

*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office*



PHOTO CREDIT: Dr. William M. Johnson

The Galveston County Master Gardeners' 2017 Fall Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, October 20, at the Galveston County Fairgrounds located off Hwy. 6 in Hitchcock. Master Gardeners will have citrus trees, Texas-Tuff perennials, bulbs and garden art work in addition to Master Gardener-grown vegetable transplants.



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*News column printed in the Galveston Daily News, The Post, and other Galveston County Newspapers.*

We have received an abundance of rainfall over the past couple of weeks. The hurricane season has thus far been relatively uneventful for the Texas Upper Gulf Coast region. We should be mindful that the hurricane season officially extends to November 1.

October will soon be here.

Most gardeners have been anticipating the arrival of the first "genuine" cool front. With all due respect to the science of meteorology, my definition of a cool front in the fall is one that gets your attention by immediately uplifting your spirit when you first walk outside in

the morning!

Day time temperatures have been slowly ticking downward and early evenings have become rather pleasant. Most gardeners are now eager (or at least far more willing) to venture out into the home landscape and garden. In light of this heightened enthusiasm,



here are some activities for the fall gardener to consider:

**Fall Plant Sale:** The Master Gardeners will sponsor their Annual Fall Plant Sale from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 20, at the Galveston County Fairgrounds located off Hwy. 6 in Hitchcock. Plants to be offered include many types of fall vegetable transplants, citrus trees, Texas-Tuff perennials, bulbs, garden art work and more.

A pre-sale presentation will also be offered from 8:00 - 8:50 a.m. before the sale yard is opened. Check the Master Gardener website for updates on plants that will be available at the sale.

**Mosquitoes:** Mosquitoes have been a major annoyance over the past weeks. Some of the most effective ways to reduce mosquito populations involve taking simple actions that prevent mosquitoes from breeding. Some mosquito species can breed in as little as a tablespoon of standing water that remains for as little as one week.

Because mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water, homeowners should be vigilant in eliminating places where water can collect in their yards and gardens. To reduce mosquito populations:

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, flower pots or any other containers where water has collected.
- Remove and discard old tires,

drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items left outdoors that can collect water.

- Empty and clean birdbaths and pet water bowls at least once or twice a week.

- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.

**Save Caladium Tubers:** Caladiums are getting past their prime with the onset of cooler weather. If you plan on saving caladium tubers for another year, be sure to dig them up before the top growth disappears – those tubers can be very difficult to locate after the top growth is gone. Allow the tubers to air-dry for 7-to-10 days in a well-ventilated but shaded area.

After drying, gently remove any attached leaves and large soil particles from the tubers then store in dry peat moss, vermiculite or similar material in a well-ventilated container. Pack so that the tubers do not touch each other. Dust with an all-purpose fungicide to help prevent decay. Store the tubers in an area where temperatures won't drop below 50 degrees F.

**Plant Cool Season Vegetables:** Transplants of broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and a wide variety of vegetables for the fall growing season should be transplanted into the garden.

**Control Cool Season Weeds:** Most lawn weeds that we see during late winter and early spring actually sprout in the fall. They are cool season weeds and, in fact, their

germination is stimulated in the fall by the onset of cool temperatures. They grow during winter if temperatures stay warm enough, then produce a crop of seeds in the spring and die out when hot weather arrives.

Use of pre-emergent herbicides to control cool season weeds is effective only if properly timed, i.e., they should be applied very soon after the onset of relatively cool weather conditions. Several pre-emergent herbicides are approved for lawn use and are sold under a variety of commercial labels. Check with your area garden center or feed store for available products. Always read and follow label directions.

**At a Glance**

**WHAT:** T-bud Grafting of Citrus & Fruit Trees

**WHEN:** 9:00 - 10:30 a.m., Saturday, September 29

**WHERE:** All programs conducted at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Car-bide Park (4102-B Main St. in La Marque). Class is limited to 24 participants in the workshop, but others are welcome to observe. Pre-register by e-mail (galvcountrymgs@gmail.com) or phone (281-309-5065).

