

CITRUS SHOW TO DISPLAY LOCALLY GROWN HARVEST

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office



PHOTO BY William M. Johnson

There is always something to grow and something to harvest in our Gulf Coast gardens—even during the month of December. Whether you are an enthusiastic citrus grower or just interested in viewing an array of locally grown citrus fruit, plan to attend the 2014 Upper Gulf Coast Citrus Show to be held at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 4, at the AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park.

When you think of citrus, images of grapefruits, lemons, limes, oranges are most likely to come to mind. It's unfortunate that the citrus you see in the supermarket represents a very small portion of the variety of citrus that can be grown locally.

A greater diversity of citrus types can be grown here than is available on the commercial market. Not surprisingly, home-grown citrus is of superi-

or quality to supermarket fruits.

Area gardeners grow a remarkably wide variety of citrus ranging from grapefruits to kumquats to lemons to oranges. The other good news is that this year's citrus crop has been very productive despite last winter's freeze followed by an extremely dry spring and summer.

Many types of citrus are easier to grow than

many "traditional" fruit trees such as peaches. Many residents grow citrus not only for the fruit but also for the ornamental value that trees provide to the landscape.

Now visualize one of several types of citrus trees that you can grow in your yard to produce home-grown fruit to give as a distinctive and personal gift to family, neighbors and other friends. Sound too good



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to be true? Are you interested in viewing an array of locally grown citrus fruit? Are you interested in learning about the basics of growing your own citrus?

Whether you are an enthusiastic citrus grower or just interested in viewing an array of locally grown citrus fruit, plan to attend the 2014 Upper Gulf Coast Citrus Show on Thursday, December 4. 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.

Citrus grown by local gardeners will be on display for the general public to view at 6:30 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 PowerPoint presentation entitled "Growing Citrus on the Gulf Coast." The Citrus Show is open to the general public.

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 type of fruit is not known, it may be entered and will be identified.

Entries will be accepted at the

Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 2, and on Wednesday, December 3. Rosettes and ribbons will be awarded to the best quality entries.

For additional details and other information for entering citrus, contact the Galveston County Extension Office (phone: 281-534-3413, ext. 1-2) or visit my website provided at the end of this column.

At A Glance

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6: *Growing Tomatoes from Seed.* 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park (4102-B Main St., La Marque).

Learn about the secrets of growing tomatoes from seeds by Master Gardener Ira Gervais who has considerable experience and expertise in growing tomatoes.

Two questions will likely come to mind on this topic: Isn't this an odd time of the year to be thinking about growing tomatoes? And, what can be gained from growing tomatoes from seed when I can just buy the transplants from a garden center?

You can select varieties not commonly available at garden centers including heirloom varieties. In addition, you increase the likelihood of having transplants that are disease and insect free.

Topics include how to pick the best varieties including heirlooms, where to obtain seeds,

planting and growing techniques, and insect and disease control. No fee but pre-registration required (phone 281-534-3413, ext. 21; e-mail GALV3@wt.net).

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10:

What Is a Galveston County Master Gardener?...It takes a village! 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park (4102-B Main St., La Marque). The 2015 Galveston County Master Gardener Training Course will start in February. Interested in learning more about the Master Gardener Program? Interested in becoming a Master Gardener? Interested in the various programs offered by the Galveston County Master Gardeners? Then this program is for you. I along with a panel of Master Gardeners will provide a forum-style presentation discussing the many facets of this volunteer program and how you can become a Master Gardener. No fee but pre-registration required (phone 281-534-3413, ext. 21; e-mail GALV3@wt.net).