, so while the earliest ones are finishing up, new flowers are starting, so blooming lasts quite a while. It’s not easy to find, but the UCD arboretum nursery offers it fairly frequently during their plant sales. I bought two plants at the fall sale, three years ago, and they bloomed just two months after being planted, quite a feat for a plant just getting started. I’m including a picture of the plants that was taken on December tenth of this year, so you can see how fast they have grown, and how many spikes they generate. Looking down into the crown of the plant, I can see there are still spikes forming. (I ultimately counted forty-two spikes total.) While I was examining the plants, my resident hummer came over to see what I was up

to, and spent some time feeding from the plants while I watched. Even if you aren’t a birder, this plant is worth growing just for its bright beauty at a gloomy time of year.

The next plant that caught my eye was that old workhorse of the garden, *Salvia leucantha*, Mexican Bush Sage. Flowering since October, it will continue until our first severe freeze, which seems to be happening later and later, into late December the last few years. This is an easy, uncomplicated plant, pest free and undemanding of care. My hummer followed me over and photobombed my picture when I was snapping a photo of the plant in bloom (he’s blurry, it takes fussing with aperture settings and other adjustments to account for the speed of tiny wings if you want a clear picture of a flying hummingbird). These plants are three feet tall but can be held lower by cutting back the new growth in spring when the plants are about a foot tall. Cut the branches back by half, and the plant will be reduced in height during bloom and will flop less as well. While this plant is usually seen in its common purple form, there is a white and even a very pretty pink form available, although it takes some effort to find them.



*Salvia leucantha*  
“Mexican Bush Sage”



*Lavandula multifida*  
“Fern Leaf  
Lavender”

*Lavandula multifida*, or fern-leaved lavender, blooms all winter. This plant was considered an annual for many years, but in the last fifteen years or so, our gradually warming winters have allowed the plant to survive and become reliably perennial. This plant is almost never out of bloom of its many, many spikes of deep purple flowers. The plants grow about two feet high and spread out to four feet wide if not cut back. While this article is primarily concerned with hummingbirds, I must add that this plant is happily foraged by black tailed bumblebee queens, which emerge from hibernation in late January.

My last plant is *Grevillea* ‘Peaches and Cream’, a bushy, upright shrub that gets fairly large, but can be tip-pruned to keep it at whatever size you need. A continuous producer of four- to six-inch-long clusters of flowers that are salmon, shading to pale yellow, it’s quite striking.

*Grevillea* flowers are very generous producers of nectar, and my hummer is frequently found perched on a top branch, defending his plant from other hummingbird intruders. Drought tolerant, it’s an easy plant as long as it gets full sun and good drainage. I got my plant at a big box store, it might take a request for a special order at a full service nursery to be sure of finding this particular variety. There are several



*Grevillea* ‘Peaches and Cream’

other *Grevillea* varieties, many which flower in winter and early spring. Shop at a nursery in January and pick up whatever variety they have that's in bloom.

## Darwinian Gardening and the Magic of Mulch

*Jim Fowler, UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County*

Pssst! Y'all wanna know a secret? I hate gardening! I have been a UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County for eighteen years and have performed almost five thousand volunteer hours. During this time, I have done almost everything there is to do in the program. I have sat at information tables at farmers' markets, the County Fair, and dozens of other venues. I regularly attend the planning meetings. I have manned the phone line, helped to organize and to administer three Master Gardener training classes, have given numerous public and Master Gardener presentations, helped to establish Central Park Gardens and served on its board for ten years. I supported the establishment of Grace Garden, have written dozens of garden related articles for the *Bloomin' News* and for *The Yolo Gardener*, and have been the editor of both publications. I also have been a volunteer propagator for the UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden for the last eighteen years and have propagated and repotted thousands of plants for use by the Arboretum in its collection and for its numerous plant sales. And yet, despite all this garden related activity, I hate gardening – it's just too darn much hard work.

Gardening is dirty, sweaty, and itchy. Gardening requires digging with shovels and, in the case of our clay soils, pickaxes, that results, regardless of gloves, in sore hands, blisters, and aching muscles. Most gardens require unending, tedious weeding mostly on hands and knees, checking for diseases and insect pests, fertilizing, and constant tinkering with watering systems. If lawn is a part of the gardening scheme even more labor is required, watering, weeding, aerating, dethatching, fertilizing, and weekly mowing. None of these jobs is particularly my cup of tea.



*Felicia amelloides*  
"Marguerite Daisy"

Don't get me wrong. I love gardens. I have grown a garden for the last thirty-five years. When visiting other places, I never miss an opportunity to visit a public garden. I find my own garden incredibly peaceful and calming. I love everything about it; the colors, the aromas, the insect life that flourishes in, above, and below the canopy. I love the birds it attracts: the hummers that come to feed from my salvias, the bush tits that bounce around in play on my *Gaura lindheimeri*, the robins that eat the berries from my English Hawthorn, the doves that nest in my Chinese Pistache, and even the blue jays that think my bird baths belong exclusively to them. I even tolerate the neighborhood cats that come to poop in my mulch, hang about in the shade



*Kniphofia alcazar*  
"Red-Hot Poker"

of my shrubs, hoping that an easy meal will fly nearby. I adore the shades of green, the shapes, and the textures of the leaves on my garden plants: the plump flat leaves of *Crassula ovata*, the gray green odiferous leaves of salvias, the filigreed leaves of *Verbena lilacina* 'De La Mina', the large furry leaves of the *Phlomis fruticosa*. And, oh my, the flowers: ranging from the prolific blossoms of the salvias and the *Felicia amelloides*, to the showy, long-lasting blossoms provided by *Euphorbia characias*, *Kniphofia alcazar*, and *Amaryllis belladonna*, to the delicate brushes produced by my *Callistemon viminalis* 'Little John' and my *Calliandra californica*.

So, the problem for me has been how to balance my love of gardens with my dislike of gardening. My solution, developed over many years, is what I like to call Darwinian gardening. My wife, however, calls it lazy gardening! In a sense she is correct in that I like to depend on as many natural processes in the garden that involve as little work on my part as possible. This brings me to the miracle of mulch.

When we bought our home in 2003, we had a typical Davis lawn with a tiny five-foot circular garden and a large, small-leafed maple as the city tree. Thus began the weekly mowing and watering in the sweltering Valley heat of July, August, and September and then the three Autumn months of raking leaves from the maple and those blown in from the neighbors as well as the constant rain of marcescent maple seeds. These processes were becoming tedious, frustrating, and burdensome, so I began to look for a solution. Fortunately, shortly thereafter I began my training for the UC Davis Arboretum and for the UCCE Master Gardener program. The Arboretum opened my eyes to the wonderful world of Mediterranean and waterwise plants and the Master Gardener training taught me the techniques and gave me the tools to deal with my problems effectively and efficiently.



*Salvia microphylla*  
“Hot Lips”

To start with I decided to create two large garden beds by getting rid of a good portion of my lawn. I employed the technique of sheet mulching learned in one of my Master Gardener classes. I laid out three layers of newspaper over the area of lawn I wanted to eliminate and covered them with a three-inch layer of shredded cedar bark. (I used shredded mulch rather than the chunk because it covers better, stays in place, and it looks wonderful and inviting, just like a warm, fuzzy brown blanket.) While this reduced my workload, I still had to contend with the third of my yard left in lawn. After struggling for another two years with this strip of lawn I decided to get rid of it altogether, this time, however, I used cardboard instead of newspaper and it worked as effectively. Once the yard was completely mulched, I’ve only had to remulch every two or three years.

Besides lawn care, mulching has solved several other labor-intensive tasks. First, it has almost eliminated weeding on hands and knees. Except for an occasional breakthrough of Bermuda grass, generally my weeds are those that mostly grow in the much itself, broadleaves, spurge, scarlet pimpernel, bed straw (a recent arrival), the occasional privet from bird droppings, and rogue oaks planted by squirrels and jays. There are also hundreds of maple sprouts and euphorbia seedlings. If caught early all of these are easily removed with a gentle tug or a light hoeing. Second, mulching has also solved the problem of raking Autumn leaves. Now I just let them lay. They blend in with the ageing mulch and they compost nicely. The only raking I do now is in the places where the leaves have piled up in the corners of the garden or along the fence, which I then redistribute to places in the garden where the layer of leaves is thinner. Third, mulching eliminates the need for fertilizers because the layer of mulch and leaves creates a perfect interface for the earthworms that live and breed in this environment leaving behind castings, the almost perfect fertilizer.



*Euphorbia characias*

Finally, mulching drastically reduces water usage by conserving soil moisture. I think that drip irrigation is one of the best ways to conserve water, especially when growing ever thirsty vegetable crops or when using pots. However, since I do neither, I don’t use it. Instead, I use overhead watering. I can justify it by saying that plants in nature are always watered from above, not from below. And, since I grow mostly water-wise plants that I water only once every three weeks, I think that my water use balances out with those using drip. (I might even use less.) This process saves me from having to tinker constantly with my watering system.

To populate my garden, I relied heavily on the UC Davis Arboretum All-Star list. Those plants have been selected for their, beauty, toughness, and tolerance of our Valley climate. Therefore, they are mostly water-wise

plants. Once I selected them, I asked my wife to oversee their placement in the garden. I showed her pictures of the plants and gave her an idea of their growth habits and sun needs. Using her excellent artistic sensibilities (of which I have little) she then chose where to place them for their best advantage. Since then, as I have added other plants from other places, she has provided me with that same service.

I have made some bad choices brought about by over enthusiasm for a “I just gotta have it” plant. Many of those plants just withered and died in the conditions of my garden. I don’t remove them when that happens, I just let them compost *in situ* as part of the natural order. The results of this “buy it and try it” habit is that I currently have more than forty species and varieties of plants. From my Master Gardener classes I learned that this is the best defense against pests and diseases as variety attracts a lot of natural enemies. So, except for the occasional snail, I don’t have to spend any time at all with either pests or diseases.

There are some labor-intensive plants that I refuse to deal with. For example, I don’t do many bulbs. They tend to rot in our clay soils unless they are taken up at the end of the growing season. Who has time for that? Roses are among my favorite flowers. When I was a kid, my Mom always had twenty or thirty varieties of them. But roses require meticulous and finicky care – far too much work for the likes of me. I won’t plant anything I have to prune. If it can’t be hacked or whacked, then I won’t grow it. If a plant is impinging on the space of another, I solve the problem with a weed whacker or a hedge trimmer, not with a pair of hand pruners or scissors. If those plants don’t survive their encounter, then so be it. Nature always provides a plant that will.

Gardening is still a pastime that I don’t particularly enjoy, but by applying all the above techniques and principles I have managed to eliminate most of the drudgery of gardening while greatly enhancing the durability, the beauty, and the joys of my garden. 

## *WWC Spring Plant Sale - 2022*

*Maryellen McKenzie and Gail Jankowski, UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County*

The UCCE Master Gardeners of Yolo County Program will be having their annual Spring Plant Sale. Featured will be heirloom tomatoes, perennial, drought-tolerant, landscape plants, bulbs, and succulents. The sale will be held in the Ag area of the Woodland Community College Campus, 2300 E. Gibson Road, Woodland, California. As you enter the College follow the signs directing you to the sale. As a general reference, the Ag area is located at the west end of the campus. **MASKS ARE REQUIRED ON CAMPUS.**

The plant sale will be held the first two Saturdays in April, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup>, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. each day. Only cash and checks will be accepted. All one-gallon pots will be \$5.00. All four-inch heirloom tomatoes pots will be \$3.00. Proceeds support the UCCE Master Gardeners Program of Yolo County.

In conjunction with the plant sale, on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., Master Gardener Paula Haley will present a workshop entitled “Welcoming Pollinators to Your Garden”. The workshop is free, open to the public, and will be located outdoors, adjacent to the College’s Ag Area.

Learn more about the UCCE Master Gardeners of Yolo Co. at <http://yolomg.ucanr.edu/> If you have questions, please call or email our hotline at: 530 666-8736 or [mgyolo@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mgyolo@ucdavis.edu) and leave a message, someone will get back to you!

The list of plants to be sold follows:

## 2022 TOMATO VARIETIES

Variety	Description	Type, Color, Size	Ripens season
<b>African Queen</b>	Large potato leaf plants produce heavy crops of 1-2 lb., 3-5", jade-pink, lightly fluted beefsteak tomatoes with red flesh and delicious flavors. Yolo County: <i>Great flavor, good producer.</i>	Indet. Pink Beefstk	Mid
<b>Amana Orange</b>	Huge light orange beefsteak. Excellent sweet almost tropical fruit flavors. Yolo County: <i>Top scorer in 2017 tasting; good producer.</i>	Indet. Orange XL Bfstk	Late
<b>Amish Red</b>	Amish Red is a red sport of Amish Gold, a cross between Amish Paste and Sungold; 1 ½ to 2" oblong shaped with pointed tip; this small tomato packs a wallop of delicious, sweet flavors with a slightly tart finish. This is a great patio or small garden tomato. Yolo County: <i>One of top three taste test winners in 2018. A wonderful tomato!</i>	Indet. Red Oblong	Mid
<b>Ananas Noir NEW this year.</b>	Fruit is up to 1-1/2 lbs. Its exterior is purple and green with pink splotches, while the inside is green streaked with pink. Sweet, rich and delicious.	Indet. Var. Med- Lg	Mid
<b>Arkansas Traveler</b>	Well known for its ability to produce fruit in hot weather. Abundant crops of deep pink tomatoes that are 6 to 8 ounces and very flavorful. Yolo County: <i>Good producer, performed very well in 2020's excessive heat.</i>	Indet. Pink S-M	Late
<b>Big Rainbow</b>	Sweet tasting 2# beefsteak fruit. Very striking sliced, as the yellow fruits have neon red streaking through the flesh. Yolo County: <i>A favorite for color and taste.</i>	Indet. Yellow Beefstk	Mid
<b>Black Plum</b>	Looks like a small mahogany paste tomato but has thin walls. Sweet, tangy flavor. Crop throughout the season. Yolo County: <i>Good flavor, good producer.</i>	Indet. Black Plum	Mid-early summer.
<b>Black Krim</b>	Beefsteak with intense flavor, slightly salty. Fruits slightly flattened. Purple/black with green shoulders. Yola County: Good producer, scores high in taste tests, MG favorite	Indet. Black Med.	Mid
<b>Carmello</b>	This hybrid heirloom has a rich, balanced tomato flavor. Heavy producer of medium-sized red fruit. Good slicer; salads and sauces. Yolo County: <i>In top 10 2017 Tomato Festival tasting; good producer.</i>	Indet. Red Med.	Late
<b>Costoluto Genovese</b>	Heat loving meaty, heavily lobed shape. Full flavor slightly acid, favored by Italian and American chefs. Good for sauces Yolo County: Abundant producer	Indet. Red M-L	Mid

Variety	Description	Type, Color, Size	Ripens season
<b>Grape</b> <b>NEW this year.</b>	Long grape-like clusters of brilliant red, elongated cherry tomatoes have given this variety its name. Very sweet complex flavor, vigorous vines are very productive.	Indet. Red Sm Plum	Early
<b>Green Doctors</b>	Great flavor, making Green Doctors a favorite new green variety. Small tomatoes are about 3/4-inch and borne on long trusses. <i>Yolo County: Good producer, great flavor. Gets golden tinge when ripe.</i>	Indet. Green Cherry	Late
<b>Green Zebra</b>	Small, round yellow/gold with green zebra stripes and lime-green flesh. Heat loving With lemon/lime flavor. <i>Yolo County: A must have but doesn't last long off plant.</i>	Indet. Green Med.	Mid
<b>Hawaiian Pineapple</b>	Large beefsteak with nice pineapple flavor, yellow/orange. <i>Yolo County: Scores high in taste and appearance.</i>	Indet. Yellow Beefstk	Late
<b>Legend</b>	Short, bushy plants produce 3-4" smooth round fruit with few seeds. Great for salads and canning. Strong tolerance to west coast blight strains. Good for containers. <i>Yolo County: Must have for many Master Gardeners</i>	Det. Red Med.	Early
<b>Paul Robeson</b>	Purple/black beefsteak fruit slightly flattened round shape; up to 4" with green shoulders and red flesh; earthy, exotic flavor won "Best of Show" at Carmel Tomatofest. <i>Yolo County: A favorite black slicer scoring high in taste.</i>	Indet. Black Beefstk	Mid
<b>Pink Berkley Tie Die</b>	Heavy producer of dark pink/purple fruit with green stripes. Very meaty with excellent flavor <i>Yolo County: Yolo County: Favorite for Master Gardeners' own gardens.</i>	Indet. Pink Small	Early
<b>Pork Chop</b>	True yellow medium sized slightly flattened beefsteak. Very sweet with hint of citrus <i>Yolo County: Scores high at Woodland tomato tasting.</i>	Indet. Yellow Med	Mid
<b>Rose</b>	Amish heirloom, crack resistant, large, meaty fruit with excellent flavor. Vigorous plants provide a lot of leaf cover preventing sunburned fruits. <i>Yolo County: good producer, great flavor</i>	Indet. Pink Beefstk	Mid
<b>Virginia Sweets</b>	Large, yellow beefsteak fruit with red stripes. Sweet rich flavor from abundant harvests. <i>Yolo County: Good taste with moderate productivity</i>	Indet. Yellow Large	Mid.

### **Explanation of Terms**

**Heirloom** – Always open pollinated plants, which means the seeds can be saved and used to reproduce the same tomato. Heirlooms have generally been saved for their superior qualities and passed on generation after generation.

**Determinate** (Det.) – The plant grows to a certain point then stops and sets fruit which then mostly ripen in a short period of time. Height is often four feet or less and may not need staking.

**Indeterminate** (Indet.) – The plant grows continually until it dies at the end of the season, continuing to flower, set, and ripen fruit. Plants can get quite large and most often produce best when staked or grown in a wire cage. **Variety Names** shaded in orange are heat tolerant.

Perennials		
Hesperaloe 'Bright Lights'	<i>Hesperaloe parviflora</i> 'Bright Lights'	Red flowers; full sun; low water; attracts hummingbirds
Green Fernleaf Lavender	<i>Lavandula minutolii</i>	Bright blue flowers; full sun; low water
Pink Scented Geranium	<i>Pelargonium</i> hybrid	Pink flowers; full sun /partial shade; moderate water
Bluewitch Nightshade	<i>Solanum umbelliferum</i>	Purple flowers, full sun/part shade; low water; attracts bees; CA native
Vancouver Centennial Geranium	<i>Pelargonium</i> 'Vancouver Centennial'	Star-shaped coral flowers with bronze foliage; sun/part shade; regular water
Mexican Lobelia	<i>Lobelia laxiflora</i>	Tubular orange-red flowers; full sun/light shade; low water; attracts hummingbirds
Cleveland Sage	<i>Salvia clevelandii</i>	Pale lavender flowers; sun; low water; attracts bees, butterflies; CA native
Cedros Island Verbena	<i>Verbena lilacina</i>	Lilac flowers; full sun; low water
Pink Gaura	<i>Gaura lindheimeri</i>	Pink flowers; sun /partial shade; moderate water; attracts butterflies
Red Autumn Sage	<i>Salvia greggii</i>	Red flowers; full sun/partial shade; low water; attracts hummingbirds
French Lavender	<i>Lavandula dentata</i>	Purple flowers; full sun; low water; attracts bees, butterflies
Munstead English Lavender	<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> 'Munstead'	Lavender-blue flowers; full sun; low water; attracts bees, butterflies
Deer Grass	<i>Muhlenbergia species</i>	Full sun/part shade; low water; CA native
California Meadow Sedge	<i>Carex pansa</i>	Full sun/part shade; moderate water; CA native
Blue-eyed Grass	<i>Sisyrinchium idahoense bellum</i>	Bluish purple flowers; full sun/light shade; moderate to regular water; CA native
Shasta Daisy	<i>Leucanthemum x superbum</i>	White flowers; full sun/part shade; moderate water; attracts butterflies
Pacific Aster/ California Aster	<i>Symphotrichum chilense</i>	Pale purple flowers; full sun/part shade; low water; attracts butterflies; CA native
Bluebeard	<i>Caryopteris</i>	Lavender-blue flowers; full sun; moderate water
Copper Canyon Daisy	<i>Tagetes lemmonii</i>	Golden orange flower; strongly fragrant leaves; full sun; moderate - regular water
Texas Ranger	<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i>	Light purple flowers; full sun; low - moderate water
Gaura	<i>Gaura lindheimeri</i>	White flowers; full sun/part shade; moderate water; attracts butterflies
Fernleaf Yarrow	<i>Achillea filipendulina</i>	Yellow flowers; full sun; low - moderate water; attracts butterflies
Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Purple flowers; full sun; moderate - regular water; attracts bees and butterflies
Chaste Tree	<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	Lavender-blue flowers; full sun; moderate - regular water; attracts butterflies and hummingbirds
Common Emu Bush	<i>Eremophila glabra</i>	Tubular yellow flowers; full sun; low - moderate water; attracts butterflies

Myoporum groundcover	<i>Myoporum parvifolium</i> 'Prostratum	White flowers; full sun/part shade; low - moderate water
Silver Carpet	<i>Dymondia margaretae</i>	Yellow flowers; full sun/light shade; moderate - regular water
Common Lippia / Turkey Tangle	<i>Phyla nodiflora</i>	White - pale pink flowers; full sun; low - regular water; attracts bees; CA native
Wire Vine	<i>Muehlenbeckia complexa</i>	Full sun/part shade; regular water
Curry Plant	<i>Helichrysum italicum</i>	Yellow flowers; full sun; moderate water
Russian Sage	<i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	Purple flowers; full sun; low - moderate water; attracts butterflies and bees
Desert Globemallow	<i>Sphaeralcea ambigua</i>	Orange flowers; full sun; low water; attracts butterflies
White Sage	<i>Salvia apiana</i>	White flowers; full sun; low - moderate water; attracts bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, CA native
Peace Lily	<i>Spathiphyllum</i>	White flowers; houseplant
Gartenmeister Fuchsia	<i>Fuchsia</i> 'Gartenmeister Bonstedt'	Tubular coral-red flowers; full - partial shade; regular water; attracts hummingbirds'
Fuchsia	<i>Fuchsia</i> hybrid	Red flowers with white center; full - partial shade; regular water; attracts hummingbirds
<b>Bulbs</b>		
Naked Lady	<i>Amaryllis belladonna</i>	Trumpet-shaped rosy- pink flowers; full sun; no irrigation needed
White Rain Lily	<i>Zephyranthes candida</i>	White flowers; full sun - part shade; low - moderate water
Orange African Daisy	<i>Arctotis</i> hybrid	Orange flowers; full sun; moderate water
White Leaved Savory	<i>Micromeria fruticosa</i>	Silver leaves; full sun - shade; low water; attracts bees and butterflies
Geranium	<i>Pelargonium</i> hybrid	Pink flowers; full sun /partial shade; moderate water
Tazetta Daffodil	<i>Narcissus tazetta</i>	Cluster-flowering daffodil with white perianth and yellow cup; full sun/part shade; regular water
Daffodil	<i>Narcissus species</i>	Cream perianth with pale yellow cup; full sun/part shade; regular water
Lavender Starflower	<i>Grewia occidentalis</i>	Star-shaped lavender-pink flowers; full sun; regular water; attracts butterflies
Dwarf Catmint	<i>Nepeta x faassenii</i>	Pinkish flowers; full sun - partial shade; moderate water; attracts bees
African Blue Basil	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> hybrid	Light purple - pink flowers; full sun - part shade; regular water; well-drained soil; needs frost protection
<b>Succulents</b>		
Lamb's Ears	<i>Stachys byzantina</i>	Purplish flowers; full sun - light shade; moderate water

Hallmark Orange Bulbine	<i>Bulbine frutescens</i> 'Hallmark'	Orange flowers; light shade; low - regular water; compact form
Miniature Pine Tree Succulent	<i>Crassula tetragona</i>	Clusters of white flowers; sun - part shade (afternoon); low water; needs frost protection
Jade Plant	<i>Crassula ovata</i>	Clusters of white star-shaped flowers; sun - part shade (afternoons); low water; needs frost protection
Pinwheel Aeonium	<i>Aeonium haworthii</i>	Cream - yellow flowers; cool sun/light shade; low water
Aeonium	<i>Aeonium canariense</i>	Forms mounds; cool sun/lightshade; low water
Aeonium	<i>Aeonium arboreum</i> hybrid	Yellow flowers; green leaves with red edge; cool sun/light shade; low water
Climbing Aloe	<i>Aloiampelos ciliaris</i>	Green- or yellow-tipped scarlet flowers; sun - part shade; low water
Rock Purslane	<i>Calandrinia spectabilis</i>	Magenta flowers; sun/part shade; low water; good drainage
Ghost Plant	<i>Graptopetalum paraguayense</i>	Sun/partial shade; low water
Century Plant	<i>Agave americana medio picta</i>	Full sun - part shade; low water
Green Cockscomb Succulent	<i>Sedum praelatum</i>	Yellow flowers; sun - partial shade; low water; attracts bees and butterflies
Graptopetalum	<i>Graptopetalum</i> hybrid	Sun/partial shade; low water
Spider Aloe	<i>Aloe spinosissima</i>	Orange-red flowers; full sun; low water
Mexican Firecracker	<i>Echeveria</i> hybrid	Bell-shaped orange - red flowers; sun/part shade; low water
Green/purple Aeonium	<i>Aeonium</i> hybrid	Cool sun/light shade; low water
Pig's Ear (pointed leaf)	<i>Cotyledon orbiculata oblonga</i>	Orange-red flowers; sun/light shade; low - moderate water
Gold Tooth Aloe	<i>Aloe x nobilis</i>	Orange-red flowers; full sun/light shade; low water
Orchid Cactus	<i>Epiphyllum</i>	Red flowers; partial shade; quick-draining soil; needs frost protection
California Fuchsia	<i>Zauschneria californica</i>	Orange to red flowers; full sun; low water; CA native
Common Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	White flowers; full sun; low water; CA native
Pink Rockrose	<i>Cistus</i> 'Grayswood Pink'	Pink flowers; full sun; low water; attracts butterflies
Chinese Fringe Plant	<i>Loropetalum chinense</i>	Pink flowers; full sun/part shade; regular water
Bulbine	<i>Bulbine frutescens</i>	Yellow flowers; partial shade; low - regular water
Spider Plant	<i>Chlorophytum comosum</i>	Houseplant; bright, indirect light, well-drained soil
Starfish Flower / Carrion Flower	<i>Stapelia species</i>	Furry star-shaped flowers; sun/part shade; low water
Euphorbia	<i>Euphorbia species</i>	Sun/partial shade; low water; sap is irritating and/or toxic
Graptopetalum	<i>Graptopetalum</i> hybrid	Yellow flowers; full sun - part shade; low water; needs frost protection



## Master Gardener Help Desk

*Joy Sakai, UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County*

This past month we were pleased to add frequently asked questions (FAQs) to our website (<http://yolomg.ucanr.edu/>) “Get Help and Advice” section. The questions are on topics that show up at the help desk repeatedly, indicating general interest from the public. We plan to change these questions seasonally, as the needs of your gardens, and questions from the public change.

Current topics include when and what to plant in your spring garden, a discussion of insect pests in the spring and summer garden, and how to plan a raised garden bed, among other topics. Upcoming quarterly FAQ updates will be accompanied by panel discussions held via zoom through the Yolo County Library, Davis Branch (530-666-8005). Contact the library to get on the email list for the great gardening classes held regularly and organized by UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County, Mike Kluk. The classes are designed for the gardening public, so we hope to see you there.

In the coming seasons, look for FAQ advice on pruning both roses and fruit trees, and a discussion on why and how to get rid of your water guzzling lawn, and replace it with our beautiful, beneficial insect supporting, California native plants.

We encourage gardeners in Yolo County to call or email your gardening questions to the UCCE Master Gardener Help Desk. Visit us (<http://yolomg.ucanr.edu/YMGHelp/>) and you can “ask a Master Gardener.” 

## Spring Garden Tips 2021

*Peg Smith, UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County*

This was my preamble to the 2019 Spring Tips for the Spring *Yolo Gardener*: “The ground, with all our wonderful rain, is saturated and patience will be needed before heading out to turn the soil or replant a bed. Walking on the ground when it is saturated will compact the soil and make it harder to prepare for planting...”

What a different year is this 2022 Spring! As gardeners we need to consider the feast and famine nature of California’s rainfall in our garden designs and plant selections. Consider installing drip irrigation, soaker hoses or converting an existing sprinkler irrigation system to drip irrigation to conserve water. Plants labelled ‘drought tolerant’ or ‘waterwise’ does not mean they need ‘no water’. Periodic, regular watering is needed for young plants to establish healthy root systems and to survive the heat of summer. Even well-established waterwise plantings will need supplemental watering through the summer and low rainfall years.

Creating permanent pathways through both your ornamental and vegetable beds will allow ease of access and make garden tasks easier whether the season is wet or dry. Raised beds for vegetable growing are a great approach as they allow a permanent planting area and permanent pathways which allow easy access to work and plant the vegetables even if it is a wetter season. Pathways through an ornamental bed do not need to be very formal, steppingstones work well, designated well mulched walking areas that allow reaching into the beds also work well. The easier the access to your plants, the easier it is to identify problems or do the needed seasonal

maintenance.

## SPRING CLEANING

- Examine trees and shrubs for winter damage. Prune damaged foliage and branches.
- If you haven't pruned your roses and fruit trees, early March is the last month to ready them for their spring growth.
- Cut back seasonal grasses.
- Do not prune early flowering perennials such as 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 oil spray to all fruit trees if the buds are not producing foliage or bloom. Roses need to be sprayed to prevent over-wintering insects and fungal spores. Last year's rose leaves can be stripped off and discarded to reduce the numbers of overwintering spores. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/GARDEN/PLANTS/rose.html> \*
- Apply final application of copper and Volck Oil to peach and nectarine trees if foliage and bloom have not pushed. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7426.html> \*
- Spray a fungicide to control anthracnose on Sycamore and Ash trees. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7420.html#MANAGEMENT>
- Weeds are starting to sprout, so take care of them before they take over. "Get 'em small, get 'em often" is the best policy
- Once your spring bulbs have finished blooming, dead head (remove blossom stalks and finished blossom heads) however, don't remove the leaves until they turn yellow. This will help the bulbs store energy for next spring's bloom. The longer the leaves are left to 'feed' the bulb the more likely you will have blooms next spring.

\*As always, please carefully read and follow label instructions and properly dispose of excess materials.

## FERTILIZING, COMPOSTING AND MULCHING

- Add soil amendments, such as compost and organic fertilizer.
- Roses and fruit trees need special attention now. In addition to organic rose food and soil amendments, add a cup of alfalfa pellets around each rose plant. Alfalfa contains a natural plant growth stimulant (triaconitol) that has been shown in some studies to improve plant growth.
- Be sure to use the fertilizer that is recommended for each plant type. Follow the application directions. Applying too much nitrogen will make a plant grow too quickly, producing growth which will not be as sturdy. This weaker growth is more susceptible to sucking insects. Too much nitrogen encourages leaf growth not blooms.
- As leaves and blooms push resume your normal fertilizing schedule for fruit trees. Spread a layer of compost around the fruit trees out to the edge of the leaf canopy. If using commercial fertilizer be sure to follow the directions – more is not better.
- Fertilize your spring blooming plants after they finish blooming and repeat for the next three months.
- Fertilize your houseplants.
- Mulch your garden to a depth of 4 inches. The reward will be fewer weeds and less watering in the months ahead.
- Mulch is good for water conservation but to attract our wonderful pollinator native bees, of whom several are ground nesting bees, leave some bare dirt, not mulched, that will not be disturbed. Some bare soil, some nesting possibilities, and a shallow water source combined with a selection of pollinator attractor plants should bring the native bees to the garden. <https://xerces.org/enhancing-habitat-for-native-bees/>

## PLANTING

Spring is a time when old, worn-out woody shrubs and roses can be replaced.

Perennial plants and shrubs need attention now.

- Remove any old woody non-productive growth, any dead branches, any crossing branches or branches that rub on one another.
- Dig and divide crowded perennial plants. Offer them to your neighbors if you have excess.

Select early blooming perennials and annuals

- Plant candytuft, pansies, violas, dianthus. An easy-care plant, *Iberis sempervirens*, is a low-growing perennial candytuft that brightens a spring garden.

Select summer blooming plants.

- Bulbs, corms, tubers can be planted now.  
Some colorful choices are cannas, begonias, lilies, and dahlias.

Shade plants include

- Columbine (*Aquilegia*) which comes in many colors. Coral bells (*Heuchera*) comes in a wide variety of bloom and foliage colors. Island Alumroot (*Heuchera maximus*) is the largest of the *Heuchera* and provides a beautiful show in the shade. Australian bluebell creeper (*Sollya heterophylla* a.k.a. *Billardiera heterophylla*) has evergreen mounded growth with a delicate blue flower.

Drought tolerant and sunny location plants

- Island Pink yarrow, blue grama grass, California fuchsia, Santa Margarita foothill penstemon, hummingbird sage, and California goldenrod will all establish well and give seasonal color to the sunny waterwise garden.

Be sure to select these plants with care to ensure that they are strong, healthy, and not pot bound. Check the needed growing conditions so that you are placing them where they will grow and thrive. Plants that need 8 hours + of sun per day will not do well in the shade. Careful selection ensures healthy plants that are easy to grow and maintain. Young plants need additional water regularly to help them through their first summer as they establish a healthy deep root system.

After you have completed your planting, lightly fertilize your plants and mulch well. Plants do better if they are planted at or slightly above grade on a gentle mound with no root exposure.

## VEGETABLES

If you are growing your vegetables from seed inside under grow lights by early/late April, you can 'harden off' your seedlings by moving them outside for a few hours each day. Starting with the seedlings placed in partial shade steadily increase the time outside and time in the sunlight each couple of days so that when your seedlings are transplanted into your vegetable garden, they will be able to tolerate the outside conditions. The soil temperature needs to be around 50°F before you set out your young plants. Tomatoes and peppers prefer about a 60°F soil temperature. April to May is the prime planting season for summer vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, squash, cucumbers etc. For a year-round guide to vegetable planting <https://ucanr.edu/sites/YCMG/files/206763.pdf>

## 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, lower parts or back of the leaves of the plant. If the spring is especially rainy, you will need to be more vigilant, and either remove the affected leaves or spray more often.

If your rose leaves have neatly cut out curved sections that is just the native leaf cutter bee collecting leaf pieces to line the laying sites for their young – something we want to encourage in the garden.

- There are simple solutions to most garden pests <http://ipm.ucdavis.edu/> This Integrated Pest Management website is a great resource for the least environmentally toxic way of handling garden pests. Regularly examine plants for damage from caterpillars, slugs, snails or earwigs. As the weather warms, aphids, mites, thrips, and scale may show in your garden. These pests are usually kept in check by a variety of beneficial insects such as lacewings, mantises, ground beetles, tachinidae, and robber flies. Many plants attract beneficial insects including yarrow, alyssum, feverfew, dill, parsley, coriander, penstemon, and asters.
- Attracting birds to the garden with a shallow water source and plants such as sunflowers will also help with insect control. You may have a few torn leaves on your beets and chard from birds such as house finches feeding on the leaves but the balance and gain for the garden is the large volume of insects, scale etc. that they will consume.
- Consult <http://ipm.ucdavis.edu/> for guidance on commercial pesticides and information for alternative solutions for controlling pests and diseases with the least environmental damage.
- Here is the link to Seasonal Landscape IPM Check:  
<http://www2.ipm.ucanr.edu/landscapechecklist/checklist.cfm?regionKey=2>

## LAWN CARE

Lawn can still have a place in the garden when managed well. Deep soaking, without having water run-off, encourages deep root growth and this is the key to a healthy summer lawn. Lawn does not need to be watered every day. Even with our hot summers a deep soak once or twice a week will carry a lawn through the hottest season. Lawn does surprisingly well if given a modicum of care with deep soaking and regular fertilizing.

To allow water penetration into heavier clay soils you may need to adjust your irrigation cycle. The ideal length of time for watering depends on when the water begins to run off from the lawn and be wasted. Allow the sprinklers to run for 15-20 minutes if there is run off with this timing adjust the sprinkler system to water for a shorter duration. Then set the irrigation timing to repeat this cycle in about an hour. Doing two watering cycles close together but of shorter duration allows the water time to penetrate more deeply into the soil. This deeper penetration of water will encourage deeper root growth in the lawn so that in the summer your lawn will cope better with a very hot prolonged heat wave.

If you have been watering your lawn every day you will need to ‘adapt’ the lawn to its new watering routine. Use this spring to change your watering practices gradually over a period of weeks this will give the lawn time to acclimate and develop deeper roots with the new water saving routine. Start by not watering on one day of the week. Slowly progress dropping more watering days. Choose the one or two days a week you want to water the lawn and using the above guidance refine the duration of the improved watering cycles. Most lawns can manage with a deep soak once a week unless we have an extended period of over 100°F.

As spring gives way to summer raise the mower blade to a height of 3 inches to protect the crown of the grass from the heat.

- Re-seed thin spots in your lawn and begin your fertilizing and mowing schedule with the beginnings of vigorous spring lawn growth.
- 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 soil health.
- Leaving grass clippings on your lawn by using a mulching mower will return needed nutrients. Tolerating a slightly untidy lawn as the grass clippings break down will benefit the soil and the health of the lawn.

## FINAL SPRING TOUCHES

- Paint the lower trunks of young trees with water thinned interior 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 on the trees, leaving 6 inches between each fruit. This will help the remaining fruit to mature properly and keep the branches from being over-weighted with fruit causing splitting and breaking of the tree limbs.
- Deadhead spent flowers to assure a long blooming season in your garden.  
When California poppies begin to fade trim them back to promote a second bloom.
- Plant containers with your favorite annuals and herbs.
- Keep bird feeders clean and well supplied.
- Sharpen and maintain garden tools.
- Hang your hammock or set out your favorite garden chair. Relax with some lemonade and take time to enjoy a new gardening book or listen to a local garden radio program.

**UCCE Master Gardener Events in Yolo County**

As local regulations for Covid precautions are ever changing the Yolo County Master Gardener program has continued to adapt. Check our website for any upcoming resumption of our Plant Sales or free gardening workshops online or in person <http://www.ucanr.edu/yolomg> or visit us on facebook.com.

Details of the upcoming Master Gardener Spring Plant Sale at Woodland Community College are included in this newsletter.



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

**UCCE Master Gardener, Yolo County 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**

**Web Site ..... <http://yolomg.ucanr.edu>**

**Facebook.....UCCE Master Gardeners, Yolo County**



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## *The Yolo Gardener – Spring, 2022*

Send a Letter  
to an Editor!

email: [mgyclo@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mgyclo@ucdavis.edu)  
 Please put: *Yolo Gardener* in the subject line

or

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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://yolomg.ucanr.edu/>

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Baumbach".

Jennifer Baumbach, UCCE Master Gardener Program  
 Coordinator Yolo and Solano Counties