

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office



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PHOTO CREDIT: Dr William M. Johnson



Dr. William Johnson is a horticulturist with the Galveston County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Visit his website at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston>.

News column printed in the Galveston Daily News, The Post, and other Galveston County Newspapers.

The Galveston County Master Gardeners' 2017 Fall Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, October 14, at the Galveston County Fairgrounds located off Hwy. 6 in Hitchcock. Master gardeners will have citrus trees, Texas-Tuff perennials, bulbs and garden art work in addition to Master Gardener-grown vegetable transplants.

Most gardeners have been anticipating the arrival of the first "genuine" cool front. With all due respect to the science of meteorology, my definition of a cool front in the fall is one that gets your attention by immediately uplifting your spirit when you first walk outside in the morning!

Most gardeners are now eager (or at least far more

willing) to venture out into the home landscape and garden. In light of this heightened enthusiasm, here are some activities for the fall gardener to consider:

Fall Plant Sale: The Master Gardeners will sponsor their Annual Fall Plant Sale from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 14, at the Galveston County Fairgrounds located

north of Hwy. 6 in Hitchcock. Plants to be offered include many types of fall vegetable transplants, citrus trees, Texas-Tuff perennials, bulbs, garden art work and more. A pre-sale presentation will also be offered from 8:00 - 8:50 a.m. before the sale yard is opened.

Save Caladium Tubers: Caladiums are getting past



their prime with the onset of cooler weather. If you plan on saving caladium tubers for another year, be sure to dig them up before the top growth disappears – those tubers can be very difficult to locate after the top growth is gone. Allow the tubers to air-dry for 7-to-10 days in a well-ventilated but shaded area.

After drying, gently remove any attached leaves and large soil particles from the tubers then store in dry peat moss, vermiculite or similar material in a well-ventilated container. Pack so that the tubers do not touch each other. Dust with an all-purpose fungicide to help prevent decay. Store the tubers in an area where temperatures won't drop below 50 degrees F.

Plant Cool Season Vegetables: Transplants of broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and a wide variety of vegetables for the fall growing season should be transplanted into the garden.

Control Cool Season Weeds: Most lawn weeds that we see during late winter and early spring sprout in the fall. They are cool season weeds and, in fact, their germination is stimulated in the fall by the onset of cool temperatures. They grow during winter if temperatures stay warm enough, then produce a crop of seeds in the spring and die out when hot weather arrives.

Use of pre-emergent herbicides to control cool season weeds is effective only if properly timed, i.e., they should be applied very soon after the onset of relatively cool weather conditions. Several pre-emergent herbicides are approved for lawn use and are sold under a variety of commer-

cial labels. Check with your area garden center or feed store for available products. Always read and follow label directions.

Plant Shrubs and Trees: This is an excellent time for planting container-grown ground covers, shrubs and trees. Thanks to our mild winters, trees and shrubs planted now will have several relatively stress-free months to establish a good root system before hot, dry weather returns.

At a Glance

Fall Bulbs for Gulf Coast Landscapes, Saturday, October 7, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Margaret Cherry, bulb & colorscape expert, will provide recommendations for growing bulbs. Her presentation will cover do's & don'ts, planting techniques, annual combo plantings, growing in pots, and much more. Margaret will also discuss bulb varieties that will have available at the Master Gardeners' Fall Plant Sale on October 14, 2017.

Smart Start Fruit Trees, Saturday, October 7, 11:00 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Master Gardener and Fruit Tree Specialist Herman Auer will show you the path to success for growing a single or multiple fruit trees in your home landscape by doing it right the first time. Location, drainage, selection of trees, variety, pruning, nutrients, and weed control will be covered.

My Favorite Fall Vegetables, Saturday, October 7, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Gene Speller will present a program on Cruciferous and other favorite

vegetables usually grown during fall and winter months. These include popular varieties of broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard, kale, mustard and turnip greens, all members of the Cruciferous family. Other vegetables to be discussed are several varieties of lettuce, spinach, and Swiss chard. Many of the vegetables included in this presentation will be offered for sale as transplants at the Galveston County Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale on October 14.

Post Harvey Recovery of Landscapes & Gardens, Saturday, October 7, 3:00 p.m.

Dr. William M. Johnson, Galveston County Horticulture Agent, and a panel of Master Gardeners will lead a discussion and homeowner Q&A session to provide information to homeowners to assist with the process of recovery of landscapes and gardens after Hurricane Harvey.

LOCATION: All programs conducted at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park (4102-B Main St. in La Marque). Pre-register by email (galvcountrymgs@gmail.com) or phone (281-309-5065).

