

*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office*



PHOTO BY William M. Johnson



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Experienced vegetable growers know that mid- to late -February is the ideal time period to transplant tomatoes. Ira Gervais will present a program on "Growing Great Tomatoes in Galveston County" on Saturday, February 6, from 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office.

Overall, the winter season has been rather mild for Gulf Coast gardeners and rainfall has been ample.

Over the next few weeks, landscapes will be blanketed with new leaves in varying shades of green and an array of colorful flowers to lift our spirits.

The new gardening year will be in full swing in February with many activities and options for growing

and learning.

Peaches and plums have already started to display their beautiful flowers and the promise of spring can be seen. Galveston County Master Gardeners have planned several programs for February that will be of interest to local gardeners.

### **Hands-on Rose Pruning Demonstrations:**

Did you know the time to prune your roses is on Valentine's Day? Are you a bit hesitant on what types of roses to prune and not prune? Then be sure to visit the Master Gardener Horticulture Demonstration Garden on Thursday, February 11, at 9:00 a.m.

Master Gardener and consulting Rosarian John Jons will provide demonstrations on how to

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properly prune your roses. Please bring hand pruners and gloves (not required but needed if you wish to practice pruning on site). The Master Gardener Horticulture Demonstration is located in Carbide Park at 4102 Main Street in La Marque. The program is free of charge but pre-registration is requested (phone: 281-534-3413, ext. 1-2; e-mail [GALV3@wt.net](mailto:GALV3@wt.net)).

**Upcoming Seminars**

Master Gardeners are sponsoring two educational programs this Saturday that will likely be of interest to gardeners across the county.

I looked up the term "book-learning" and one definition goes as follows: Knowledge acquired from reading books, as opposed to knowledge gained through experience; theoretical or academic knowledge as opposed to practical or common-sense knowledge.

The speakers for both programs have "book-learning" (they have, after all, earned the title of Certified Master Gardeners) and they have amassed a wealth of practical or common-sense knowledge from their lifelong experiences as gardeners. Moreover, they gladly share their knowledge and experiences with the public.

Master Gardener Chris Anastas will provide a PowerPoint presentation "Growing Backyard Citrus" on Saturday, February 6, from 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Chris has sizable home citrus orchard. She will discuss a variety of topics including rootstock and variety selection for citrus; cultural care of trees; common disease and insect pest problems and how to manage them; control of birds and critters; and freeze protection.

Master Gardener Robert Marshall will present a PowerPoint program entitled "Citrus Greening Disease" on Saturday, February 6, 11:00 a.m. - 12 Noon. Citrus greening is a bacterial disease of citrus that was first confirmed in Harris County in 2014. To help reduce the spread of this disease; Harris, Fort Bend and Montgomery counties, in addition to two counties in the Valley, have been quarantined by the Texas Department of Agriculture. Robert has been trained as a first-responder to help identify new occurrences of this disease. His presentation will cover what symptoms to look for and preventative measures home growers can practice to help reduce chances of citrus trees grown in the home landscape becoming infected with citrus greening.

Master Gardener Ira Gervais will present a PowerPoint program entitled "Growing Great Toma-

toes in Galveston County" on Saturday, February 6, from 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. This Saturday's program is part two of a three-part program on Growing Great Tomatoes in Galveston County. Galveston County Master Gardener Ira Gervais will discuss his secrets to successful planting and production of great tomatoes. Program participants will learn about the various varieties that do well in this area, when to transplant tomato seedlings and various growing techniques. Information on soil requirements, needed nutrients and the temperature ranges for best tomato fruit set will be discussed.

All three programs will be conducted at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park (4102-B Main St.) in La Marque. No fee but pre-registration is required (e-mail: [GALV3@wt.net](mailto:GALV3@wt.net) or phone 281-309-5065).

I vouch for each presenter being "book-learned" and "common-sense." Additionally, I know that they are also gifted and entertaining speakers. I have attended their seminars on several previous occasions and I have learned something different each time I attended. Even though there isn't any registration fee, I am tempted to apply an entertainment surcharge fee as they deliver their programs in a most engaging manner.

