It seems that Fall has arrived. This is always a bit of a guessing game in the Central Valley with cooling temperatures followed by spurts of heat; cool then warm and finally hey, it’s Winter. Out in the garden the tomatoes aren’t turning red and the zucchini no longer produce; the perennials and annuals are less robust and, the best indicator of all, the leaves are turning color and falling. While we can welcome the cooler temperature and a change of season it is still a bittersweet time. From the day we eat that last wonderfully ripe peach and realize that that taste won’t be something we can savor till the following July, there is a definite sadness. Naturally we would loose all incentive to garden if we spent too much time mourning the loss of Summer, so with this issue of Garden Notes we are discussing some timely topics for Fall.

One sure way to create a new seasonal look for the garden is covered in “Color for your Fall and Winter Garden.” An article on attracting birds to the garden is also in this issue. There are some suggestions on ways to take some of the herbs you have grown and use them to make lovely infused oils as gifts for the not too distant holidays. From the help desk we have some information on the popular, but problematic Bradford Pear Tree and two book reviews will provide food for thought. And speaking of food, find out the results of the Master Gardener tomato tasting and use it to guide your selection of plants next year. Our regular features of Pest of the Season, Garden Chores and Coming Events will keep you up to date seasonally.

While we will certainly miss those long, productive summer days and it will be awhile before our garden gives us the same satisfaction that can be had when harvesting the first ripe tomato, we can appreciate that these things will come again. This season has its own pace and we should fall into step.

San Joaquin County Master Gardeners

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Color For Your Fall and Winter Garden

Corinne Bachle Master Gardener

Autumn in San Joaquin County presents flower gardeners with a dilemma: Do we enjoy the bounty of all the work we’ve put into our gardens which produced gorgeous coleus and waves of bright impatiens and marigolds, or do we rip them out before the weather turns and it’s too chilly for the next season’s crops to take hold? This Master Gardener’s choice was to rip out and replant! The sacrifice of a few more weeks of color is worth it to gain additional color during the cold and dreary winter months. My beds are bare right now, but they will soon be filled with pansies, violas, calendula, stock, English daisies, dianthus, snapdragon, and whatever else I can find to brighten up our space. Cyclamen are gorgeous, but because they are somewhat pricy, they are reserved for a few places of honor such as in decorative pots near entrances.

For winter flowers, it’s good to get them in before the ground turns too cold. If they get a good start in relatively warm soil, they should flourish all winter long. If they go in too late, they will go dormant right away and not do well until spring; hence the need for “out with the old; in with the new.”

CALENDULA comes in vivid orange and yellow 2-½ to 4-½” blooms. They are annuals which will self-sow. Plants are about 12-18 “ tall and are effective planted in masses of color in borders or containers. Remove spent flowers to prolong bloom and avoid some of the self-seeding (if that is your intent).

Continued on pg. 16
It is fall and it seems a gardener’s work is never done. It is now time to get those fall bulbs in the ground. I prefer Narcissus to tulips because they usually repeat bloom and naturalize, whereas tulips are a one season flower in most of California. This is fine if you don’t mind the expense of purchasing new tulip bulbs annually and the added task of chilling them for 6-8 weeks before planting which is recommended for mild winter climates. Of course there are many other bulbs like Hyacinth, Muscari, Scilla, Iris of various types, Belladonna Lily (Naked Lady), Watsonia (Bugle Lily) and the list is long. For more information purchase a book on bulbs.

Not all bulbs listed are true bulbs. Some are rhizomes like Irises, some are tuberous, like Begonias, some are corms, such as Gladiolus and Freesias and some are tuberous roots, like Dahlias and Alstroemeria (Peruvian Lily), but they all qualify as bulbs in most books. These plants are well adapted to Mediterranean climates like California. I especially like the Belladonna Lily which is blooming in September as I am writing this article. It is a versatile bulb that tends to need division every 3-4 years. Hence you can spread them to places where you have no irrigation and they will do fine as long as we get normal winter rains. They produce lots of foliage in the winter and a naked stem shoots up in August producing pink flowers.

For planting lots of Narcissi, tulip bulbs or others, you may want to obtain a bulb planting soil auger which can be attached to a battery powered drill for drilling bulb holes. Put a little compost and bone meal in each hole and plant the bulb at a depth 3x the bulb’s height and make sure it has about 6 hours of sunlight. Planting under trees that leaf out late will work as long as the plant has enough light to store energy for next year’s growth. Woodyland bulbs should be planted either in shade, or in areas of morning sun. Since you are putting a lot of effort into planting bulbs; it pays to buy the best quality bulbs you can afford. You will be rewarded with healthier, bigger blooms.

October is time for garlic and onions. I plant my onion sets and garlic in October through several layers of newspaper which will suppress weeds for most of the winter. Enrich the soil with aged manure or compost before planting and provide irrigation until the rains come and then irrigate again in the late spring when dry weather comes.

If you planted your early broccoli in August or September, keep an eye out for harvestable heads in October. Spray your broccoli and other cole crops with Bt (Bacillus thuringiensis), a naturally occurring caterpillar biocide, if you have infestations of either Imported Cabbage Moth or cabbage looper. Cool season vegetable planting is still possible. October is time to plant peas, lettuce, turnips, and spinach from seed. Peas grow best in cool soil.

This is also the time to plant trees, shrubs and perennials to get them established in the cooler days of fall. It is best to plant them while the soil is still warm to encourage root growth. The only exceptions are frost-tender plants such as Citrus, Bougainvillea and Mandevilla, which are best planted in spring.

When it comes to plants for fall planting it is good to have a plan and go for the plants that are going to fill your landscape needs rather than buy plants on a whim. I need to take my own advice as I tend to do the latter. It is time for sowing wildflower beds if you are so inclined. California poppies should be in any wildflower mix as they are spectacular.

Fall is time to dig and divide bulbs like gladiolus and dahlias. This year I have an added chore because I had a serious thrips infestation in my gladiolus. Since thrips may overwinter on the bulbs, I need to be purchased at a bulk rate if you are interested in supporting the MG program by hosting your own fundraiser.

The Master Gardeners are busy planning a sustainable landscape workshop that will be hosted at our office February 5th. Look for more info on our web-site and in the next newsletter.

Interested in attending a MG workshop? Next year you will find us at the SJ County Historical Museum the second Saturday of the month along with the Manteca Library the third Saturday of the month. Look for class details in our next issue. Remember if you have a gardening question you can call the Hotline Office at 953-6112 or visit our web-site here.
Attracting Birds To Your Garden

Laurie Berg  Master Gardener

When thinking about why we want to attract birds to our backyards, the obvious response is the wonderful display as they make their way through the landscape and their varied song. Watching birds has been shown to have health benefits: slowing us down during our hectic days and providing a sense of calm. It’s also an easy way to get our children interested in nature and gives them an intimate view to what goes on in the garden. Birds are our willing assistants in the garden helping to keep a natural balance between plants and pests. However, habitat loss and degradation have contributed to the declining population of many once common bird populations. By following some simple guidelines and with judicious use of pesticides, which may reduce natural insect food sources, we can create gardens that can be safe havens for birds to live and raise young and benefit ourselves as well.

The first step toward attracting birds is to provide a food source so they will want to come into our landscape and have a look around. We don’t however, want to feed them so much that they lose incentive to go after the insects that are damaging our vegetables and garden. Installing a freestanding bird feeder will discourage squirrels and cats and provide an invitation that this yard is the place to be. Most birds like black-oil sunflower seeds; finches prefer thistle seed; and sparrows, towhees, robins and doves prefer to eat cracked corn and millet on the ground. A hummingbird feeder is one of the easiest to maintain and can provide endless entertainment especially if positioned near a window. In addition to nectar, hummingbirds eat fruit flies, gnats and aphids.

A reliable water source is another requirement for your habitat. A water feature can add a lot of interest to the area and be very attractive to birds, but a birdbath can be just as effective. Make sure that there is a secure area for the birds to drink and bathe and, in the case of the birdbath, make sure to empty and clean it every two or three days to prevent disease and reduce the chance of a mosquito infestation, as is the case with any standing water. Another thing to consider is shelter. If the birdfeeder is placed near bushes and trees the birds are more likely to feel secure in the yard and be more likely to linger. This also gives them access to their ideal nesting choices. By replacing some of our traditional landscaping with native and bird friendly plant selections such as Oregon grape, Hawthorne, Crabapple, and Pyracantha, we increase the yard’s appeal to birds and vary the insect population. Planting alyssum, dill, coriander and marigold also brings beneficial insects to our landscape and helps balance the pests that can invade it. Since March through September are the breeding months for birds, avoid trimming and culling your bushes and trees during this time.

Creating a bird habitat in your backyard is an idea you can easily accomplish with very little effort and expense. Be warned, however, that attracting birds to your yard can become addictive. You’ll find yourself wanting to bring more and more species into your little haven. There will be binoculars and a bird book placed at a strategic viewing spot. Conversations will eagerly begin with “I saw a ______ today.” The sounds of a vibrant bird population will thrill you. And soon, almost incidentally, you will begin to notice less damage and loss in the garden to pests and things will just seem a bit more right in your world.
**European Grape Vine Moth & Oak Root Fungus**

This pest has recently caused a quarantine to be established in San Joaquin County which applies to both commercial farmers and backyard orchardists who grow fruits that host it. European Grapes (Vitis vinifera) and spurge laurel (Daphne gnidium) are preferred hosts, but it has also been reported on blackberry (Rubus fruticosus), gooseberry (Ribes sp.), black and red currant (Ribes nigrum), olive (Olea europaea), cherry (Prunus avium), prune (Prunus domestica), persimmon (Diospyrus kakis), kiwi (Actinidia chinensis), pomegranate (Punica granatum), carnation (Dianthus spp.), and a number of other wild hosts. It is of vital importance for home vineyardists and orchardists not to move susceptible fruits out of the quarantine area and to remove and dispose of any unpicked fruit before the pest has a chance to multiply.

For more information visit the following web-sites

- UC IPM
- Lodi News article
- Western Farm Press

For an in depth course on EGVM [click here](#).

**Fleabane & Mare’s tail, Conyza canadiensis and Flaxleafed fleabane, Conyza**

While primarily a problem for rural sites, these annual weeds are becoming increasingly frequent in urban settings along roadways and open lots or in cracks in pavement. This weed is incredibly invasive due to its (rosette) dandelion type seed head and is also becoming increasingly resistant to our most commonly recommended herbicide, glyphosphate (RoundUP). This weed and other stubborn or herbicide tolerant weeds are best controlled when they are small. Once they have elevated a central stem they become difficult to pull out or kill with any herbicide. The web-sites below have more information on fleabane and its developing resistance to herbicides

- UC Publication
- UCCE Fresno
- Weed Science

"Gardening is a matter of your enthusiasm. Holding up till your back gets used to it.”
Author Unknown

You can click on any of the blue underlined words in any of the articles to go to a webpage and learn more about that.
**Persimmon - Tree of the quarter**

**PLANT IDENTIFICATION**

There are two kinds of persimmons grown in the valley: The Hachiya persimmon and the Fuyu persimmon. Both are deciduous fruit trees. These species have oval and leathery leaves which turn yellow, red, or orange in the fall. Orange or scarlet fruit forms after leaves drop. Fuyu persimmons are commonly used for eating fresh while they are firm, whereas the Hachiyas are used for baking and drying and are ripe when soft.

**OPTIMUM CONDITIONS FOR GROWTH**

Persimmons are good shade trees. The Japanese persimmon is often grown for ornamental use. Persimmons do well in areas with full sun. They are tolerant of many soil types but require good drainage. Prune young trees to establish the framework. In established trees, prune out suckers or dead wood. Water regularly and avoid overfertilizing.

For more information on Persimmon care and management click here.

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**Selecting Poinsettias**

Poinsettias are traditional Christmas plants that will last through the Christmas season and beyond. It is important to select the best plant for your home environment. The following are a few selection pointers: (for more information on poinsettia care, selection and facts [click here](#))

- Choose a plant with dark green foliage down to the soil line.
- Choose bracts (modified leaves) that are completely colored.
- Do not choose plants with fallen or yellowed leaves.
- Choose plants that are not drooping or wilting.
- Do not purchase plants that have been displayed or crowded close together. Crowding can cause premature bract loss.
- Check the plant’s soil. If it’s wet and the plant is wilted, this could be an indication of root rot.

Poinsettia ideally prefer indirect light six hours daily. Keep the plant from touching cold windows. Keep poinsettias away from warm or cold drafts from radiators, air registers or open doors and windows. Check the soil daily. Water when soil is dry. Allow water to drain into the saucer and discard excess water. *Wilted plants will tend to drop bracts sooner.*

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**Clematis—*Clematis spp.***

Family Ranunculaceae (Buttercup family)

**PLANT IDENTIFICATION:** Clematis plants are deciduous or evergreen vines. Many species with a wide range of flower colors and forms exist.

**OPTIMUM CONDITIONS FOR GROWTH**

Clematis can grow in all climatic zones but does best in zones with cold winters or those with a coastal effect. It does best in rich, well-drained soils high in organic matter. The leafy part of the vine needs sun to flower while the roots need to be shaded and cool; mulching roots can help keep them cool. Vines require regular irrigation. For more information on Clematis [click here](#).
Sound like the makings for a Halloween party? Not quite, but these pompoms, spiders and spoons might help you decorate for one! Brightening up the garden or bringing the fall indoors when all hope of color in the garden has faded, glorious chrysanthemums appear, blooming in the fall in a genetic response to the lengthening of the nights. You can choose among 160 species and 13 forms, including the three mentioned above. Every imaginable color or combination of colors can be found, the sole missing tone from the palette, blue.

The astounding range of choices we have today can be attributed to the long-term aesthetic value of the Chinese in honoring beauty and perfection. From the fifteenth century B.C. the “golden flower” was valued for its medical and health benefits: petals in salads for a variety of ailments and tea from its leaves believed to promote longevity. Chinese horticulturalists made mum breeding a fine art, using hybridization to develop chrysanthemums with more variety and hardiness, as well as aesthetic beauty. They perfected the two critical skills needed to bring mums to their fullest potential: skilled pruning and disbudding. Chrysanthemum competitions saw mums formed into intricate shapes such as ships and pagodas.

Among many items and ideas borrowed from the Chinese, Japan soon imported chrysanthemums and continued the development process. So highly did the Japanese value this flower that by the eighth century A.D the chrysanthemum became the symbol on the crest of the emperor and remains so today. It appeared in all forms of art and in thousands of haiku verses. When the chrysanthemum arrived in Europe in the 1600’s, the burgeoning Industrial Revolution added the touch of science and technology to the development process, utilizing the greenhouse to control light so as to produce chrysanthemum blooms any time of the year. Hardiness and longevity also improved.

So what to do to grow these beauties in your own garden? There are several ways to start and differing opinions (of course!) as to the best methods.

Choosing Plants

1. Buy and plant very young plants in the spring. These could be from your own cuttings or through orders from a specialized nursery.

2. Buy plants in bloom in the fall. This is very common since folks like to see what the plant looks like when fully grown. Enjoy the color in your home, then plant in the garden. Caution: the “hardy garden mum” available in almost every store in the fall is most likely a hybrid developed for show, often with delicate roots. Planting these in the fall can often be unsuccessful since these tender roots do not have time to establish themselves in the garden.

Planting

1. Mums are very hearty and can be grown in almost any type of soil. Plant in a sunny location, but where they will be protected from the hot afternoon sun in the summer.

2. Plant in well-drained soil, water consistently, and fertilize occasionally. You can dig in some compost and aged manure if desired. One of the few sensitivities of this plant is “wet feet,” so do consider the drainage.

3. If planting a potted mum in the fall, prepare it by deadheading spent blooms but do not immediately cut back the stems. Watch for new growth at the bottom and when it is well established then cut back the old stems to one inch. Caveat: some suggest not cutting back the dead stems until early spring, believing that this makes for healthier plants.

Care

1. Whether new plantings or returning perennials, mulch through the summer.

2. For the best flowers, feed in the spring and summer and stop feeding when the buds begin to show color.

3. When you cut back your plants after they die back in late fall, mulch over them for the winter.

4. There are usually few insect problems except for aphids and mites. Hose these off or use a light horticultural oil.
Pruning and Shaping

1. For the desired shape, best bloom, and to prevent legginess, it is a must to prune and shape throughout the growing season. If started from rooted cuttings, when the stem has reached one foot in height in the spring, cut it back to four inches. The stem will branch at the cut. If more fullness is desired cut back these new lateral branches after they have grown some. With larger or tall varieties, when growth starts in the spring, trim to three main stalks. Trim medium to tall mums to fifteen inches or to desired height in early July.

2. Eventually all cut ends will develop buds. Depending on what type of mum it is (upright or mounding and cascading) and your goal (full flowering or one or two grand blooms), remove a few, some or most buds. Keep in mind that terminal buds show the best color. Lateral buds lack the same intensity but grow faster. For top flower quality at a terminal, disbudd the lateral crowns and when the terminal bud starts to mature, remove all the buds around it, leaving only one or two on a stem.

3. For mounding and cascading mums, continuously pinch back tips as they grow, trimming to the desired shape. They will then be fuller and have more flowers. Important! ALL cutting, pruning, and disbudding should be finished by mid-summer.

Division

1. Your perennials should be divided every two to three years. This should be done in the spring as soon as you see new growth appear.
2. Prepare the beds or planting spaces ahead of time. Newly divided plants should be replanted the same day.
3. Water the mother plant well, and then dig up the entire root ball. Divide the plant by breaking it apart into new plants or, if the root ball is dense, cut it with a sharp knife or saw. A 24 inch plant should yield three new plants.
4. Plant the new divisions right away in the prepared new locations. Water and continue care as described above.

Taking Tip Cuttings

1. Want more of those favorites in the garden? Make your own by taking cuttings in the spring when the temperature has reached 70 degrees.
2. Trim off the top three to four inches of several soft shoots from mature plants, those 6 to 8 inches tall.
3. Strip off the lower leaves and put the stems in rooting medium.
4. Keep the medium moist and warm. Keep them outdoors in a sheltered location with no direct sun.
5. In two weeks or so when roots have formed, plant them as described above.

Harvesting

1. Take cuttings for indoor display at least ten centimeters above the soil level to avoid woody plant tissue. Most problems post-cutting have to due with failure to take up water.
2. Remove leaves from the bottom one-third of the stem.

Chrysanthemums are a delight to the eye and a joy to the heart. Add that gift to your table and your garden this fall. And, if you don’t have the time or desire for the cultivation of these gems, or do not have the garden room, you can always use the following simpler method: “Love ’em and leave ’em!” Enjoy that glorious supermarket mum now and bless the compost heap with an offering when its beauty fades.

Of interest: If you are interested in mail ordering Mums visit the Kings Mum web-site. This company was originally in Clements, CA but in 2009 the new owners moved the business to Oregon City, OR in 2009. The company phone number is 503.656.2078.
People with a gardening interest have several reasons to read Andrea Wulf’s *The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire, and the Birth of an Obsession* (New York, Random House: 2008). It offers an elegantly written and thoroughly researched account of key persons and developments at a crucial period in the history of gardening. Throughout the 18th Century thousands of species of plants from all over the world became newly available to gardeners in Europe (particularly in England). A twenty-page “Glossary” of these plants—their botanical and common names, when they arrived in Europe, where they came from and who nurtured them—is provided in an appendix to the book. By 1700 scientific inquiry based on direct observation and experimentation led to new ways of thinking about species difference, and by 1716 new plant species deliberately created through hybridization challenged long held religious beliefs. Later in the century powerful and extensive commercial enterprises looked to use new botanical knowledge to their financial advantage. Throughout the century growing prosperity and the emergence of a middle class (particularly in England) led to vast increases in the number of private residential gardens, and changing political ideology led to changes in the purpose of gardens and to an entirely new aesthetic for judging them.

At the beginning of the century notable gardens in England were largely exercises in geometry—lawns, terraces, water features and topiary in symmetrical arrangements appended to noble houses. Such gardens represented their owners’ status and power. Within a decade or two the “English garden” aimed instead for an artful re-creation and heightening of naturally occurring meadows, springs, and forest glens, sometimes on a grand scale, but often surrounding modest suburban villas or rural cottages. This distinctive new garden style testified to an owner’s admiration of “Nature,” (and, often, allegiance to the liberalizing ideas of the Enlightenment).

Plants from Asia, Africa, and especially from North America became increasingly prominent in this new landscape, their status as “exotics,” initially based on their rarity, fading as they became more and more familiar. Early in the century no trees in England bore leaves that became highly colored in autumn, but by 1780 whole forests rivaled those in New England. “Painting a landscape” with plants quickly evolved to an art.

Pre-revolutionary America contributed greatly to these developments. Not only did famous men like Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington show interest in horticulture and, in the case of the latter two, development of their own gardens, but less famous men like John Bartram of Philadelphia undertook arduous expeditions to collect specimens and seeds of North American native plants to ship to horticulturalists and collectors across the Atlantic. If Bartram and Peter Colinson, his English partner in this export arrangement, are principles of the first part of the book, Joseph Banks, a wealthy English adventurer, ardent horticulturalist, and sponsor of Captain Bligh’s ill-fated voyage on the *Bounty*, dominates the latter part. Supporting roles are filled by the Swedish botanist and inventor of the Linnaean classification system Carl von Linné (Linnaeus), and his pupil Daniel Solander. Englishmen in supporting roles include Erasmus Darwin (grandfather of Charles Darwin and author of “The Loves of the Plants” popularizing Linnaeus’ “sexual” classification system), Hans Sloane, President of the Royal Academy and principal supporter of the Chelsea Physic Garden, and Philip Miller, head gardener there and author in 1731 of *The Gardener’s Dictionary*, the first systematic and comprehensive manual of practical gardening. Miller’s first and subsequent editions provide a template for garden books even to this day.

More Growing Knowledge

Healthy Garden Healthy You, The Best Garden of your Life 100 easy-to-grow plants & their health benefits is a very personal account of Dr. Milo Shammas’ gardening practices, and his advocacy for organic gardening and organic living. By profession he is a biochemist, so his knowledge of chemistry is good foundation for his work in improving soils with Dr. Earth products. His introduction sets the tone for the book, “Human Health Starts in the Soil.” Part I is about “Soil Health” with 11 chapters covering soils, minerals, microbes, mycorrhizae, pH, humus, pest resistance in healthy plants, and composting.

Part 2 consists of 10 chapters about plant health and the importance of soil fertility, micronutrients and an organic approach to gardening. Chapter 18, “Why Go Organic,” provides a definition for organic foods and a justification for a more environmentally conscious lifestyle for family and pets as well as the world. He points out the negative impacts of our industrial agriculture in terms of animal welfare, soil loss, and decline in phytonutrients due to monoculture practices on large industrial farms. In the 1950’s one farmer fed 25 people whereas now the ratio is one farmer to 129 people. This decrease in numbers of farmers and the increase in efficiency are due to genetic selection for higher yields, economies of scale, more mechanization and greater energy inputs to produce food. He includes a chapter on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and the need for more research on their impacts on the environment before they are used extensively.

Part 3 deals with “Animal Health” from advocacy for a pet-safe environment free of toxic chemicals to providing your own pet food that includes vegetables and their phytonutrients from your garden as well as meat. He is obviously a pet lover with a soft heart for animals. He feeds 24 cats at his office everyday with his homemade pet food.

Part 4 is “Human Health” covered in 5 chapters. He discusses phytonutrients and their role in preventing diseases in humans. Phytonutrients were discovered in 1990. In this new field, there are thousands of such compounds, but so far only 1000 have been identified, and about 100 have had their healing properties analyzed. He favors raw foods because more of these antioxidation compounds are ingested without breaking down by cooking. They protect us from free radicals which tend to destroy our bodies’ integrity over time. He states “Molecular disruption by free radicals ultimately leads to a breakdown of the body and creates conditions like heart disease and cancer.” He goes on to mention several other adverse health conditions caused by free radicals. He advocates for a diet high in fiber and phytonutrients and he is especially partial to green salads and juices high in chlorophyll made from wheat grass and other greens.

Part 5 is “Gardening Basics” and he devotes one chapter to site selection, sun and shade, plant zones, irrigation, microclimates, soil types, drainage, raised beds, and container size.

Part 6 is an alphabetical listing of 100 plants you can grow and eat for a healthy life. They include several herbs and most of the commonly grown fruits and vegetables. Under each plant he provides a section on the “Health Power” of the plant in terms of phytonutrients, fiber, vitamins or other nutrients. He then lists, “Vitamins and Mineral Content,” but nothing is quantitative regarding the quantities per unit of measure or percent of daily requirements. This is a bit of a shortcoming, but not a serious flaw. The next section is a little redundant “Disease Prevention” and somewhat speculative with the caveat “may” used often in front of “prevent” or “help.” The fourth section on, “How to Grow,” is more straightforward telling the gardener the site, soil type, drainage and other aspects of growing that are useful. He then has a short section on “Insect Control” which lists pests for that cultivar and how to control them organically. Finally he includes some “Tips” based on his or others experience like: Stake the tree if planted in a windy area, and another, cantaloupes are ripe when they easily detach from the vine.

I found the book to be a good one for any level of gardener, and in particular anyone interested in organic gardening. He covers the basics of the organic movement, and I favorably related to his narrative of organic enlightenment. You are what you eat and eating food free of toxic chemicals and grown in healthy organic soil at home is healthier as well as environmentally better. The book has a large reference section, but the references are not tied to any book chapters. This is not a referenced science tome on gardening but a good practical guide to organic gardening and living. The reasons to do it are presented in an easy-to-read, persuasive style as is the how to do it at the end.

Frequently Asked Questions for Fall

A major limb has broken off my fruitless pear. Is there any hope, or should I dig it up and start again?

Chances are your fruitless pear is Pyrus calleryana (Callery Pear) ‘Bradford’, an ornamental pear often grown as a street tree in the San Joaquin Valley. Their showy early spring display of white flowers and rich fall color also make them a popular tree choice for home gardeners. They do well with moderate water and are tolerant of most soils, although they do not do well in shallow soil. The tree has many great attributes but one serious defect—an inferior branch structure. It suffers from narrow branch angles that result in severe splitting of the tight, upright branch crotches. This makes the tree especially susceptible to wind and ice damage.

What’s a gardener to do? If the splitting is severe, the health of the tree is likely to be in jeopardy. Large wounds often provide entry points for decay fungi or insects. The damage may also reduce or destroy the tree’s intended function, besides ruining its appearance. If this is the case, the best advice really is to dig it up and start again. If you still want an ornamental pear, choose a cultivar with improved form and structure—and one resistant to fire blight, a bacterial disease that attacks Pyrus and other pome- producing members of the rose family. Cultivars recommended for this area include ‘Chanticleer’ (‘Cleveland Select’, ‘Stone Hill’), a narrow, pyramid-like tree with orange to reddish-purple fall color, and “Trinity” which has a round-headed form and orange-red fall color. Jim Barnes, Arborist and Product Manager at Delta Tree Nursery in Lodi, also recommends ‘New Bradford’. According to Barnes, this cultivar, with its less vertical form and stronger branch attachments, is a major improvement over ‘Bradford’. Other medium sized trees that bloom in spring are Carpinus (Hornbeam), Cercis Canadensis (Eastern Redbud), Chionanthus retusus (Chinese Fringe Tree), Amelanchier (Serviceberry), Chitalpa tashkiensis, Malus (Crabapple), Crataegus phaenopyrum (Washington hawthorn), and many Prunus varieties (flowering cherry and plum, in particular).

For further information refer to these IPM websites:
- UC information on Pyrus calleryana
- UC information on fire blight
- UC information on pruning trees
- University of Florida information on Pyrus calleryana

Broken limbs of a Bradford pear

For further information refer to these IPM websites:
- UC information on Pyrus calleryana
- UC information on fire blight
- UC information on pruning trees
- University of Florida information on Pyrus calleryana
Coming Events

OCTOBER

Saturday and Sunday, October 2 and 3
Orchid Safari - Presented by the Orchid Forum of Sacramento
3330 McKinley Boulevard, Sacramento, CA Shephard Garden & Arts Center
Saturday October 2, 10:30 AM - 5:00 PM
Sunday, October 3, 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Place: 3330 McKinley Blvd, Free Admission & Parking

Saturday, October 2
UC Davis Arboretum Guided Tour: Container Gardens
11 a.m., Arboretum Terrace Garden
Learn how to enliven your porch, patio or balcony with vibrant plant displays in pots

Saturday, October 2
Sacramento Master Gardener Event:
Effective watering - Use every drop wisely
9 am-noon
Fair Oaks Horticulture Center
11549 Fair Oaks Blvd. Fair Oaks, CA 95628

Wednesday, October 6
Science Café: Chumash Traditional Medicinal Uses of California Plants
UC Davis Arboretum
Dr. James D. Adams, USC School of Pharmacy
Cecilia Garcia, Chumash healer
5:15–6:15 p.m., Wyatt Deck, Old Davis Road
The co-authors of “Healing with Medicinal Plants of the West: Cultural and Scientific Basis for Their Use” will present an informal talk and chat with audience members about their work. Light refreshments will be served.

Saturday, October 9
San Joaquin Master Gardener Event (web link??)
Create a More Sustainable Landscape with Drought Tolerant Plants
10:00-11:30
San Joaquin Historical Museum
11793 N. Micke Grove Road, Lodi

Saturday, October 9
Guided Tour: Plant Sale Preview
UC Davis Arboretum 2 p.m., Arboretum Teaching Nursery
Get a preview of the Arboretum All-Stars and other exciting plants that you can take home from the Arboretum plant sale on October 16. See them in a garden setting at their mature sizes.

Saturday, October 16
Plant Sale: Fall is for Planting
UC Davis Arboretum Public sale: 9 a.m.–1 p.m., Arboretum Teaching Nursery
Find some great plants for your home landscape and get expert advice on working with your garden conditions. Join at the door for 10% member discount and a free plant!

Sat, Oct 16, 9:00am–1:00pm
Growing Urban Edibles: Winter Workshop (212-2070)
Led by Master Gardeners
San Francisco Botanical Garden
Learn how to grow your own sustainable food garden!

Saturday, October 16th
Green Living: Ecology and Conservation in the Home Garden (212-3000)
San Francisco Botanical Garden
Part One: with Don Mahoney, Ph.D. 9:30am-11:20am Part Two: Tom Bressan of the Urban Farmer Store 11:30am-1:30pm

Sunday, October 17
Guided Tour: Birds That Winter in the Arbor...
How Do I Recycle...

Dave Gorton  SJ County Solid Waste Dept.

Californians have a reputation for being concerned about the environment. Maybe that is why California goes further than most states by banning many common items that we use at home, at work and in our daily lives from being disposed of in the trash. Batteries, fluorescent bulbs and electronic devices are just a few examples of products that contain toxic or hazardous materials that would end up in the landfill if Californians allowed it. The concern is that eventually chemicals or hazardous materials from these items could contaminate delicate ecosystems and groundwater, causing detrimental effects to humans and the environment.

Here is a partial list of items that are not allowed to be placed into the trash:

| Batteries | Automotive fluids | Medications |
| Paint | Tires | Electronics |
| Solvents | Appliances | |
| Household chemicals | Mercury devices | |

These items are easily recycled - but are often thrown away:

| Styrofoam | Inkjet and toner cartridges |
| Carpet and padding | Plastic bags |

So how do you sort it all out? What needs to be recycled? What can and can’t be thrown in the garbage? What can’t be recycled but needs to be disposed of properly? Most importantly, where can I take all this stuff? For information on how to manage these materials and more, go to www.SJCreycle.org and click on the “How do I recycle or properly dispose of…” link to find a list of common materials and how to recycle or dispose of them properly in San Joaquin County. The best part is that most of the materials listed can be recycled or disposed of at convenient locations near you, FREE OF CHARGE!
BEEFY MINESTRONE SOUP
From Corinne Bachle

1 tri-tip roast
2 quarts water
2 quarts beef stock (fat free, low salt)
olive oil
2 14-oz cans pinto beans
1 large clove garlic
2 C celery, chopped
1 large onion, chopped
3 large carrots, chopped
2 C fresh string beans, trimmed, and cut into 1” pieces
2 C fresh zucchini, quartered and sliced
2 C thinly sliced and quartered new potatoes
2 cans Italian stewed tomatoes
2 C shredded cabbage
4 T green pesto sauce (or more)
1 C Harvest Trader Joe’s Harvest Grains Blend
salt and pepper to taste
Parmesan cheese to taste
steak and roast seasoning (or similar) to taste

Trim tri-tip of all visible fat. Cut into 3 or 4 chunks and season with Steak and Roast (or similar) seasoning. Place in crockpot and pour 1 quart of beef broth over. Cook on high for about 6-8 hours until meat is very tender. Skim fat from broth and add broth to the soup pot. Place meat on plate and cut across the grain in 1 inch strips.

Meanwhile……

Sauté onion, celery, and garlic in olive oil. Blend ½ of pinto beans with some added liquid in a blender until they are a smooth consistency (set aside).

Put the water and 1 quart beef broth in a 10-quart stock pot. When water comes to a boil, add remaining whole pinto beans, Harvest Grains Blend and all vegetables except cabbage. Cook on low flame for 40 minutes. Add blended pinto beans. Leave lid off pot after adding blended pinto beans. Add shredded cabbage, sliced beef and broth from the crockpot.

After beans and vegetables are cooked, add cabbage and boil for 15-20 minutes. Add Harvest Grain Blend, salt and pepper to taste and pesto. Simmer 10 minutes. When serving, add Parmesan cheese to taste.

This hearty soup can’t be beat on a cold autumn day! It takes a little time, but it’s well worth the effort. It’s a meal in itself and it makes a BIG pot of soup. ENJOY!!

APPLE-BERRY COOKIE COBBLER From Susan Price / Corinne Bachle

Ingredients
3 lbs. Granny Smith apples peeled and sliced
1 16-oz. bag frozen berry medley, thawed
1 cup brown sugar
2 tbs. all purpose flour
1-1/2 tsp. cinnamon, divided
1/2 tsp. allspice
2 tbs. lemon juice
1 tube refrigerated sugar cookie dough
2 tbs. granulated sugar

Directions:
Preheat oven to 350°
In a bowl, combine the berries, apples, brown sugar, flour, lemon juice, and 1 tsp. of the cinnamon. Mix well. Pour into an ungreased 9x13 pan.
Take the cookie dough a little at a time and flatten it and lay it over the fruit. That way it leaves a nice even layer over the fruit. Mix the remaining cinnamon and granulated sugar and sprinkle evenly over the cookie dough. Bake in the oven for 35-45 minutes.

Let it rest, but serve warm with ice cream. So, so easy. And it is really good too!
As the winter holiday season approaches, we begin to think about special things with which we can gift our friends and family, as well as ourselves. And we all know that the most personal gift is one that we give of ourselves. For many of us twenty-first century folks, the most limited item in our holiday planning is time. Also in these more challenging economic times, gifts personally made can be done inexpensively and without excessive time or difficulty. These gifts are also often the ones that are most happily received. Experience making some lovely and delicious flavored vinegars and oils this season using your garden herbs and other flavorings. Both the gift and the gifting may make the holiday season more meaningful and personal for all. Remember to include children in the process of making and giving, especially if they have assisted in the growing garden itself.

**Herb Flavored Vinegars and Oils**

These gourmet items make for beautiful gifts and really add some punch to dressings, marinades, sauces, dips, deglazing pans, and adding a little extra “pop” to almost any dish. While many of us have made these before by putting some oil or vinegar and favorite herbs or spices in a jar, following the instructions and noting the precautions will insure that these gifts are processed properly.

**Ingredients for Vinegars**

- 1 small bunch parsley
- 1 tsp. peppercorns
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- other herbs, spices, seasonings of your choice
- 1 quart of vinegar of choice: cider, white distilled, rice wine, red wine, white wine

**Ingredients for Oils**

- 1 tsp. peppercorns
- 8-10 sprigs your choice of herbs, spices, or citrus
- olive or other oil to fill the containers you are using

Some suggest using oils other than olive oil, which has a distinctive flavor of its own, so that your choice of herb flavorings will be better highlighted. In any case, you don’t need to purchase the most expensive oils for this purpose since the less expensive oils may pick up your intended flavorings better. Other oils to consider are canola, peanut, or grape seed oil for Asian flavors, olive oil for Mediterranean herbs and spices.

**Processing and Bottling Both Vinegars and Oils**

Heat the vinegar or oil over medium heat or in the microwave until warm but not boiling. Put all of the other ingredients into a large sterile container (ceramic or glass). If using leafy herbs such as basil or oregano, crush slightly to enhance the infusion of flavors. Pour the hot liquid over the flavorings and cover. Let stand 1-4 weeks in a cool place, checking frequently to see when the flavor is developed to your liking. Once flavor is developed, strain one or more times till no longer cloudy (cheesecloth or coffee filters work well). Pour into sterile attractive jars and cap with a lid or cork. Store in a cool dark place.

Shortly before gifting, add a sprig or two of fresh (blanched) herbs or spices. This adds to the beauty of the gift and also identifies the flavor. To be “green” as well as original, save attractive bottles during the year to use for gifts. Decorate your gourmet oils and vinegars with something natural or rustic: twine to hold your gift tag, a few sprigs of greens, small cones, twigs, etc. To add another special touch, include a favorite recipe or two or a note listing possible uses for the oil or vinegar. You might also include in your gift a small set of dipping plates and perhaps a loaf of tasty artisan bread, all in lovely basket.
Precautions

There is some risk of bacteria contamination in home processed vinegars and oils, especially using fresh herbs and spices, garlic, etc., given the higher water content. This is not so much a concern with dried items. As a precaution for both oils and vinegars, use sterile jars and lids, blanch fresh items first, or dip them in a solution of 1 t. bleach in 6 cups of water. Rinse in clear running water.

To sterilize jars, immerse in boiling water for 10 minutes. Some instructions indicate that running the jars through the dishwasher is sufficient, if the temperature is high enough. In the case of both vinegars and oils, after processing it is best to keep them refrigerated. Remember to indicate that on your gift tag.

*A note: It is also possible to use dried herbs in flavored oils and vinegars by making a paste of the herb with an equal amount of water and whisking it into the warm vinegar or oil.

Use your imagination along with what your garden has provided to make these your own creations.

For more flavoring and preparation suggestions see...

UC Extension Calaveras County Flavored Vinegars and Oils
Colorado Extension (Includes safe storing as well as recipes)
Razzle Dazzle Recipes

You will find lots more recipes and information on the internet. Just search “flavored vinegars and oils”
CYCLAMEN (*C. persicum* or Florists’ Cyclamen) come in beautiful rich shades from reds and pinks to salmon and pure white. They are perennials which grow from tubers. While they appear to be delicate, they are very cold-hearty for this area. Cyclamen plants are available now in local nurseries. Plants should be placed about 1 foot apart and placed in a fairly rich soil with lots of humus (decomposed organic matter). Grown outdoors in the proper environment, the plants will often self-sow and may bloom all year long. It helps to clean up the lower leaves as they fade so they don’t become a hiding place for snails, and pinch faded flowers off at the base of the stem to encourage continued flowering. The reds and whites will look beautiful near your front entrance during the holidays.

DIANTHUS (*D. barbatus*, or Sweet William) are an amazing little plant. They are considered a cool-season annual, but if the summer doesn’t get too hot and they have the proper exposure, they can bloom virtually all year long. Dianthus come in many shades of pinks, reds, and whites. They thrive in light, fast-draining, fairly rich soil, and should not be over-watered.

ENGLISH DAISY (*Bellis perennis*). These are rosette-forming carpeting plant with flowers ranging from dark pink to white on the same plant. These are about 8‖ wide and work well as edging or bedding plants. They prefer cooler temperatures and will probably die of as the weather warms up in summer.

FORSYTHIAS (*F. x intermedia*) are a fountain-shaped perennial flowering shrub whose bare winter branches become covered with gorgeous bright yellow budded branches in late winter. They are a ray of sunshine and reassurance that Spring is just around the corner. During the rest of the growing season, the forsythia has green, rounded leaves which blend well with other background shrubs. They should be pruned after blooming by cutting a third of the branches that have flowered and removing the oldest branches and weak or dead wood (or prune while in bloom if you want to take the cuttings inside).

MUMS (*various varieties*) come in many fall colors, and a variety of sizes, and shapes. To encourage your mums into a nice bushy shape, it is necessary to “pinch” them back. To do this, when a plant is 6 to 8 inches high, pinch out 1/2 inch at the tip to encourage new lateral growth. About 2 months later, select 3 or 4 healthy, evenly spaced laterals and remove any others. This will give your plant a strong structure and pleasing shape. It’s hard to throw away healthy plant growth, but really, it’s for the good of the plant! Mums can get top-heavy with the abundance of flowers, so it is wise to stake and tie them as they grow. For continued bloom, prune lightly at frequent intervals.

### 2010 Master Gardener Tomato Tasting Results

At our last monthly meeting, the Master Gardeners had a tomato tasting event where we brought in various tomatoes from our gardens and rated them based on what our taste buds thought. There wasn’t much of a scientific process to this, only sheer taste bud delight and personal preference. We thought we would share some of the top varieties that the Master Gardeners liked. In the chart to the right you will see the top 13 tomatoes (out of 20+ we tasted) plus the overall score they received based on our scoring process. Enjoy!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tomato</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Franchetia di Manduri</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Cherry</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellogg’s Breakfast</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burbank</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thessaloniki</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old German</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pruden’s Purple</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amana Orange</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Wonder</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stupice</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva Purple Ball</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon Boy</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Saturday, November 13
San Joaquin Master Gardener Event  (web link??)
Planning the Next Vegetable Garden of Heirlooms
10:00-11:30
San Joaquin Historical Museum
11793 N. Micke Grove Road, Lodi
Sat, Nov 13, 9:30am--12:30pm
Slugs, Bugs and Bigger Thugs (212-2090)
San Francisco Botanical Garden
Safe and Sane Pest Management for Bay Area Gardens with Bob Fiorello

Sunday, November 21
Guided Tour: Birds That Winter in the Arboretum
UC Davis Arboretum (Slideshow and walk)
11 a.m., Arboretum Headquarters
Bird activity really picks up in the winter months, as many birds come down from the hills or south from Alaska to hang out where the climate is mild.

Saturday, November 27
Guided Tour: The Oak Lifecycle
UC Davis Arboretum  11 a.m., Gazebo
In fall the oaks are ending their cycle, preparing to drop their seeds, and hunkering down for the winter. Learn more about the stages in the life of an oak.

DECEMBER
Saturday, December 4
Guided Tour: California’s Native Plants
UC Davis Arboretum
11 a.m., Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center
Tour the Mary Wattis Brown Garden focusing on plants native to California’s Central Valley. Learn more about these plants and why they thrive in our regional ecosystem.

Sat, Dec 4, 9:30am--11:30am
Window Box and Deck Gardening (212-3020)
San Francisco Botanical Garden
With Ellyn Shea, Horticulturalist

Wednesday, December 8
Walk With Warren
UC Davis Arboretum  12 p.m., Gazebo
Explore the pleasures of the winter garden with everyone’s favorite garden raconteur, Warren Roberts.

Saturday, December 11
Guided Tour: Why Do Some Trees Lose Their Leaves?
UC Davis Arboretum  11 a.m., Gazebo
A look at the difference between evergreen and deciduous trees in the Shields Oak Grove.

Useful Web-sites

UC Center for Landscape & Urban Horticulture
The CLUH goals are to promote sustainable landscaping and provide information about landscaping. Visit the web-site to check out some projects as well as valuable how to guides on pruning trees, selecting plants, and other home gardening related topics.

UC Davis Arboretum
The UC Davis Arboretum has some really great demonstration landscapes and trails. Visit the web-site to find an upcoming plant sale or workshop that might be of interest. You can also find the UC Davis Arboretum All Stars hosted here. Water wise and low maintenance plants that do well in the valley.

San Joaquin MG web-site
Have a gardening question? Start here. We have linked many useful UC web-sites and information to our easy to navigate web-site. Check back often as we continually update it with local master gardener events and tips.
San Joaquin County Master Gardeners

2101 E Earhart Ave.
Ste 200
Stockton CA 95206

Phone: 209-953-6112
Fax: 209-953-6128
E-mail: mgsanjoaquin@ucdavis.edu
Web-site: http://sjmastergardeners.ucdavis.edu

Master Gardeners Out and About

Did you make it to the Tracy Bean Festival this September? The Master Gardeners were there! Look for us at the Manteca Pumpkin Festival this weekend (October 2nd and 3rd) We will be in a corner booth #505. We will also have a table at the Lodi Sand Hill Crane Festival November 5-7. Stop by and say hello. We will have lots of great seasonal information at our booth!

You Know You’re An Avid Gardener When:

10. You rejoice in rain...even after straight days of it.
9. You have pride in how bad your hands look.
8. You have a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter.
7. You can give away plants easily, but compost is another thing.
6. Soil test results actually mean something.
5. Your gardening books are covered in dirt and automatically open to your problem section.
4. You’d rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothes store.
3. You look for gardens open to the public whenever you go on vacation.
2. Your non-gardening spouse is actually getting involved with your garden endeavors...digging ponds, building bird houses, watering, pruning, turning compost piles, planting...

And you definitely know you’re an avid Gardener when...

1. You have read our newsletter from start to finish and are excited to get out and garden!

Audrey, Emmitsburg, Md & Marcy Hachman

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