

# Citrus Show Accepting Entries Today

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



PHOTO BY William M. Johnson

**Home citrus growers can enter their citrus for judging and display today from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park. The 2013 Upper Gulf Coast Citrus Show to be held at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 21.**

California and Florida step aside . . . 'Tis the season for citrus in Texas, and at least some of it will be tagged with rosettes and blue ribbons at this year's Upper Gulf Coast Citrus Show. Whether you are an enthusiastic citrus grower or just interested in viewing an array of locally grown citrus fruit, plan to attend the 2013 Upper Gulf Coast Citrus Show on Thursday, No-

vember 21. The Citrus Show will be conducted at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park at 4102-B Main Street (FM 519) in La Marque. Based on prior year entries, 200 entries are expected to be on display at this year's show. Area residents may enter any type of citrus fruit in the show for judging. Each entry

must be grown by the exhibitor and should consist of three fruits that are as uniform as possible. Each entry must be bagged and clearly tagged with your name, address and telephone number. Also, indicate the type of fruit and variety. If the variety or even type of fruit is not known, it may be entered and will be identified. Entries will be accepted



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at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office today, Wednesday, November 20, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Rosettes and ribbons will be awarded to the best quality entries.

Citrus exhibits will be on public display on Thursday, November 21, from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. followed by an awards presentation at 7:00 p.m.

At 7:15 p.m., Monte Nesbitt, Texas A&M Extension Specialist in the Department of Horticultural Sciences at College Station, will provide a Power-Point presentation entitled "Growing Citrus on the Gulf Coast." Whether you already have considerable experience with growing citrus or are just considering growing citrus, this is a must-attend program.

### **Cold Protection for Plants**

We have experienced some impressive swings in temperatures over the past several weeks. A polar cool front got our attention several days ago. Yet as I prepare this week's column, daytime temperatures have reached into the mid-eighties.

Even though our winters are typically mild, gardeners should be prepared to provide protection to cold-sensitive plants when needed.

Winter temperatures in the Upper Gulf Coast can get low enough to damage tropical, subtropical, and even sometimes temperate plants, especially if they have not had suffi-

cient time to become acclimated to lower temperatures. Plants become acclimated by gradual decreases in temperature over a period of time. Sudden freezes after a period of warm weather often do more damage to plants than a freeze during a period of cold weather.

Prepare landscape plants for possible severe cold snaps by taking a few preventive steps to help avoid injury. If you trust your weather prognosticator and he or she predicts a hard freeze and if your soil is on the dry side at the time, then be sure to irrigate landscape plants well prior to the freeze.

Drought-stressed plants are more easily injured by freezing temperatures. This is particularly true of evergreen plants.

Also, moist soil stores more of the sun's energy and for a longer time than does dry soil. This energy is released as heat after the sun sets, and provides a degree or two of moderation. Providing a 4-to-6 inch layer of mulch (such as leaves, compost, or shredded pine bark) will also help to reduce cold injury.

Use of wraps can provide an effective means of protecting plants, and the degree of protection depends on the material used. Types of plant wraps that can be used range from the homemade to the commercial. Various types of "frost blankets" are available at gar-

den centers including a woven polypropylene fabric.

Use of a blanket covered with a solid sheet of plastic or tarp works well. The blanket limits radiation cooling and the plastic provides a barrier to rain and cold wind.

While plastic alone does not provide sufficient protection to plants during an extended hard freeze, it can be used to protect cold-sensitive plants against light frosts. However, be very sure to remove the plastic immediately after the danger from a light frost has passed—temperatures inside a clear plastic covering can become very high on a sunny day.

