

FALL INTO GARDENING . . . SEPTEMBER'S GARDEN CALENDAR

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office



PHOTO BY William M. Johnson

The Master Gardener Horticulture Demonstration Garden in Carbide Park contains a Serenity Garden in addition to a wide selection of vegetable beds and a fruit orchard. The garden will be open to the public from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 4.



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Ahhh, September has arrived. Weather-wise, the 2014 summer season has been relatively tolerable. We managed to stay below 100-degrees, most areas of the county received fairly decent amounts of rainfall and hurricanes have not been a threat to our area. Kids are back in school and the hope of cooler days is becoming more of a reality. Although it may not seem like it, September marks the beginning of a new season in our area. The change is subtle to be sure but the warm

days of summer are coming to an end and the fall gardening season is here. The seasonal change is also apparent in the length of the day as we are rapidly approaching the autumnal equinox when days and nights are equal in duration and the fall season technically commences on Monday, September 22, at 11:29 p.m. One good thing about our Texas Gulf Coast summers is that we get to anticipate and to better appreciate the

cooler temperatures of the fall season. The gardening checklist for September includes the following.

Master Gardener Horticulture Demonstration Garden Tour: The Master Gardeners will conduct a "Garden with the Masters" program on Thursday, September 4. A guided tour of vegetable beds as well as the fruit orchard and Asian garden will start at 9:00 a.m. Gardeners are also welcome to casually tour the garden and orchard thereafter until 11:30



a.m.

Annual Ornamentals, Perennials & Fall Vegetables Sale: The 2014 fall plant sale is an "absolute must" for area gardeners. This is an early notification so gardeners can pencil in this popular event on their gardening calendar for Saturday, October 11. A diverse variety of fall vegetable transplants will be available at this fall's sale. All activities will be conducted at Carbide Park in La Marque. For more information, visit my website provided with this column.

Pruning Trees: Prune out dead or diseased wood from trees. However, hold off on major pruning until midwinter. Pruning now will only stimulate tender new growth which is highly susceptible to cold injury.

Pruning Shrubs and Bushes: September is also a good time to trim unruly shrubs and bushes. Pruning too late in the season may encourage tender new growth which could be susceptible to cold weather. Be careful not to prune plants like gardenias, camellias and azaleas at this time as these plants have already formed next spring's floral buds. Pruning these plants now will result in fewer flowers next year.

Fertilization of Shrubs: Avoid the use of high nitrogen fertilizers on shrubs from late September on through early spring. Too much nitrogen applied this late can induce late succulent growth

and possible winter injury.

Divide Perennials: Late September is time to divide spring-flowering perennials such as irises, Shasta daisies, gaillardias, cannas, day lilies, violets, liriopse, and ajuga. Reset divisions into well-prepared soil with generous amounts of organic material worked into the top 8 to 10 inches.

Fall Vegetables: Vegetables to plant at the beginning of September include corn, cucumber, eggplant, green beans, lima beans, pepper, squash and tomato. Toward the end of the month this list can be expanded to include broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, collard, endive, lettuce, mustard, onion, radish, and turnips.

Palms: September is the last month in the year for transplanting palms and sagos for the year, to ensure good establishment before cooler temperatures arrive.

At a Glance

WHAT: Growing Onions and Garlic

WHEN: Saturday, Sept. 13, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

WHAT: Kitchen Gardening

WHEN: Saturday, Sept. 13, 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

WHAT: Texas-Tuff Landscape Plants . . . Blooming & Beautiful

WHEN: Saturday, Sept. 20, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

WHAT: Fall Grafting of Citrus and Fruit Trees

WHEN: Saturday, Sept. 20, 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

TYPE: Hands-on demonstrations; class is limited to 24 participants

WHAT: Irises for the Gulf Coast Garden

WHEN: Tuesday, Sept. 23, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

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 (GALV3@wt.net) or phone (281-534-3413, ext. 12).

