

## Onions & Garlic and Kitchen Gardening Seminars

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



PHOTO BY **William M. Johnson**

Onions and garlic are easy to grow in the home garden and so necessary in the kitchen. Master Gardener Ken Steblein will conduct a "Grow Your Own Onions & Garlic" seminar on Saturday, September 19, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in La Marque.

We can look forward to two promising experiences occurring during the latter half of September. Over the past weekend, we were afforded a tantalizing experience of daytime temperatures actually staying below the ninety-degree mark. We will also be afforded an 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. 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 including 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. The onion has been util-

ized 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 on-



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ions 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 19, 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. 5065 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 Reality" will be conducted on Saturday, September 19, 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. 5065 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.

