

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



PHOTO BY Herman Auer

Onions and garlic are easy to grow in the home garden and so necessary in the kitchen. Shown above is Luke Stripling with his bumper crop of onions harvested from home garden in Dickinson. Master Gardener Ken Steblein will conduct a "Grow Your Own Onions & Garlic" seminar on Saturday, September 14, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in La Marque.



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A glorious thing takes place toward the end of summer. We get another opportunity to reestablish the vegetable garden with hopes of a grand harvest in the cool fall climate. Two of my favorite veggies to grow in the fall garden are onions and garlic. Onions and garlic grow very well in our Upper Gulf Coast growing environment. As I write this column, it's sweltering outside

and pesky saltmarsh mosquitoes abound. But I know from experience that now is the time to start planning for the fall gardening season. I plan on planting onions as they are easy to grow and well-worth the effort. Since onions have a reputation for bringing tears to the eyes, one might ask why do so many home gardeners grow onions? There are multiple reasons in-

cluding being easy to grow and requiring little space in the home garden and can be grown just about anywhere, including containers. Onions have been used for culinary uses since ancient times. I also plan on planting garlic especially when I recall that the cost of a few cloves of garlic purchased here and there adds up over time. So, perhaps I'll

plant a bunch of garlic also! The onion has been utilized as an important ingredient in a variety of dishes for thousands of years by many cultures around the world. The Greeks, Romans and Egyptians have noted their many uses of onions. Onions were also part of the staple of early American settlers.

Onions rank among the more important culinary vegetables. One culinary expert said, "Without onions there would be no gastronomic art. Its absence reduces the diner to despair." And, it was General Ulysses S. Grant who reportedly said, "I will not move my armies without onions."

Studies have shown that both onions and garlic are rich in antioxidants. Antioxidants can help to protect the body against damaging "free radicals."

Garlic also grows very well in our Upper Gulf Coast soils. We know onions and garlic are a very important part of our diet but we may not know when to plant them or how to grow them. Since fall is the ideal time to plant onions and garlic, our Master Gardener volunteers will be conducting a seminar on "Grow Your Own Onions & Garlic."

Master Gardener Ken Steblein will provide the seminar on Saturday, September 14, from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m., at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park at 4102-B Main Street (FM 519) in La Marque. Pre-registration is required (phone 281-534-3413,

ext. 12 or e-mail [GALV3@w.net](mailto:GALV3@w.net)).

### **SEMINAR ON KITCHEN GARDENS**

The history of kitchen garden designs dates back to medieval times. They were the cloister or courtyard gardens of monasteries or castles. During colonial times, European settlers brought the kitchen garden concept to America.

In earlier times, the kitchen garden was located by the back door as it would be handy for everyday use and care in addition to providing some protection from two- and four-legged intruders. In colonial times, these gardens would have contained plants for medicinal properties as well as culinary herbs, fruit trees and berried shrubs.

Modern-day kitchen gardens contain a variety of plants that serve the needs of the palate (i.e., provides food for the dinner table or raw consumption) and the needs of the soul (i.e., provides beauty in the home landscape and cut flowers for the interiorscape). In essence, vegetables can be used in imaginative ways to add beauty, interest, and utility to our landscapes.

Taking the concept of a kitchen garden from fantasy to reality can be a daunting task for the beginner. Help is at hand: A seminar on "Kitchen Gardening . . . From Conception to Realty" will be conducted on Saturday, September 14, from 1:00 - 3:30 p.m. at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park at 4102-B Main

Street (FM 519) in La Marque. Pre-registration is required (phone 281-534-3413, ext. 12 or e-mail [GALV3@w.net](mailto:GALV3@w.net)).

Mary Demeny, a Galveston County Master Gardener, will discuss growing vegetables as an integral component of the home landscape. Gardening on a smaller scale and making use of vegetables interplanted in your flower beds and in pots will be emphasized.

Mary has grown a kitchen garden for many years. Vegetables for discussion include: onions, carrots, tomatoes, lettuce, peppers, okra, beets, broccoli, cabbage, kohlrabi, kale, leeks and more. September is a great time to get started on a fall vegetable garden and this seminar can help you get started with your own kitchen garden.

