

Gardening Checklist for March

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office



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PHOTO CREDIT: Barbara Hankins

Master Gardeners will be on hand Wednesday, March 4 to answer gardeners' questions about growing herbs at the Gulf Coast Herb Fair. The Herb Fair takes place Wednesday, March 4 from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in the Moody Gardens Rainforest Pyramid atrium. Pictured above are Master Gardeners Lisa Belcher (left) and Mary Gonzalez.

The first day of spring will arrive in two weeks (on Thursday, March 19, at 10:50 p.m.). From a gardening perspective, the exact timing of "spring" is less precise.

The 2020 winter season has thus far been remarkably mild. The northern

half of the county experienced a fleeting period of near-32-degree temperatures last week. One home gardener reported that his okra plants were still alive (though not producing flowers or pods) and asked whether he could expect the plants to start growing again when spring arrives.

It is a rarity for okra plants to remain alive over a winter season. However, winter is not over yet so be prepared for another cold snap to occur before the arrival of spring.

Review the following gardening checklist for





things to do as the spring season arrives.

GULF COAST HERB FAIR: The Friends of Moody Gardens Seventh Annual Gulf Coast Herb Fair takes place Wednesday, March 4 in the Moody Gardens Rainforest Pyramid atrium from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. The Herb Fair will feature cooking demonstrations, selected herb education and a variety of vendors, including Galveston County Master Gardeners, showcasing their herbs, books, food items and gifts available for sale.

A Blessing of the Garden will be conducted at 10:30 a.m. The highlight of the Herb Fair will be the luncheon and presentation at 12:00 Noon. Featured speakers will be Hannah Gonzales and Sarah Lewis from MOD Coffeehouse. They will provide a presentation entitled "Coffee: From Seed to Cup."

Proceeds from the Herb Fair and luncheon benefit Galveston's children and seniors by planting seeds of education. All funds from this event will be used to bring local school children on field trips to the Aquarium and Rainforest Pyramids at Moody Gardens and to send outreach programs to seniors and pre-schools throughout the Galveston area.

Master Gardeners will also be available to answer visitors' questions on growing and using herbs. Admission to the morning events is free, and the luncheon tickets are available

for \$35 for preregistered guests or \$45 at the door.

HERBS FOR THE GULF COAST SEMINAR: Galveston County Master Gardener Briana Etie will present this program showcasing herbs that grow well in Gulf Coast gardens. She will also share growing tips, herb uses and preservation techniques. Briana is a grower and a user of herbs. Seminar conducted on Saturday, March 7, from 9:00 - 10:30 a.m. at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park (4102-B Main Street) in La Marque. Pre-register by e-mail (galvcountymgs@gmail.com) or phone (281-309-5065).

KITCHEN GARDENING SEMINAR: Galveston County Master Gardener Mary Demeny will provide a discussion on vegetable gardening in your own backyard. Gardening on a smaller scale and making use of vegetables interplanted in your flower beds and in pots will be emphasized. Seminar conducted on Saturday, March 7, from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park (4102-B Main Street) in La Marque. Pre-register by e-mail (galvcountymgs@gmail.com) or phone (281-309-5065).

MASTER GARDENER GREENHOUSE PLANT SALE: The Master Gardeners will be conducting a greenhouse-grown plant sale from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 12, at the Discovery Garden located in Carbide Park (4102

Main Street) in La Marque. Plants will include angelonias (in 3 colors), pentas (in 3 colors), hibiscus (hardy and tropical), echinacea, guara, euphorbia (Baby's Breath series), geraniums and African daisies. To view a complete list of plants on sale, visit the Master Gardeners' Greenhouse Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/gcmggreenhouse/>).

FERTILIZE LANDSCAPE TREES AND SHRUBS: March is an excellent time to fertilize established landscape trees and shrubs as they come out of their winter dormancy period and put out new growth. It is not necessary to punch holes in the ground to fertilize trees or shrubs or to use fertilizer spikes. Surface application of a granular fertilizer is quite satisfactory and is actually a better practice.

VEGETABLES: Many types of vegetables can usually be established in the garden during March including transplants of tomatoes and peppers as well as direct-seeding of corn, cucumbers, southern peas and many other vegetables.

Be prepared to provide cold weather protection as may be needed. It is still too early to plant okra as okra does not tolerate cool spells. Wait until mid-April before planting okra seeds.

