



PHOTO BY **Herman Auer**

Creating a kitchen garden can be a daunting task for the beginner. Shown above is Master Gardener Mary Demeny in her kitchen garden. Mary will provide a seminar on "Kitchen Gardening . . . From Conception to Reality" on Saturday at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in La Marque.

The winter season has been rather mild overall for Gulf Coast gardeners and rainfall has been ample—I've become way too familiar to the squish-squish sound heard when walking over a lawn with waterlogged soil. Peaches and plums have started to display their beautiful flowers and the promise of spring can be seen. With a little luck, Mother Nature will place many more blossoms in home landscapes over the

next few weeks. In the meantime, look over the following checklist for February's gardening activities:
Hands-on Rose Pruning Demonstrations: Did you remember to prune your roses on Valentine's Day? Are you a bit hesitant on what types of roses to prune and not prune? Then be sure to visit the Master Gardener Horticulture Demonstration Garden on Thursday (Feb. 19)

morning.
Master Gardener and consulting Rosarian John Jons will provide demonstrations on how to properly prune your roses. Please bring hand pruners and gloves (not required but needed if you wish to practice pruning on site). John's presentation will start at 9:00 a.m. No pre-registration required.
Raised Beds: Moisture-saturated soils have provided an abundance of



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Lawns: Yes, most area St. Augustine lawns are dull brown in color because of our on-and-off periods of cool weather conditions. However, do not fertilize St. Augustine lawns now in the hope of making it green up faster. St. Augustine lawns should not be fertilized this time of year until after the grass starts to actively grow; otherwise, if you fertilize now you will be benefitting winter weeds and some of the nitrogen will be lost before lawn growth starts.

Gladiolus: Begin planting gladiolus bulbs. Space planting dates at 2-week intervals to extend the flower season.

Master Gardeners are sponsoring two educational programs this Saturday that will likely be of interest

Master Gardener Sandra Devall will discuss “Texas-Tuff Landscape Plants - Blooming and Beautiful” on Saturday, February 21, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Sandra is a fourth generation Texas gardener and presents a personal perspective on a variety of tree, shrubs, annuals and perennials. She will present a program on choosing varieties of hearty plants for your landscape that will be ornamental as well as welcoming to bees and other pollinators, birds and butterflies. She will also discuss ways to bring beauty to the garden and save you money by directing you away from plants that will not bring you gardening success here in Galveston County.

to gardeners across the county. I looked up the term "book-learning" and one definition goes as follows: Knowledge acquired from reading books, as opposed to knowledge gained through experience; theoretical or academic knowledge as opposed to practical or common-sensical knowledge. The speakers for both programs have "book-learning" (they have, after all, earned the title of Certified Master Gardeners) and they have amassed a wealth of practical or common-sensical knowledge from their lifelong experiences as gardeners. Moreover, they gladly share their knowledge and experiences with the public.

I vouch for both presenters being “book-learned” and “common-sensical.” I also know that they are also gifted and entertaining speakers. I have attended their seminars on several occasions before and I have learned something different each time I attended. Even though there isn’t any registration fee, I was tempted (albeit momentarily) to apply an entertainment surcharge fee as they deliver their programs in a most engaging manner.

