

Citrus show to display locally grown harvest

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office



PHOTO BY Dr. William M. Johnson

Sam Scarcella, a master gardener in La Marque, will present a workshop on "Growing Your Own Tomatoes From Seed" from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Dec. 3.

When you think of citrus, images of grapefruits, lemons, limes, oranges are most likely to come to mind. It's unfortunate 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, homegrown citrus is of superior 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 trees provide to the landscape.

Now visualize one of several types of citrus trees you can grow in your yard to produce homegrown fruit to give as a distinctive and personal gift to family, neighbors and other friends. Sound too good 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 2011 Upper Gulf Coast Citrus Show at 7 p.m. Dec. 1. The citrus show will be conducted at the Galveston County Extension Office in Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (FM 519), in La Marque.

Area residents can 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 even type of fruit is not known, it can be entered and will be identified.

Entries will be accepted at the Galveston County Extension Office from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Nov. 29-30. Rosettes and ribbons will be awarded to the best quality entries.

A PowerPoint presentation titled "Growing Citrus on the Gulf Coast" will be provided by Monte Nesbitt, Texas A&M extension specialist in the Department of Horticultural Sciences at College Station. The citrus show is open to the general public.

For information, contact the Galveston County Extension Office, 281-534-3413, Ext. 1-2, or visit my website provided at the end of this column.



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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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Tomatoes From Seed Seminar On Dec. 3

Tomatoes are the most widely grown vegetable in the home garden. Be sure to make a notation on your gardening calendar to preregister for an upcoming seminar on “Growing Your Own Tomatoes From Seed.”

The seminar will be offered from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Dec. 3 at the Galveston County Extension Office. Preregistration is required by calling 281-534-3413, Ext. 1-2 or emailing [galv3\(at\)wt.net](mailto:galv3(at)wt.net).

This workshop will be presented by Sam Scarcella, who is a Master Gardener volunteer with considerable experience and expertise in growing tomatoes. If you have an interest in growing your tomatoes from seed for the spring gardening season, plan to attend this program.

Two questions likely will 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.

