

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office

# Gardeners Checklist for November



PHOTO BY Gene Speller

Fresh peppers harvested from the home garden are rich in good flavor and nutrition. Whether you're new to growing peppers or wish to expand the variety of peppers already grown, make plans to attend the upcoming "Great Pepper Extravaganza - Seminar & Tasting" on Nov. 2 at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park.

The weather conditions over the past several days were just right by my reckoning—daytime temperatures moderately cool and nighttime temps pleasantly crisp.

As the fall season settles in, take advantage of the cool days and the slower pace of gardening to prepare your plants for winter. So enjoy the beautiful weather and while you're at it, be sure to perform any needed activities in the home garden and landscape

and check our upcoming educational programs as follows:

## **The Great Pepper Extravaganza - Seminar**

**& Tasting:** 9:00 a.m. - 12 Noon, on Saturday, November 2, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park (4102-B Main, La Marque, TX).

Master Gardener Gene Speller will provide a PowerPoint presentation on growing peppers in the home garden. Topics to be discussed include background and origin of

pepper plants; heat value classification (Scoville Units); how to start from seed; culture and growing tips; recommended varieties; insect and disease control; and pepper uses & recipes.

Gene will have his homegrown peppers available for tasting and comparison. His peppers come from all four 'heat' groups: mild, medium, very hot and extremely hot, to suit everyone's taste.

The general public is also encouraged to bring in their own unsliced peppers for taste comparisons. Preregistration requested by e-mail ([GALV3@wt.net](mailto:GALV3@wt.net)) or phone (281-534-3413, Ext. 12).

## **Landscape Design III - Design Principles:**

6:30 - 8:00 p.m., on Tuesday, November 5, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park.

Presented by Master Gardener and landscape designer Karen Lehr who earned a Master of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of Oklahoma. In this last-



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Dr. William Johnson is a horticulturist with the Galveston County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Visit his website at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston>.

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in-a-series of three programs, you will learn more design principles and how to organize your landscape plans and designs. Preregistration requested by e-mail ([GALV3@wt.net](mailto:GALV3@wt.net)) or phone (281-534-3413, Ext. 12).

**County Citrus Show:** This is an earlier notification that the County Citrus Show is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 21, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park. Home citrus growers should make plans to enter their homegrown citrus into the show for display and judging. Pre-registration for this program is not necessary. Additional details will be provided in later columns.

**Compost Leaves:** Oaks, pecans and other trees in the landscape will soon start dropping their leaves. Start collecting leaves for the compost pile. Be sure to have extra soil available so that each 6-inch layer of leaves is covered with a shallow layer of soil (or compost). Always moisten each layer of leaves thoroughly before adding the soil. Shredding the leaves beforehand with a lawn mower will help speed the process of decomposition, but it is not essential.

**Inspect landscape trees and shrubs:** Make periodic inspections on recently transplanted landscape trees and shrubs for soil moisture level. Their root systems will not become well-established for some time.

While rainfall amounts have been good in most areas, be sure to water new transplants regularly to avoid stressing plants in the event extended periods of dry weather conditions occur.

**Plant cool season vegetables:** Cool season vegetables to plant include English peas, radishes, spinach and turnips throughout November while garlic cloves and carrot seed should be planted by mid-November.

**Cool-season annuals:** This is an ideal time to plant cool-season annuals to provide color in the landscape. There are many types of annual flowers that bloom only in cooler weather. Pansies are a favorite choice as they are on the list of Texas' top-selling annual flowers.

Pansies are hardy and will bloom over a long season. The old-fashioned face varieties have been steadily improved for better garden performance, and many new varieties with solid or bi-colors without a face are now available.

Pansies are available in a wide array of colors ranging from bold yellows, oranges, and reds, to pale pastels. Miniature pansies are also becoming popular.

**Divide perennials:** In order to increase your stock of clumping perennials, divide spring and summer bloomers during the fall and winter. Those which are fall bloomers can be divided in the spring, or season

opposite to bloom time. Most perennials left in the ground in the same place for more than 3 years are likely to become overgrown and overcrowded. Passing favorite plants along to friends or trading for a prized plant is a favorite part of perennial gardening.