

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

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Family & Community Health
County Coordinator

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Program Associate
Nutrition Educator

Office 409-882-7010

Orange County
AgriLife Newsletter
May 2020



Sunday, May 10th



County Judge
John Gothia

Commissioner Precinct 1

Johnny Trahan

Commissioner Precinct 2

Theresa Beauchamp

Commissioner Precinct 3

Kirk Roccaforte

Commissioner Precinct 4

Robert Viator



Monday, May 25th

AgriLife office closed in observance of this day.



Scan and go directly to
AgriLife website
orange.agrilife.org



Texas A&M
AgriLife Extension
Orange County

Orange County Food Safety

COVID-19 food safety: Separating the myths from the facts... Cooking for others

With Easter and Passover behind us, many people are making meals for friends and family members. Both food preparation and delivery deserve due consideration when it comes to mitigating risk. Firstly, “if you’re getting any symptoms at all that you think could be related to COVID-19, please do not prepare food for other people,” says Jeffrey Farber, professor of food science at the University of Guelph. If you’re feeling well, wash your hands thoroughly prior to beginning food prep.

The containers you use to package food should be clean. If you use a dishwasher, the temperature of a hot water cycle is “more than sufficient to inactivate coronavirus,” he adds. If you wash your dishes by hand with hot water and soap, using a brush is preferable to a dish cloth. Unlike with bacterial concerns, viruses can’t multiply on the surface of a dish cloth—“they’re just basically sitting there” - but the abrasion of a brush is more effective. “The physical action of the brush going against the plate or whatever you’re washing should be adequate) to wash off any viral particles that are present,” says Farber.



When it comes to delivering meals to friends or family members, ensure physical distance by calling ahead of time, leaving the container at the door, and calling again from afar to tell them you’ve dropped it off. Once the person has brought the food into their home, they can place it directly in the fridge, wash their hands thoroughly with soap and lukewarm water, and then wash them again prior to eating.

For people at higher risk who want to take extra precautions, Farber says they can choose to clean each individual container or package with a disinfectant wipe, “but is definitely not recommended in general to do this.”

Nationalpost.com/Laura Brehaut

According to the CDC, FDA and USDA, neither food nor food packaging has been associated with transmission of COVID-19, but out of an abundance of caution, please avoid touching items that you do not intend to purchase. Thank you for your cooperation.



James Scales, Health Inspector
Deputy Director
Orange County Environmental
Health and Code Compliance

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Fallon Foster, M.P.H.
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Family & Community Health
Orange County

Family & Community Health

COVID-19

REGIONAL CALL CENTER

HARDIN JASPER JEFFERSON ORANGE NEWTON TYLER COUNTIES

(409) 550-2536

Monday-Friday 8AM-8PM



**YOU CAN BE TESTED FOR COVID-19 IF YOU ARE:
ASYMPTOMATIC**

**HAVE HAD CONTACT WITH A COVID-19
POSITIVE INDIVIDUAL -OR-**

HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:

*Fever (100.4+), Cough, Shortness of Breath,
Fatigue, Muscle/Joint Pain, Sore Throat,
Headache, Chills, Nausea, Vomitting, Nasal
Congestion, Producing Sputum, Diarrhea or
Loss of Taste/Smell*

**CONTACT THE REGIONAL CALL CENTER
TO BE ASSIGNED AN ID#
AND TESTING SITE LOCATION**

**PROPER IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED
HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED FOR BILLING
NO CO-PAY REQUIRED
NO CHARGE TO INDIVIDUALS WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE**

Face Covering Do's and Don'ts:

DO:



- ✓ Make sure you can breathe through it
- ✓ Wear it whenever going out in public
- ✓ Make sure it covers your nose and mouth
- ✓ Wash after using

DON'T:

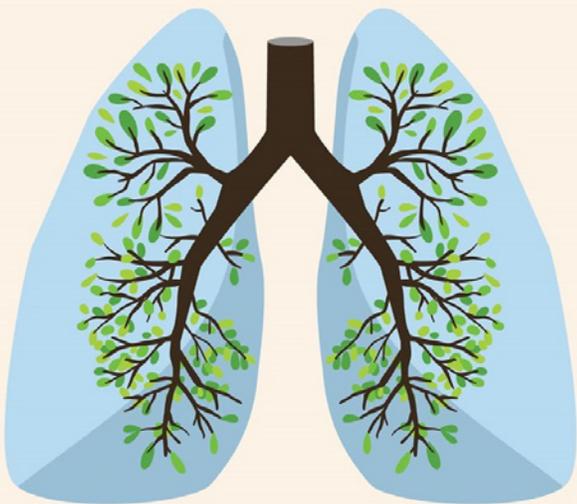
- ✗ Use on children under age 2
- ✗ Use surgical masks or other personal protective equipment (PPE) intended for healthcare workers



cdc.gov/coronavirus

Been indoors and feeling blah?

Let trees give you a boost!



Trees absorb pollutants so you can breathe clean, fresh air, helping your brain release serotonin to boost your energy and mood.

#HealthyTreesHealthyLives

Texas Health and Human Services

COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line

Call the toll-free
COVID-19
Mental Health
Support Line

833-986-1919



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

4-H/Youth Development

Orange County Livestock Show Association

2020 South Texas State Fair Youth Exhibitor Relief Fundraiser Raffle

1st Prize: Beretta A400 Camo .12 Gauge Shotgun



2nd Prize: Ruger EC9S 9mm Handgun



3rd & 4th Prizes: Free Texas Conceal Carry Class

100% of donations will be shared equally between all Orange County 4-H and FFA students who were unable to show their livestock animals at the 2020 South Texas State Fair

Drawing June 4, 2020 Ticket Price: \$10/each

Tickets available at:

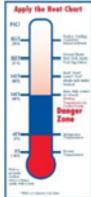
- *All area Reliable Dry Cleaners
- *K-Dan's Super Foods (Orangefield) *Circle K Kiddie Ranch (Hwy 62)
- *Farmer's Mercantile (Orange)
- *Morton's Mercantile (Vidor)
- *Peveto's Feed & Farm Supply (Hwy 62)

Family & Community Health



FREE

FOOD SAFETY CONFERENCE



**August 4, 2020
9 am - 3 pm
Orange County Convention & Expo Center
11475 FM 1442
Orange, TX
409-882-7010**

- Speakers
- Continental Breakfast
- Lunch
- Door Prizes
- Vendors

- Hand's On Activities
- Round Table Talk
- Active Shooter Scenarios
- Rodent Control
- Vent-a-hood Maintenance
- Health Department Speakers

Food Handlers Course offered for \$20 from 3:00 pm-5:00 pm

Deadline to register July 17, 2020

To register go to: orange.agrilife.org and click on the Food Safety Registration tab.

CALLING ALL VENDORS!

Come and set up a booth at our

FOOD SAFETY CONFERENCE

Door Prizes Appreciated



**August 4, 2020
9 am - 3 pm
Orange County Convention & Expo Center
11475 FM 1442
Orange, TX
409-882-7010**

RSVP to James Scales at jscales@co.orange.tx.us by July 6, 2020

WASH YOUR HANDS

Food Safety Tips

- 1. Clean:**
The first rule of safe food preparation!
- 2. Separate:**
Don't give bacteria a chance to spread!
- 3. Cook:**
Kill harmful bacteria!
- 4. Chill:**
Refrigerate foods quickly!

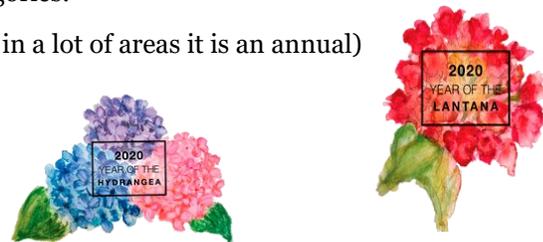
Agrilcuture/Natural Resources

National Garden Bureau Announces 2020 “Year of “ Crops!

By Sheri Bethard, Certified Texas Master Gardener, Orange County Master Gardeners Association

Each year the National Garden Bureau (NGB) selects the crops of the year. For 2020, they have selected the Lantana, the Iris, the Lavender, the Corn and the Hydrangea. They are divided into categories:

- Annuals: Lantana (even though it grows as a perennial in our area, in a lot of areas it is an annual)
- Perennials: Lavender
- Bulb: Iris
- Edibles: Corn
- Flowering Shrubs: Hydrangea (this category is new this year)



I will now talk about each of the selections.



Lantana – has been a staple of a lot of Texas gardens for many years. Most of us remember growing up with the pink and yellow flowered Lantana which is a Native Texas plant. Over the past years, many cultivars have been developed with varying color combinations. There are many, many varieties you might find in garden centers, so choose the best suited for your garden.

Lavender – this is a hard plant to grow in our area. Most Lavenders require a drier climate. There are some Lavenders that are supposed to be able to grow in our area. The Spanish variety (*Lavandula stoechas*) is one. The Phenomenal Lavender is also supposed to do well in heat and humidity. If you make sure your lavender has excellent drainage, is not overwatered, has plenty of air circulation around the plant, and that it's in full sun, you might get one year possibly two out of the plant.

Iris – I know we are all familiar with the Iris. We see them in gulley's and ditches where they grow wild, mostly the purple variety. Irises like their “feet” to be wet, so if you have a low place in your yard staying wet all the time, Irises would be a good plant to put there. Iris bulbs come in many varieties such as: Siberian Iris, Dutch Iris, Japanese Iris, Bearded Iris, Reticulata Iris and many more.



Corn – Well, what can I say about corn???? We all have eaten corn in some form – off the cob, out of the can, whole, creamed, in casseroles. There are so many ways you can eat corn. When corn seed shopping always read the package to make sure you are getting what you want.



Hydrangea – are long lasting shrubs with blooms that seem to last forever. Their flower colors and forms are diverse going from a cone-like form to rounded heads that change color depending on the soil pH. There are many different varieties of Hydrangea in the marketplace. One of my favorites is the Lemon Lime Hydrangea.

If you have any gardening questions contact us thru our website at <https://txmg.org/orange> or our Facebook page Orange County (Texas) Master Gardeners.

got
LAND?

Or thinking about purchasing land?

TEXAS A&M
FOREST SERVICE

Land acquisition and management resources to help you reach your property goals.

get started at
gotLAND.tfs.tamu.edu

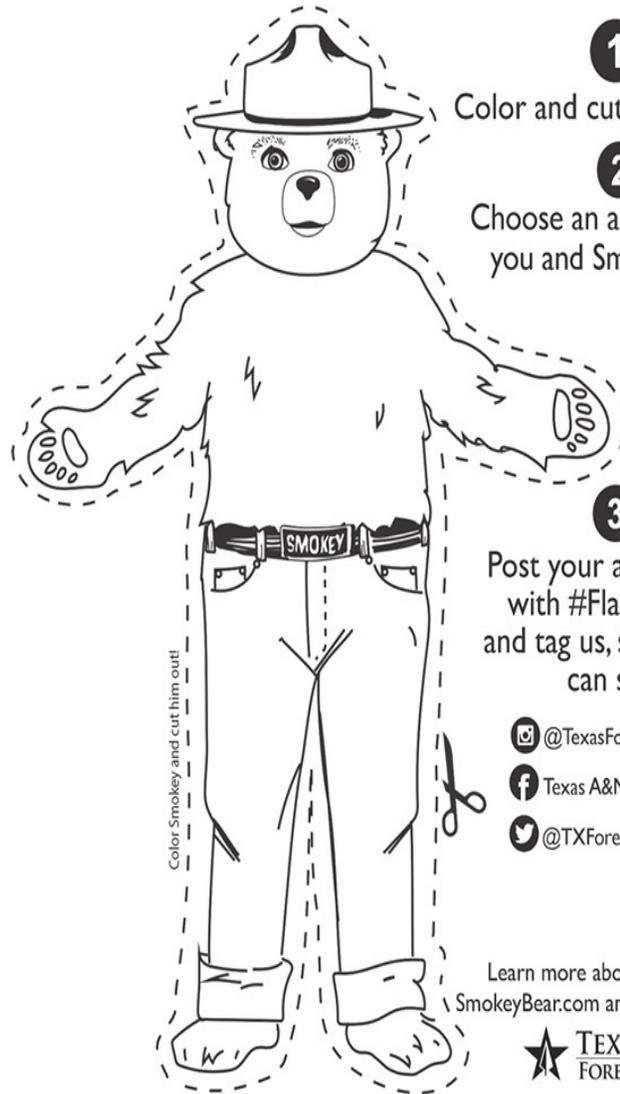
Family & Community Health

In the event of an emergency evacuation, do you have a go bag ready? Now is a great time to prepare.



Texas A&M Forest Service

Prevent Wildfires with Smokey!



1

Color and cut out Smokey.

2

Choose an adventure for you and Smokey Bear.

3

Post your adventures with #FlatSmokey and tag us, so Smokey can see!

@TexasForestService

Texas A&M Forest Service

@TXForest Service

Learn more about fire safety at SmokeyBear.com and tfsweb.tamu.edu.



Full size print of Smokey is available at: tfsweb.tamu.edu
Conservation Education Resources



MOTIVATIONAL MONDAY

Orange County Food Safety

COVID-19 food safety: Separating the myths from the facts

What food safety practices should you adopt during the COVID-19 pandemic? A professor of food science dispels the myths

You've seen the photos and videos on social media. Like a sudsy, pandemic edition of bobbing for apples, people sharing what they assume to be a prudent food safety precaution. In an effort to banish all traces of coronavirus, sinks full of soapy water—everything from fresh fruit and vegetables to snacks and other packaged foods floating on the surface.

"It's really not necessary." says Jeffrey Farber, professor of food science at the University of Guelph. To date, there is no evidence linking COVID-19 transmission to food or food packaging, he emphasizes. Just as you would in non-pandemic times—as recommended by Health Canada and the U. S. Food and Drug Administration—using cold running water to wash fruit and vegetables before eating "should be more than sufficient."



Not only is it unwarranted, explains Farber—who was previously director of Bureau of Microbial Hazards at Health Canada, and has more than 35 years of experience in food—safety—it's also potentially dangerous for reasons unrelated to coronavirus. By putting food in the sink, cross contamination with bacterial pathogens can occur—especially if it has previously housed something like raw chicken.

"You can have potentially dangerous bacterial pathogens in the sink," says Farber. "And people don't generally tend to wash their sinks very well, or clean them that often." At the best of times, kitchen sinks are among the filthiest places in the home, even your toilet may be cleaner.

Additionally, washing fruit and vegetables with dish soap can cause stomach upset. "This is definitely a no-no because we know that soap actually can cause things like vomiting and or diarrhea," says Farber. And so long as you're washing your hands well—with lukewarm water and soap for at least 20 seconds—before and after you handle package food, and every time you eat, there's no need to give them a bath either.

Nationalpost.com/Laura Brehaut



James Scales, Health Inspector
Deputy Director
Orange County Environmental
Health and Code Compliance



COVID-19 AND FOOD SAFETY FACTS FRESH PRODUCE

COULD EATING FRESH PRODUCE THAT HAS BEEN CONTAMINATED CAUSE COVID-19?



- CDC, FDA and USDA are not aware of any reports at this time that suggests the virus that causes COVID-19 is spread by eating food that might inadvertently contain small amounts of virus.
- Produce has not been identified as a risk factor in the transmission of other respiratory virus outbreaks.
- Follow good food safety practices whenever preparing, storing, or consuming foods.

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Fallon Foster, M.P.H.
County Extension Agent
Family & Community Health
Orange County

NC STATE
EXTENSION

Stay informed: go.ncsu.edu/covid-19

Updated April 3, 2020

NC STATE
UNIVERSITY

Agriculture/Natural Resources

All Master Gardener programs postpone until further notice.

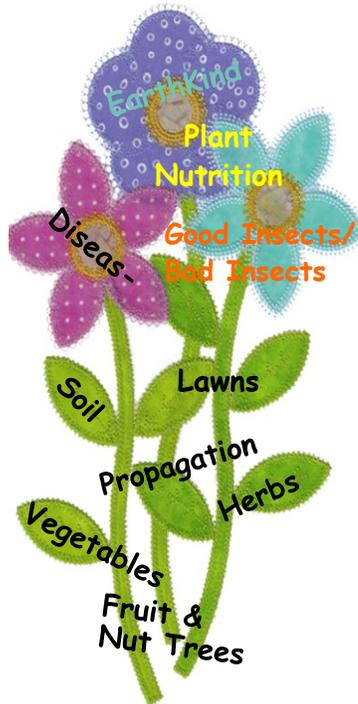


The Orange County Master Gardeners Presents... Master Gardener Certification Training Course 2020

Join the Orange County Master Gardeners for classes led by local horticultural specialists and Master Gardeners to become a Certified Texas Master Gardener. Classes are \$150, which includes all training material, speaker fees, and supplies.

Classes will be held on Thursdays in 2 semesters:
Spring – April 2 thru May 28 and
Fall – Sept. 3 thru Nov. 12
Some Saturday classes/field trips will be scheduled.

RSVP required 409-882-7010
<https://txmg.org/orange/>
Email: sheribethard@yahoo.com



The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

The Orange County Master Gardener HOTLINE

A Master Gardener Volunteer is available to answer your questions.

Tuesday & Thursday 10 AM – 2 PM.
Call 409-882-7010 or stop by the

Orange County Master Gardeners hold their monthly meeting on the 2nd Thursdays of each month.

Social & meal begins at 6 pm

6:30 pm Business meeting followed by a special presentation

The public is welcome to visit any of the meeting.

Meetings are held at Orange County Convention & Expo Center, 11475 FM 1442 Orange.

If you have further questions about the Orange County Master Gardens contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office at 409-882-7010.

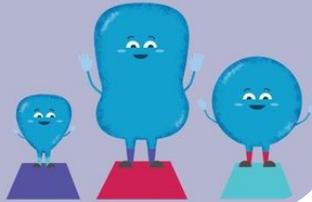
Family & Community Health

COVID-19 PARENTING: Structure up

Create a flexible but consistent **daily routine**

Children or teenagers can help plan the routine for the day – like making a school timetable. Children will follow this better if they help to make it.

Include exercise in each day – this helps with stress and kids with lots of energy at home.



COVID-19 PARENTING: Bad behavior

Redirect

Catch bad behavior early and redirect your kids' attention from a bad to a good behavior.

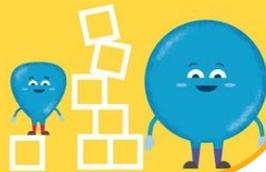
Stop it before it starts! When they start to get restless, you can distract with something interesting or fun: "Come, let's play a game together."



COVID-19 PARENTING: One-on-One Time

Set aside time to spend with each child

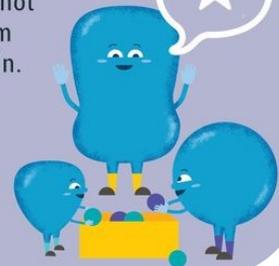
It can be for just 20 minutes, or longer – it's up to us. It can be at the same time each day so children or teenagers can look forward to it.



COVID-19 PARENTING: Keeping it positive

Praise your child when they are behaving well

Try praising your child or teenager for something they have done well. They may not show it, but you'll see them doing that good thing again. It will also reassure them that you notice and care.



COVID-19 PARENTING: Keep calm and manage stress

Take a break

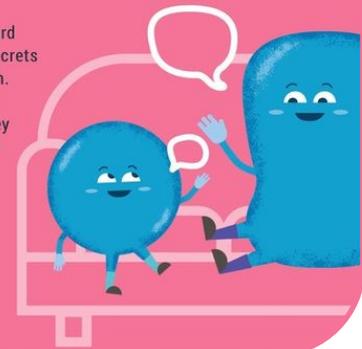
We all need a break sometimes. When your children are asleep, do something fun or relaxing for yourself. Make a list of healthy activities that YOU like to do. You deserve it!



COVID-19 PARENTING Talking about COVID-19

Be willing to talk.

They will already have heard something. Silence and secrets do not protect our children. Honesty and openness do. Think about how much they will understand. You know them best.



Agriculture/Natural Resources

Citrus Greening and Citrus Canker

By Sheri Bethard, Texas Certified Master Gardener, Orange County Master Gardeners

This will be the first of two articles discussing **Citrus Greening and Citrus Canker**. First, I will go over **Citrus Greening** and next week I will cover **Citrus Canker**.

They are two diseases which attack the citrus family. Both are currently in Texas and other states along the Gulf Coast including South Carolina and the Los Angeles area. To control these diseases the counties in which these diseases have appeared are currently quarantined. Texas counties under quarantine closest to us are Harris, Montgomery, Galveston, Brazoria and Fort Bend. Additional counties along the coast and also the Rio Grande Valley area are included. Within the quarantine areas all home-grown citrus must be consumed within the area and home-grown citrus plants cannot be transported outside of the quarantined area.

Commercial citrus businesses, Internet shippers and roadside vendors within the State of Texas should be able to prove they are in compliance with the federal and state quarantine guidelines. Before you buy, make sure they are in compliance and they citrus was not from a quarantined area.

Citrus Greening is a devastating bacterial citrus disease caused by the bacterium *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus*, which is vectored by the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP). It is also known as the yellow dragon disease. It was confirmed in Louisiana in 2008 and Texas in 2012 and is found worldwide.

There is no cure for this disease once a tree is infected. While the disease poses no threat to humans or animals, it has devastated millions of acres of citrus production around the world, including in the United States.

What to look for? A tree infected by **Citrus Greening** may have:

Asian citrus psyllid

- Adult is about the size of a toothpick tip (about 3mm or 1/8th inch) and has a distinctive 45-degree angled posture when present on leaves
- Nymphs are smaller and yellow-orange. They feed on new growth and secrete a waxy substance.

Once a tree is infected with the bacteria, the tree can remain without detectable symptoms for months or years. During this symptomless phase, the tree can serve as a source of bacteria to infect other trees.

Leaves and branches

- Leaves are blotchy, mottled, and yellowed
- Leaves may have raised veins with a corky appearance

Fruit

- Fruit tastes bitter but poses no health problems to humans
- Fruit may be stunted or lopsided, remain green or partially green, fall prematurely from the tree

Since there is not a cure for **Citrus Greening**, prevention is the best approach to managing both.

- Do not purchase plants, fruit, budwood, rootstock

seedlings or budded trees from quarantined areas and transporting it out of that area.

- Purchase certified plants by buying plants, budwood, and seedlings only from Texas Department of Agriculture-certified citrus nurseries
- Use good sanitation practices to reduce potential disease spread. Practice general cleanliness and use alcohol-based sanitizers, bleach solution, and antibacterial soap solutions to decontaminate equipment and tools and reduce the risks associated with human and mechanical transmission of the diseases.
- Remove and destroy diseased plants to eliminate potential bacteria for future infections.
- Monitor nearby citrus plants. If new infections appear, take action swiftly. **TDA regulations require disposal of infected tree and plant material by burning or bagging and burying it at least 2 feet deep at a municipal landfill.**

Plant protection chemicals that contain copper can help prevent infection. These products reduce risks but do not stop the disease from occurring or cure affected trees.

- Application timing is critical to provide protection.
- New, growing tissues are the most susceptible to infection.
- Multiple applications may be needed to ensure proper coverage on the plant.
- Proper chemical use and rates are available on the product label. Always read all directions and labels before using any chemical control agent.

For more information on **Citrus Greening** check out <https://plantclinic.tamu.edu/files/2019/10/CitrusGreeningRVSD.pdf> Or you can contact Texas A&M AgriLife County Extension office – Orange County 409 882-7010 or the Texas Dept. of Agriculture at www.texasagriculture.gov or call (877) 542-2474.

Be sure to look for my article next week on **Citrus Canker** another devastating citrus disease

Citrus Greening on leaves



Lopsided fruit from Citrus Greening



4-H/Youth Development

All activities are postpone to further notice.

We miss our 4-H youth and volunteers. Everyone Stay Safe & Well!!

Adult Leaders Association & County Council

1st Monday @ 6 pm
4-H Office

Dusty Trails 4-H & Clover Kids Club

1st Tuesday
6pm @ 4-H Office
Casey Trahan 409-988-4873

Mighty Pirates 4-H

2nd Tuesday @ 7 pm,
Vidor Junior High Cafeteria
Tammy Glawson 409-474-2811
Sandy Byers 409-201-8523

Boots & Bridles 4-H Horse Club

3rd Monday
6 pm @ T2 Arena
Debbie Vance—409-365-9027
Gabrielle Barfield

All Hearts 4-H Homeschool Club

3rd Monday
1 pm @ 4-H Office
Tammy Swindell 409-239-6026

Clay Busters Shooting Sport

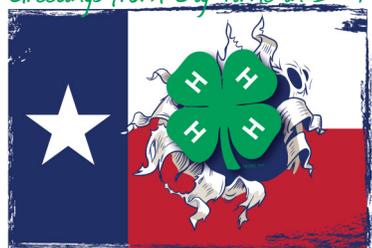
Meetings—3rd Tuesday
6 pm 4-H Office
Tuesdays Shooting practice 6 pm
Orange County Gun Club
Robert Caffey 409-767-6222



OC 4-H Judging Club

Thursdays @ 6:30 pm
4-H Office
Melissa Pyatt 409-679-2441

Greetings from Big Time in D-9



Southeast District 9 4-H Roundup

4-H Projects are held at the 4-H Office 6 pm - 8pm

Food & Nutrition
3rd Tuesday

Robotics
4th Monday

Fashion & Interior Design
4th Tuesday



If you have any questions, please contact the 4-H office 409-882-7010.

If you need any type of accommodation to participate in this program or have questions about the physical access provided, please Orange AgriLife Office 409-882-7010, at least 2 weeks prior to the program or event you are interested in.

Agriculture/Natural Resources

Improving Clay Soil

By Sheri Bethard, Certified Texas Master Gardener, Orange County Master Gardeners

As most of you already have figured out the soil in the majority of Orange County is considered Coast Prairie Soil which are mostly deep, dark-gray, neutral to slightly acid clay loams and clays. With clay soil you know it can be a challenge both for you and your plants. Heavy clay drains slowly, staying wet longer and when it does dry it is a hard, cracked surface. Clay soils are usually rich in nutrients.

To work with clay soil, here are some things you can do to help “soften” it and make it easier to work.

Test soil pH. Adjust if necessary. Even though clay is rich, you need to check to see if it is too acidic or too alkaline. If either, your plants will not be able to take up the nutrients. You can use a home test kit or send a sample to Texas A&M AgriLife for testing. The Orange County Extension office has forms with instructions. Your ideal pH range for most plants is 6.3 – 6.8.

Add organic matter. This helps improve drainage and lighten the heavy soil. It also provides beneficial nutrients for soil microorganisms which will help improve the soil. It is best to add compost and aged manure before you plant in the spring. A 2 to 3-inch layer worked into the soil about shovel depth is a good amount. Thru-out the growing season add organic materials such as shredded leaves, grass clippings (minus weeds) or additional compost. The microorganisms in the soil will “eat” the organic matter, so you will continually need to add “food” for them to keep working.

Build raised beds. Since clay holds water, building raised beds can help with drainage. Raised beds can be a mound of soil, or constructed with sides of wood, brick, stone or many different materials. Size your beds so you can reach the middle from either side. Normally, a raised bed is about 4 feet wide and can be as long as you want. If you purchase a pre-fab kit, most of them are 4x4 or 4x8. With raised beds be sure you add a good quality garden soil, compost and aged manure. Always before planting at the minimum, do a pH test. If your pH is not correct, your plants will not grow.



Mulch beds over winter. Even though winter has just past, one thing to remember this fall is to mulch your beds. Leaving them bare, the rain beating down can compact the soil making it harder to work the soil in the spring. If you do not have leaves from trees to spread over your garden, you can use straw which can be purchased at a farm supply store. Doing this will also help keep the weed growth down over winter. In the spring, move the mulch to your garden paths if it has not broken down enough to work into the soil. Just remember if you till the soil with a tiller, you are destroying the earthworms that have come to “eat” the organic materials you had put out over winter. So be careful when you start back in spring working your soil.

Expanded Shale. Shale is a common sedimentary rock comprised of flakes of clay and other minerals such as quartz and calcite. Expanded shale is found in Texas when Texas was a huge lakebed. It is a lightweight, gray, porous gravel related to perlite and vermiculite. Adding it to heavy clay soil lightens and aerates the soil and it holds 40% of its weight in water allowing for better water retention around plants. Expanded shale does not breakdown so soils stay loose for years.

Greensand. Greensand is an organic fertilizer that contains mineral deposits from the ocean floor. It can enhance soil structure, increase root growth and is good for the overall health of plants as it provides needed nutrients. Greensand is not water soluble, so it has to break up in the soil. Apply it directly to the soil and do not mix with water and apply early in spring. For flower and vegetable gardens a goal is 30 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

I hope this has given you some insights into how to help you work the clay soils in Orange County. If you have any horticulture or gardening questions, please go to our website <https://txmg.org/orange> and click on the down arrow on the Contact tab and complete the form. Someone will get back with you within 24 hours.

All of the Master Gardener and Texas A&M AgriLife Programs and classes have been cancelled or postponed until further notice. We will update as dates become available here, on our website and our Facebook page: Orange County Texas Master Gardeners. Please heed the current Emergency Declarations as they are in place for your protection and mine. Happy Gardening!

Family & Community Health

Green Bean and Squash Salad

Serves 8

Salad

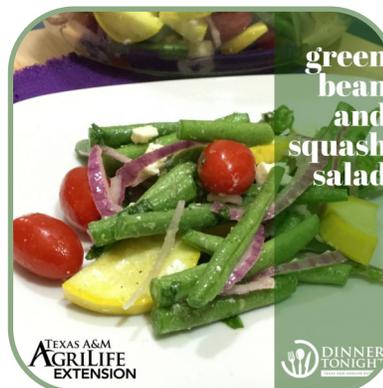
- 2 cups fresh green beans, trimmed and cut into bite size pieces
- 2 cups yellow squash, sliced and chopped
- 1/2 pint grape tomatoes
- 3/4 cups red onion, finely sliced
- 1/4 cup reduced fat feta cheese, crumbled

Dressing

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 cup lime juice, fresh squeezed
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, washed and chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

1. Clean, slice and chop vegetables and place in a large bowl. Add tomatoes then feta cheese to bowl.
2. Mix olive oil, lime juice, basil, and spices in a small bowl.
3. Pour over vegetables and mix well. Chill in fridge for 30 minutes before serving.

Nutrition Facts: Serving Size 1/2 cup. Calories 90, Total Fat 6g, Saturated Fat 2g, Trans Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 400mg, Total Carbohydrate 7g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Sugars 2g, Protein 3g.



Slow Cooker Peach Cobbler

Serves 10

- * 3 lbs. frozen slice peaches, thawed and drained
- * 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- * 2/4 cup cornmeal
- * 1 teaspoon baking powder
- * 1/2 cup sugar
- * 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- * 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- * 1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
- * 1/4 teaspoon salt
- * 3 tablespoons plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- * 1/3 cup 1% Milk
- * 1 large egg
- * 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Preheat your slow cooker by setting it to the low setting.
2. In a medium size mixing bowl, mix together the flour, cornmeal, baking powder, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and salt.
3. Add in Greek yogurt, milk, egg and vanilla extract; mix well.
4. Add peaches in an even layer on the bottom of the slow cooker
5. Pour the flour mixture on top of peaches.
6. Slow cook on low for a minimum of 4 to 4 1/2 hours.
7. Store any leftover cobbler in the refrigerator. Do not reheat food or leftovers in the slow cooker; instead reheat on stove top or the microwave.

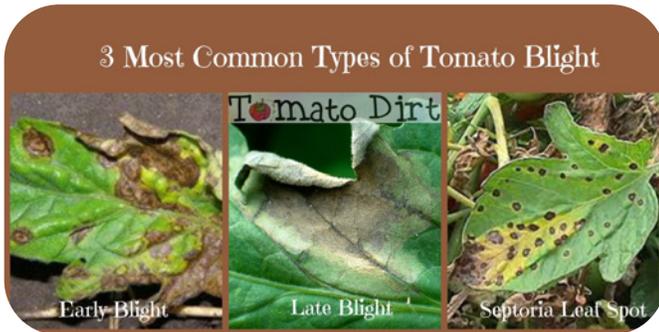
Nutrition Facts: 1/3 cup serving size. Calories 220, Total Fat 1g, Cholesterol 20mg, Sodium 240mg, Total Carbohydrate 50g, Dietary Fiber 3g, Total Sugars 35g includes 4g Added Sugars, Protein 4g.



Agriculture/Natural Resources

Is it Tomato Blight or Wilt? That is the Question

By Sheri Bethard, Texas Certified Master Gardener,
Orange County Master Gardeners



Tomatoes along with other plants are prone to many diseases. **Tomato Blight** and **Wilt** are just two of the many that could happen in your garden.

The 3 most common types of Tomato Blight are: **Early Blight**, **Late Blight** and **Septoria**.

Early Blight is fungus *Alternaria solani*. It shows as dark, concentric spots ¼ - ½ inch on lower stems and leaves, spots on the fruit near stems and the lower leaves yellow and drop. It affects the leaves, stem and fruit. It shows up in early to mid-season and is found in wet weather.

Late Blight is fungus *Phytophthora infetans*. It shows a blue-gray spots on leaves which then turn brown, leaves are dropped, there are irregular brown greasy spots on the fruit and white mold rings are on the spots. It affects the leaves, stem and fruit showing up in mid to late season in wet weather.

Septoria is fungus *Septoria lycopersici*. It shows as small black or brown spots on the lower leaves and the lower leaves yellow and drop. It affects the leaves and stems not the fruit and shows in early to mid-season in wet weather.

They can all be treated and controlled with organic (one with copper) or chemical fungicides. Remove and destroy infected leaves and be sure to wash your hands afterwards so you don't infect other crops.

There are 3 types of Tomato Wilt: **Bacteria Wilt (aka Southern Bacterial Wilt)**, **Verticillium Wilt**, and **Fusarium Wilt** all living in the soil.

Bacterial Wilt is bacterium, *Pseudomonas solanacearum*. When it attacks, the plant wilts and dies quickly without warning. The bacteria clog the vascular system, clogging the water-conducting tissue in the stem so nutrients can't reach branches and leaves, thus starving the plant. The plant remains green and when the main stem is split, it is dark and water-soaked, the result of being plugged up. In late stages, the stem may become hollow. Root-knot nematodes are known to weaken the plant roots allowing bacteria to pass into the plant.

Verticillium Wilt is fungus *Verticillium albo-atrum*. Symptoms are similar to fusarium wilt, bacterial canker or early blight. Look for yellow spots to appear on lower leaves followed by brown veins. Leaves then turn brown and fall off. The infection pattern is often in a V-shape and progress up the stem. Plants will wilt during the day and recover at night. If the interior stem is split, it

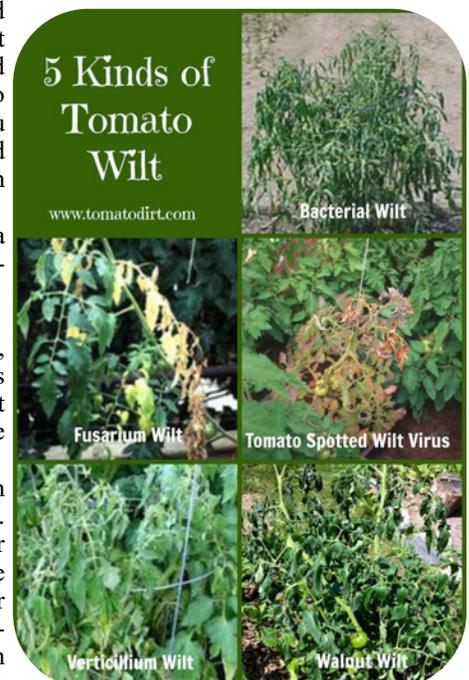
will have discolored streaks about 10-12 inches above the soil line, the result of tissue being water clogged. Use fertilizers low in nitrogen to slow the disease and higher in potassium.

Fusarium Wilt is fungus *Fusarium oxysporum f. sp Lycopersici*, clogging the water conducting tissues preventing water and nutrients from reaching all parts of the plant. Usually, the plant dies. First signs are normally yellowing and wilting along one side of the plant, a leaf, single shoot, branch or several branches. As the fungus spreads, more yellowing and wilting will appear with leaves dropping off prematurely. Interior of the main stem when split will show discolored streaks of the clogged tissue. If the plant does not die, it will produce weak and inferior fruit. Fusarium Wilt can attack at anytime of the plants growth, but usually appears right after the blossoms start. It likes temperatures 70°-90°F along with wet weather. If your soils is poor in draining this will also help the fungus multiply and move up the vascular system. Slow the disease by keeping your pH 6.5 – 7.0 using a nitrate-based nitrogen fertilizer rather than an ammonia based nitrogen fertilizer. Root-knot nematodes help the fungus be more prevalent as they work on the roots allowing the fungus easy access into the plant system. Use disease-resistant varieties with and "F" listed after the variety name on its label indicating its resistance to one or more strains for the fungus.

For all of the disease problems above, plant your tomatoes no more than once every 4 years in the same spot. Also, avoid planting peppers, eggplant, potatoes, sunflowers and cosmos as they are all susceptible to the disease if planted in the same spot. Plant crops like beans, corn and cabbage. There are not any chemical treatments rid plants of these diseases. Plant disease-resistant hybrids, plant in raised beds, give plenty of space between plants, water the soil, not the plants, mulch and keep lower leaves from touching the ground to keep the fungus from spreading to them, stake your plants for better air circulation and most of all remove and destroy affected plants at the end of the season.

I hope this has helped you understand what Tomato Blight and Wilt are and how to determine which you might have. I obtained this information from www.tomatodirt.com which I found to be a great source of information on tomatoes.

For any gardening, horticulture questions please use our Contact for on our website <https://txmg.org/> orange until we open our hotline up again. Or you can post on our Facebook page Orange County Texas Master Gardeners and someone will get back with you within 24 hours or sooner.



Family & Community Health

Make Your Produce Last



During this pandemic we've had to learn how to pull back and conserve our food and our money. *Cosmopolitan* magazine offers several ideas that may help you in the kitchen.

- ◆ Put paper towels in the salad drawer
Lining your crisper with a few sheets of kitchen roll absorbs the condensation that the veggies generate as they chill. Excess moisture can make your fresh foods wilt and much faster, so the paper keeps them fresher for longer
- ◆ Don't separate bananas before eating
You may think you're being super productive packaging your 'nanas into day-to-day portions, but actually the trick to stop them going brown is to keep them together as long as possible. Wrap the stems of the bananas in clingfilm when you first buy them, and only snap one off when you're ready to eat it. This should give you 3-5 extra days of perfectly ripe banana joy.

- ◆ Put an apple in your bag of potatoes
Sprouted potatoes are at the top of nobody's to-eat list. It turns out the best way to prevent them turning into a reject from the cast list of *Alien* is to keep an apple in the bag - apples produce ethylene gas, which keeps potatoes fresher and firmer, and ready for jacket-and-mash duties for a few more weeks.
- ◆ But keep apples away from other fruits and veggies
Ethylene gas may be good for potatoes, but it's bad for almost everything else. Keep apples out of the fruit bowl (and in a plastic bag in the fridge) and you should suddenly find that your other purchases keep much better.
- ◆ Wash berries in vinegar
Because fate is cruel, berries are both a) pretty much the most expensive fruit and b) the quickest to go moldy by a mile. You can extend their life by giving them a bath in 1 cup of vinegar and 3 cups of water before you put them in the fridge - this kills the mold spores and bacteria that turn them fuzzy. Just be sure to dry them thoroughly before storing.



- ◆ DON'T refrigerate your tomatoes
Seriously. You'll kill their flavor, and their juicy texture doesn't survive so well in the cold either. To make the most of your tomatoes, keep them on a counter to allow them to ripen them to their full potential.
- ◆ Wrap celery in foil
In the plastic wrapper you get from the supermarket, celery will last a week or two at most - annoying if you only use a couple of stalks at a time. Swap the original packaging for a sheet of aluminum foil - it lets the gas that spoils your celery escape, rather than trapping it like plastic, so the celery stays crisp.
- ◆ Let avocado ripen at room temperature
Keep your avocados out till they're ripe (you know they're there when they give a little when pressed), then put them in the fridge to halt the process and keep them ready to eat. Once you've cut them, keep the stone in the remaining half squeeze on a little lemon juice to preserve them even further.
- ◆ Put your onions in tights
Put onions in a pair of hose one at a time, knot between each bulb and keep them in a dark, dry place until you need them.
- ◆ Ice your greens
Rehydrate and refresh your leaves by separating them and tossing them into a sink full of iced water for anywhere from 5-30 mins, depending on how sad they're looking.
- ◆ Keep mushrooms in a paper bag
Paper bags keep mushrooms much more efficiently than the usual plastic tub. Moisture creates slime for mushrooms, so storing them in a paper bag keeps them clean and dry. If the mushrooms get to dry, give them a quick rinse in the sink and they will plump right back up.
- ◆ Treat herbs like a bouquet
Don't keep those hers in a bag in the fridge, they will turn to mush. After using what you need, store the rest of the bunch in a glass of water on the windowsill.
- ◆ And when they're on the turn, freeze them in olive oil
Once the herbs has run its course, finely chop the herbs, ass them to an empty ice cue tray, and pour olive oil over the top. Freeze until set. They will last for months. To use just add to a hot pan until the oil cooks down.



Agriculture/Natural Resources

Citrus Greening and Citrus Canker

By Sheri Bethard, Texas Certified Master Gardener, Orange County Master Gardeners

This is the second of two articles discussing **Citrus Greening and Citrus Canker**. Last week I went over **Citrus Greening** and this week I will cover **Citrus Canker**.

As a reminder, they are two diseases which attack the citrus family. Both are currently in Texas and other states along the Gulf Coast including South Carolina and the Los Angeles area. To control these diseases the counties in which these diseases have appeared are currently quarantined. Texas counties under quarantine closest to us are Harris, Montgomery, Galveston, Brazoria and Fort Bend. Additional counties along the coast and also the Rio Grande Valley area are included. Within the quarantine areas all home-grown citrus must be consumed within the area and home-grown citrus plants cannot be transported outside of the quarantined area.

Commercial citrus businesses, Internet shippers and roadside vendors within the State of Texas should be able to prove they are in compliance with the federal and state quarantine guidelines. Before you buy, make sure they are in compliance and the citrus was not from a quarantined area.

Citrus Canker is an incurable bacterial disease that causes lesions on the leaves, stems and fruit of citrus plants and other plants in the citrus family. It is not harmful to humans. It is highly contagious and can be spread rapidly by wind-driven rain, equipment, people carrying the infection on their hands and clothing or moving infected plants or plant parts (fruit, leaves or stems). Long distance spread occurs through the movement of infected plants of plant parts including nursery trees and propagation material (budwood, rootstock seedlings and budded trees). Hurricanes and severe weather events of strong winds and rain can spread **Citrus Canker** long distances. **The bacteria may survive up to 10 months in lesions on living citrus plants. There is NO CURE for this disease!**

The pathogen flourishes under moist and warm conditions and enters the host plant thru the leaf pores and wounds such as those caused by leaf miners. Seven to 10 days following entering the plant a pinpoint lesion becomes visible as raised or 'pustular' on both leaf surfaces, but mostly on the lower side. They develop a yellow halo with water-soaked margins, becoming corky and crateriform, with a raised margin and sunken center. Leaf lesions are usually about 1/16" – 1/2" across. Leaves and young green stems are vulnerable to the infection. Trees can survive for long periods with diseased plant tissues, which cause discoloration of the bark.

Since there is no cure for **Citrus Canker**, prevention is the best approach to managing both.

- **Do not purchase** plants, fruit, budwood, rootstock seedlings or budded trees from quarantined areas and transporting it out of that area.

- Purchase certified plants by buying plants, budwood, and seedlings only from Texas Department of Agriculture-certified citrus nurseries.
- Use good sanitation practices to reduce potential disease spread. Practice general cleanliness and use alcohol-based sanitizers, bleach solution, and antibacterial soap solutions to decontaminate equipment and tools and reduce the risks associated with human and mechanical transmission of the diseases.
- If you suspect that a citrus plant has **Citrus Canker** or **Citrus Greening**, report the tree to TDA at (800) 835-5832 or online at <http://www.citrusalert.com/report-a-tree> for further assistance.
- Remove and destroy diseased plants to eliminate potential bacteria for future infections.
- Monitor nearby citrus plants. If new infections appear, take action swiftly. **TDA regulations require disposal of infected tree and plant material by burning or bagging and burying it at least 2 feet deep at a municipal landfill.**

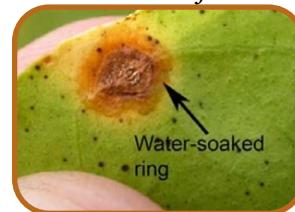
For more information on Citrus Canker check out <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/library/gardening/citrus-canker/>. Or you can contact Texas A&M AgriLife County Extension office – Orange County 409 882-7010 or the Texas Dept. of Agriculture at www.texasagriculture.gov or call (877) 542-2474.

I hope you have found the articles the past two week informative and I will try to include more articles along these areas in the coming months. If you have a suggestion for an article, please visit the Contact area of our website <https://txmg.org/orange> or go on our FaceBook page Orange County Texas Master Gardeners and let us know.

Citrus Canker lesions on a leaf



Close up on the Canker on the leaf



Lesions on the citrus fruit



Leaf miner damage with Citrus Canker present now



Pictures from the Texas Department of Agriculture website

Sun-Dried Tomato, Spinach, and Bacon Chicken (4 servings)

Baked Chicken Breasts:

- * 1.5 lb. chicken (4 small breast or 2 large breast sliced horizontally in half)
- * 1 Tbsp. butter
- * 0.5 oz. Italian Dressing mix packet (half the packet)

Creamed Spinach:

- * 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- * 6 oz baby spinach, fresh
- * 4 garlic cloves, minced
- * 2/3 c half and half
- * 2/3 c mozzarella cheese, shredded
- * 1/8 teaspoon salt

Other ingredients:

- * 1/4 c sun-dried tomatoes drained of oil, chopped into smaller bites
- * 4 slices bacon, cooked
- * 4 slices Pepper Jack cheese or Monterey cheese with jalapenos

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Butter the bottom of the baking dish. Season chicken breasts on both sides with the Italian salad dressing mix. Place the chicken breasts, flat side down, into the greased baking dish and bake for 15-20 minutes.

How to make creamed spinach:

1. Heat 1 Tbsp vegetable oil in a large skillet on medium heat. Add spinach and cook for only 1 or 2 minutes until it is heated through and starts to wilt. Remove from heat. Add minced garlic and half and half. Bring to boil. Add shredded mozzarella cheese and keep stirring, on high heat, until mozzarella cheese starts to melt—about 30 seconds. Reduce heat to simmer and keep stirring until you have a nice smooth creamed spinach—about 30 seconds to a minute. The creamed spinach should be pretty thick in texture, not watery. If watery, bring to boil again and cook off extra liquid, constantly stirring. Season with salt. Remove from heat.

Smothered Chicken Breasts:

1. Remove the baking pan with the breast from the oven. Top each chicken breast with creamed spinach, sun-dried tomatoes, chopped cooked bacon, and broken slices of pepper jack cheese. Bake in oven uncovered for 15-20 more minutes, until the chicken is completely cooked through, no longer pink in the centers, and the juices run clear.

Enjoy!

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