



Garden Notes

With the San Joaquin County
Master Gardeners



JANUARY - MARCH 2012

San Joaquin County Master Gardeners

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Program Spotlight

Marcy Sousa Master Gardener Coordinator

As I reflect on 2011, I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with such a great group of volunteers and with such a great program. The Master Gardeners have been involved in many projects throughout the county. In 2011 we added monthly classes to Manteca, we participated in several local farmers markets on a bi-weekly basis, 45 people graduated our spring training and we hosted our first annual Sustainable Landscape conference that drew in over 100 people. In 2011, Master Gardeners volunteered close to 4,000 hours in San Joaquin County, bringing our total close to 14,000 hours since July 2007. With the help of our Environmental Horticulture advisor, Karrie Reid, the Master Gardeners have been busy in the demonstration garden turning it into a true teaching garden. Our hotline office has been busy with phone calls and walk-ins and we are getting more and more requests for guidance and presentations to public and private groups. Our newsletter team took 3rd place at the Statewide Master Gardener conference for our quarterly newsletter we publish and are very proud of.

2012 is already looking to be a busy year. Plans are being made for a spring garden tour and we will have a gardening journal available for sale in early 2012. Master Gardeners will be at the local farmers markets and festivals again and we are looking to increase our free community classes. Our web-site continues to grow with more and more gardening help and resources and we are planning on another fall Sustainable Landscape conference.

This program can only continue to grow in outreach and education. I'd like to extend a "thank you" to all the Master Gardeners that have made this program what it is. A special thanks to the Public Works, Solid Waste Dept. for financially supporting this program as well.

Myself and the Master Gardeners wish you a healthy and prosperous New Year and Happy Gardening.

It's Winter; Time to Plant Seeds for Summer

Flowers and Vegetables

Lee Miller Master Gardener

January is the time to think about your summer garden. Seed catalogues have likely arrived and their perusal by the warm fireside can provide the enjoyment of selecting the cultivars which will be your garden companions next summer. If you saved some heirloom lettuce or tomato seeds, now is the time to plan to use them in your next spring or summer garden. One thing not to do is have your plants ready to plant before the garden soil is warm enough; that time for tomatoes, peppers and egg-plants is usually about the

first or second week in April. Consequently you will want to start these seeds about the first or second week of February. Lettuce seeds can be started in February or earlier because lettuce tolerates frost and does best in cooler weather. Many flowers can be started at this time of year to give you a good start for summer blooms.

To be successful at seed starting, here are some tips I have learned, sometimes the hard way.



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Garden Chores Calendar

Sue Davis Master Gardener

Winter Gardening Chores For January, February, and March

Winter is certainly the time to sit back and leaf through seed and horticultural catalogues while planning your spring and summer gardens. However, it is also the season to invest a little time getting your garden ready so you will have spectacular success later in the year.



In January, think about:

Planting – [Bare-root roses](#) and [fruit trees](#) should be available in your local nursery for planting at this time. Planning your spring and summer garden while you leaf through seed Catalogues will make planting easier when the weather warms.

Pest Control – [Snails and slugs](#) may be hiding under pots, wood, benches, and pavers. Check these areas regularly and dispose of these pests as you find them

Maintenance – If you haven't already [sharpened your pruning tools](#), do it early this month because now is a great time to



prune. Deciduous flowering vines, fruit and shade trees, grapes and roses all benefit from a pruning to remove dead, diseased, and broken branches, open their framework to the sun and improve air circulation.

Disinfect your pruning tools as you work with a 20% bleach to water solution to

prevent disease and pests. Oil your tools immediately to prevent rust.

Be sure to remove all [mummified fruit](#) from your fruit tree, as well as any fruit or leaves still on the ground to discourage pests and diseases. Apply dormant oil sprays to control pests and diseases. Dormant sprays are labeled for specific diseases or pests as well as for the recommended amount and frequency of spraying. [Please read labels carefully](#). You'll get the best results from spraying after rain or foggy weather and not during or just prior to freezing weather.

Mulch around your plants at least as far as the drip line but not near the trunks to discourage weeds, prevent soil erosion and

help regulate soil temperature.

Work the compost you have ready into the soil around your plants and continue composting for your spring and summer gardens.

Information for making the most of February:

Are you thinking of a blooming plant for your Valentine? You should be able to find the perfect gift from the azaleas, camellias, carnations, gardenias, oriental lilies, cyclamen, tulips, hydrangeas, and orchids that should be in nurseries now. Or, for something different, tie a red ribbon and a big bow around a bare-root rose or a lemon tree.

Planting – This is a good time to [start seeds](#) indoors (see Lee Miller's article on starting seeds elsewhere in this newsletter for some great tips) while peas can be planted outside. It's best to pre-germinate the pea seeds on moist paper towels in a warm room for a few days before you sow them.



Gladiolus flowers

Tuberous begonia bulbs should be available at your nursery. Choose the largest and healthiest looking bulbs.

Gladiolus corms can be planted late this month through early April. Winter blooming annuals such as pansies and snapdragons can still be planted this month.

Citrus trees will appreciate a feeding of a nitrogen rich fertilizer 6 to 8 weeks before their spring bloom time. Citrus requires micronutrients that are specifically found in citrus fertilizers. A good citrus fertilizer will include additional nutrients like Magnesium, Boron, Copper, and Zinc.

Pest Control - Keep checking for and disposing of those snails and slugs.

Maintenance – Remove old flowers on camellias to reduce the chance of petal blight.

Mid month is a good time to apply your final application of dormant spray for [peach leaf curl](#), [brown rot](#) and [scale](#) on your stone fruit trees.

[Cut back](#) woody shrubs such as butterfly bush and fuchsia to within a few inches of the ground.

Asparagus shoots are starting to pop up now and will appreciate a balanced fertilizer.

[Continued pg. 12](#)

Internet Resources for “Growing Young Gardeners”

Lynne and Bill Gowdy Master Gardeners

Winter is a quiet time in the garden that gives us a chance to plan for spring activities and explore new ideas. In this article, we will invite young gardeners and their parents to investigate good nutrition, worm bins, composting, recycling and seed starting activities. The activities listed on the websites below are a starting point to spark interest and generate ideas. Just click the links below for access to activities, instructions, images, resources and additional web links.

The first sites focus on nutrition, fitness, and good health for kids. They explain how the traditional food pyramid has transitioned to “a plate and a glass” so kids can easily visualize new nutritional guidelines. These sites support the “Slow Food Movement” as a commonsense alternative to our culture’s “Fast Food.” We’ll feature more about the “Slow Food Movement” in future newsletters.



The next group of resources features simple garden projects for kids including building worm bins (vermiculture), simple composting and recycling.

Finally, the last sites focus on seed starting activities and information that will quick-start spring gardens.

Click the links below and enjoy using these sites to explore exciting resources. They are a beginning point for exploring an infinite variety of gardening activities to enjoy with kids. You can help your young gardener grow and learn the joys and rewards of gardening.

Remember, the Internet should always be used with adult supervision. It is always best to preview each site and become familiar with it before introducing them to children. If you have any difficulty loading any of the sites, copy and paste the addresses onto your URL address bar.

Enjoy!

[KidsHealth.org \(Nutrition and Fitness Center\)](#)

[Benefits-of Recycling](#)

[ChooseMyPlate.gov](#) (United States Department of Agriculture)

[Worm World](#)

[ChooseMyPlate.gov](#) (10 Tips Nutrition Education Series)

[How-To Project: Planting a Child Friendly Garden](#)

[Cheap and Easy Worm Bins](#)

[Kids Gardening – Helping Young Minds Grow](#)

[Worm Composting](#)

[Seeds! The Promise of Life](#)

[The Worm Guide](#) (Teacher/Parent Resource – click on any of the 3 sites listed for Vermiculture)

[Eartheasy, Solutions for Sustainable Living -- Gardening with Children](#)

[Composting for Kids](#)

[The Great Plant Escape](#) (University of Illinois Extension)

[Hanging Garden Seed Starter](#) – Disney Family Fun

Pests and Plants of the Season

by Lee Miller and Marcy Sousa



A good snail and slug management program relies on a combination of methods. Elimination of hiding habitat such as ivy, locating vegetable gardens as far as possible from hiding areas, using drip irrigation to reduce moisture, using baits such as pet-safe iron phosphate, copper strip barriers, and hand picking and trapping. For details on these methods [click here](#).

Snails, Slugs and Wood Decay Fungi

Snails and slugs are among the most bothersome pests in many gardens and landscapes. The brown garden snail, *Cornu aspersum*, is the most common snail causing problems in California gardens. It was introduced from France during the 1850s for use as food.

Snails and slugs feed on a variety of living plants and on decaying plant matter. They chew irregular holes with smooth edges in leaves and flowers and can clip succulent plant parts. They also can chew fruit and young plant bark.

Because they prefer succulent foliage or flowers, they primarily are pests of seedlings and herbaceous plants, but they also are serious pests of ripening fruits that are close to the ground such as strawberries, artichokes, and tomatoes. They also will feed on foliage and fruit of some trees; citrus are especially susceptible to damage. Look for the silvery mucous trails to confirm that slugs or snails caused the damage and not earwigs, caterpillars, or other chewing insects.

Wood Decay Fungi in Landscape Trees

Several fungal diseases, sometimes called heart or sap rots, cause the wood in the center of trunks and limbs to decay. Under conditions favoring growth of certain rot fungi, extensive portions of the wood of living trees can decay in a relatively short time (i.e., months to years). Many wood rot fungi can be identified by the distinctive shape, color, and texture of the [fruiting bodies](#) that form on trees. These structures, called conks or brackets, often are located around wounds in bark, at branch scars, or around the root crown. Wood decay usually is a disease of old, large trees.

For more information and pictures of various types of fungi [click here](#).



Ganoderma applanatum
artist's conk

Weed of the Month: Mallow

Common Mallow (*Malva neglecta*) and Little Mallow (*M. parviflora*), both commonly named cheeseweed, are winter annual broadleaf weeds and occasionally a biennial or short-lived perennial. They are found throughout California in orchards, fields, gardens and other disturbed soil and unmanaged sites. The two species can be separated only by comparing flower petals and fruit shape. The seedling has cotyledons (seed leaves) that are distinctly heart-shaped, hairless, and have long stalks. The seedling rapidly develops a strong fibrous taproot, making the plant difficult to remove even at young stages.

The mature plants have tough and woody stems and grow mostly erect. They can reach over 2-1/2 feet (80 cm) in height. Flowers bloom nearly year-round. They are small, white to pale pink, and about 2/5 of an inch (1 cm) in diameter. Flower clusters are found at the bases of leaf stalks. These weeds are best controlled by early weeding with a hoe or by hand pulling. Mature plants are not readily killed with glyphosate herbicides. For more information [click here](#)



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 topic!



Pansy, Violet & Lilac - Flower and shrub of the quarter

Pansy, Violet—*Viola* spp. Family Violaceae (Violet family)

PLANT IDENTIFICATION

Pansies and most violets are perennial plants, although they are often grown as winter annuals in mild winter areas. They are grown mostly in borders, edges, or containers and sometimes used in rock gardens. Flowers may bloom in spring through summer and even during the winter in mild climates.



UC Statewide IPM Project
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OPTIMUM CONDITIONS FOR GROWTH

Pansies do well in full sun or partial shade while violets do better in some or complete shade. They require regular water. Some species can tolerate some drought. Removing old flowers can extend the blooming period. Plants often need to be removed during the summer in very hot areas as they get ragged.

For more info [click here](#).

Syringa, Lilac, Japanese tree lilac—*Syringa* spp. Family Oleaceae (Olive family)

PLANT IDENTIFICATION

The best known *Syringa* spp. is the common lilac, *Syringa vulgaris*, with its fragrant, old-fashioned flower clusters in shades of lavender, pink, purple, and white. Japanese tree lilac, *S. reticulata*, is a larger species that can become a small tree growing to a height of 30 feet.

OPTIMUM CONDITIONS FOR GROWTH

Lilacs grow best where there is a pronounced winter chilling. Some varieties will bloom with only little chilling. In inland valleys, they do best with light shade and protection from reflected heat. In other areas, plant in full sun. All lilacs prefer alkaline soils and good drainage. Provide water during bloom and heavy growth periods. For more info [click here](#).



Acacia - Tree of the Quarter

Acacia—*Acacia* spp.* Family Fabaceae (Pea family)

PLANT IDENTIFICATION

Acacia spp. can be short lived. They vary in size depending on the species. Mostly they are classified as large shrubs or small trees. Most species are evergreen and bloom in January and February. All species have whitish to yellow or orangish flowers.

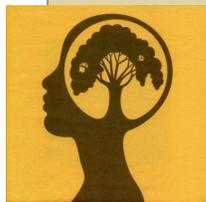
*Some species are invasives. Other types of plants may be better choices when planting.

OPTIMUM CONDITIONS FOR GROWTH

The climatic zone for Acacia varies by species; most species are native to tropics or temperate zones. They prefer full sun and survive best in well-drained soils with deep, infrequent irrigation (every 7 to 14 days). For more info on pests and problems commonly associated with Acacia's, [click here](#).



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Growing Knowledge Useful and interesting books

Lee Miller Master Gardener

Thriving During Challenging Times; The Energy, Food and Financial Independence Handbook by Cam Mather. Aztext Press, Canada. 317p.

This is not your mundane grower's guide to vegetable gardening, but a life plan for independence that includes gardening as a major component to deal with uncertain times. As I see pictures of indigent people lining up at food banks, I always wonder how many could be growing much of their own food, if they just had the knowledge, the land, and the will to garden. Unfortunately, most of us today live in urban situations where gardening is difficult. Cam Mather has managed by frugality to overcome these restraints and live an independent life much in the manner of Scott and Helen Nearing, two other heroes of the back-to-the-land movement in the 60's.

This is a guide for living frugally when times are hard. Just how hard times will be in the future is anyone's guess. Mather postulates hard landings and softer landings for the economy, but the fact that the bloom may be permanently off the American Dream and the progress concept is a possible future demanding more self-sufficiency in spite of globalization. Most food travels 1000-3000 miles to our tables at a high energy and greenhouse-gas cost. This was not so 200 years ago prior to agriculture becoming fossil fuel dependent when all food was local and the population only 4 or 5 million.

Cam Mather has been gardening for 30 years and started out on some clay subsoil that was all that was left in his subdivision after the topsoil got bulldozed away. Consequently, his first garden was a dismal disappointment. The next garden was more successful, as he lived in a home that was a hundred years old and the soil profile was left intact. The garden thrived. Later, living in apartments, he was forced to rent garden space that was 20 minutes away by car. He observed people indiscriminately dousing plants with pesticides in this community garden, so became anxious to have his own plot. The next home had two large shade-providing black walnuts in the back yard which prevented vegetables from growing, so he did the sensible thing and gardened the front yard. That being too small and somewhat controversial, he decided it was time to find a country place and a big garden area. I have had similar experiences with gardening on city lots— not enough space and neighbors who whined about my composting!

Mather has learned how to garden by reading and conversing with fellow gardeners. I have to agree when he states that, "It is not rocket science." However, it does take some skills and knowledge that are not learned overnight. The first step is to find some available land; secondly to prepare it well by smothering/digging out the grass/weeds without losing topsoil. If you can, get a rototiller to work the soil. One tank full of gas can replace a day or more with the shovel and hoe at readying the soil for planting. If you must rely on a shovel, make sure it gets sharpened which makes for less effort digging. This can save you money, since by digging you get lots of exercise and can quit your gym membership. Next, use compost which is the key to a successful garden—something all Master Gardeners know and advocate. He encourages taking, with permission, the neighbor's leaves and grass clippings, getting coffee grounds at the local coffee shop, buying discounted broken bags of manure at local stores, and generally making lots of compost as cheaply as possible for a large garden.

Since Mather lives in Canada off the grid with only solar and wind turbine for power, he does not opt for grow lights and heat mats for greenhouse production. But if you don't have such restraints, it is a good idea to grow your own tomatoes and peppers using these techniques. He does grow some, but later in the year when power for light and heat are not needed.

Mather gives many tips on gardening in this section of the book. It is a good overview of vegetable gardening where space is not at a premium. He recommends square foot gardening books only for those with space limitations. I could relate to most of his gardening experiences, such as experimenting each year with a few new vegetables, and other aspects of life on a small planet. I recommend this book for anyone desiring to live more self-sufficiently and debt free.

THRIVING During Challenging Times



Energy, Food and Financial
Independence Handbook

Cam Mather

Taking shape - A first look at the new San Joaquin County

Demonstration Garden

Susan Price Master Gardener

This year will see the newly planted San Joaquin Demonstration Garden come into its own. It occupies the property to the west of the Robert J. Cabral Agricultural Center located in Stockton (2101 E. Earhart Avenue). The project, spearheaded by Karrie Reid, Environmental Horticultural Advisor, took months of planning and the work of many dedicated Master Gardeners. They created six themed gardens—all demonstrating principles of sustainable gardening. The garden themes are:

- UC Davis Arboretum All Stars
- Foliage/Low-Maintenance
- Pollinators/Wildlife
- Edible Landscape
- Mediterranean
- California Natives



All of these gardens offer a diversity of plants and plant combinations that look beautiful and that work together to create an inviting space. Plants were chosen for their low water use and hardiness in our climate zone. These gardens are meant to teach and inspire—to show how you can plant and care for ornamental and edible plants in an environmentally friendly way. Future plans are to expand the demonstration garden to include composting displays and areas for conducting gardening workshops on topics such as pruning, planting, and propagation.



Master Gardeners working in the demo garden

While there have been some hurdles to overcome, including voles and rabbits devouring some plants and a few irrigation hiccups, the demonstration garden is taking shape. The gardens are filling in, looking more lush, and reflecting the changing seasons. The spring bloom should be spectacular, but there will be plenty to see all year. Many of the plants selected offer year-round interest. Plants worth a look in winter include:

Kniphofia 'Christmas Cheer' (Poker Plant), with its orange and gold tubular flowers, Arctostaphylos 'Howard McMinn' (Vine Hill Manzanita), with its white or pink urn-shaped flowers, and Ceanothus 'Yankee Point', with its showy blue flower clusters. Come see for yourself.

Useful Web-sites



UC Home Orchard— Propagation

We get quite a few calls each year on how to graft fruit trees. This site walks you through the process (with pictures) of propagation and fruit trees. Why not try it yourself this year?

UC IPM web-site

This web-site is used daily in our office. Find the answers to your pest questions here. You can also find info on trees, vegetables, flowers, diseases and many other topics. The site has a whole new look and is much more user friendly now!

UC Master Gardener web-site

The SJ Master Gardener web-site is continually being updated with new topics, timely articles and local resources. It's a great starting point for the local gardener looking for answers to common garden questions. Check it out today!

The Help Desk

Susan Price Master Gardener



If you have a gardening question, call the Master Gardeners Tuesday-Thursday 9:00 am-12:00 pm at 209-953-6112 or by e-mail mgsanjoaquin@ucdavis.edu

Frequently Asked Question

I have several hybrid tea roses. When and how much should I prune?

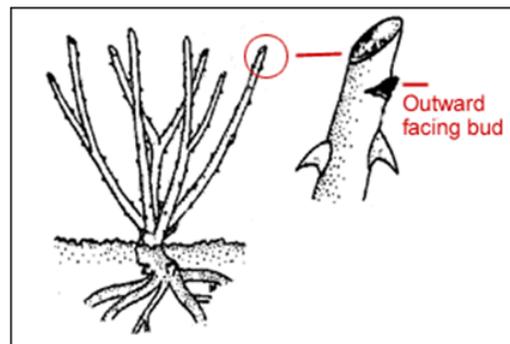


The best time to prune hybrid teas is during the winter dormant season, just before bud break. Anytime between December and mid-February should work fine.

Hybrid teas have large flowers and bloom on new wood. They benefit from a "hard" pruning. Typically, plants are cut back from 1/3 to 2/3, but this will depend on the type and variety of rose you have, its age and vigor, along with your personal preference. Start the pruning process by cutting away the deadwood. Remove dead, diseased or damaged canes, and any suckers that arise from the rootstock. This will help you see the shape of the plant without distraction. Cut back to 3-5 healthy canes, making cuts 1/4" above an outwardly facing bud (see figure). Angles formed by the cuts are ideally 45 degrees, with the downward slope toward the bush's center. The goal is create an open center with branches evenly spaced around the bush. This ensures maximum air circulation.

Good quality by-pass pruning shears will make the job easier. For thicker canes, long-handled loppers should do the trick. Don't forget to wear puncture-proof gloves, preferably with some forearm protection. After the pruning job is done, be sure to clean up the plant debris to avoid spread of any harboring pests or diseases.

For more information on pruning roses refer to our Master Gardener [web-site](#). For information on growing roses [click here](#). Also, watch for the hands-on rose pruning classes to be offered this February in Lodi and Manteca.



FREE PASSENGER TIRE RECYCLING

Expires 6/30/12

Recycle up to 4 passenger tires free any day!

FREE for residents of San Joaquin County and its Cities.

Not available for businesses.

Rims okay. Charges will apply to larger tires.

NEW

FOR ILLEGALLY DUMPED TIRES

Recycle up to **20** passenger tires (no truck tires).

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY!

#1: Call San Joaquin County Sheriff to file a report at 468-4400

(if property is within city limits, please file with local police)

#2: Call San Joaquin County Public Works Provide a report number to schedule an appointment at (209) 468-3066

Just tell the cashier you saw it in the **Master Gardener Newsletter!**



- **North County Landfill**
17720 E. Harney Lane, Lodi
- **Lovlace Transfer Station**
2323 E. Lovlace Road, Manteca
- **Foothill Sanitary Landfill**
6484 Waverly Road, Linden

Find more information on **RECYCLING** at:
www.BeGreenSanJoaquin.org

Funded by a Grant from the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).

Coming Events

Corinne Bachle Master Gardener

January

Friday-Sunday, January 6-8

[CA State Home and Garden Show](#)

Hours: Friday Jan 6: Noon—7:00 pm

Saturday Jan. 7: 10:00 am—7:00 pm

Sunday Jan. 8th: 10:00 am—5:00 pm

Admission: \$5.00 (16 & under free)

Friday only Seniors 62+ \$3.00

Sacramento Convention Center

This is the place to find the finest craftsmen and home improvement professionals all under one roof. Come have FUN as you learn money saving ideas for your home and garden.

Saturday and Sunday, January 7 and 8

[Alden Lane Nursery 6th Annual Orchids Under the Oaks](#)

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Alden Lane Nursery

981 Alden Lane Livermore, CA

94550-6350

(925) 447-0280

Free admission and parking

Experience the "Ancient World of Orchids" in our "Temple of BLOOM", featuring orchids from around the world. Don't miss our enticing "Orchid Marketplace" with vendors from throughout California bringing you top quality, selection and variety. Free seminars will be given throughout the weekend to help you keep your orchids in tip top shape.

Saturday, January 14

[San Joaquin Master Gardener Workshop](#)

Heard it through the Grape Vine

10:00 to 11:30 am

Classes are free.

San Joaquin County Historical Museum (\$5 parking if not a Museum member).

11793 N. Micke Grove Road, Lodi

All participants must register a week prior to the class by calling (209) 331-2055

Wednesday January 18

[Sac Valley Landscape and Nursery Expo](#)

8:00 am—4:00 pm

Sacramento Community Convention Center
\$55.00 if registered before Jan. 13, \$65 day of registration.

This expo is designed more towards the landscaping and nursery industry but the class topics can be applied to the home gardener. You need to pre-register for the classes.

Saturday, January 21

[San Joaquin Master Gardener Workshop:](#)

Fill Your Own Fruit Bowl

10:30 am to 12 noon

Classes are free

Manteca Library, 320 W. Center, Manteca

All participants must register a week prior to the class by calling (209) 331-2055

Saturday, January 21

[Attracting Wildlife to Your Garden](#)

1:00 to 2:00 pm

Roseville Utility Exploration Center

1501 Pleasant Grove Blvd., Roseville, CA 95747

(916) 745-1550

Learn how to turn your home into a certified wildlife habitat by following the National Wildlife Federation's four steps for creating wildlife habitats – provide food, water, cover and a place to raise their young. Take home plans for building bat, bee and bird houses; learn how to choose the best wildlife plants for your garden, and dive into some practical and fun ideas for creating a safe and inviting home for our wild neighbors.

Friday - Sunday, January 27-29

[Sacramento Home and Landscape Expo](#)

Hours: Friday 12pm - 7pm

Saturday 10am - 6pm

Sunday 10am - 6pm

Admission: \$7 adults, Children 12 & under free. Friday only special: 60 years & older just \$2 (visit web-site for a \$2.00 off coupon)

Cal Expo Fairgrounds

1600 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento, 95815

Parking: \$10 on-site parking paid directly to Cal Expo. Alternative free parking on adjacent streets or empty parking lots at Ethan & Arden Way.

Whether you are planning to build, remodel or simply redecorate, the Home & Landscape Expo promises to bring you the largest gathering of professionals to help you with your home project.

Saturday, Jan 28

[Tree Pruning \(by Certified Arborist\)](#)

1:00 to 3:30 pm

Roseville Utility Exploration Center

1501 Pleasant Grove Blvd., Roseville, CA 95747

(916) 745-1550

Learn how to train young trees to encourage fast growth, good structure and health. You will also learn how to prune your shade trees safely from the ground. Bring warm clothes for outdoor pruning demonstrations.

February

Friday - Sunday, February 3, 4 & 5

[13th Annual Lodi Home and Garden Show](#)

Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 1200 E.

Turner Road, Lodi, CA

Friday: 12 noon to 6 pm

Saturday: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Sunday: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Californians spend millions on residential construction and general home improvements/decor each year. Home improvement projects can be costly, so you should take time and care when planning the project and hiring a contractor or purchasing products and or/services.

Admission: \$3.00

Saturday, February 11

[San Joaquin Master Gardener Workshop:](#)

Roses – Pruning and Care

10:00 to 11:30 am

Classes are free

San Joaquin County Historical Museum

(\$5 parking if not a Museum member)

11793 N. Micke Grove Road, Lodi

All participants must register a week prior to the class y calling (209) 331-2055

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The Garden Gate...Opening Doors in the Community

Eating Local for 2012

Julie Hyske Master Gardener

The tree has been dismantled, the ornaments packed away, and the Christmas sweater you have worn too often lately is now hiding in the closet. It has been a season of too many cookies, candies and holiday parties. Welcome 2012, a time to ring out the old and a chance for a fresh start with resolutions that are all shiny and new. If your list of resolutions is looking a little tired, vague and uninspired, perhaps a family goal of either growing and harvesting your own vegetables or buying locally will be an investment in a healthy lifestyle change.

Talk of local food is everywhere. For food purists, "local" is the new "organic." Local foods are produced as close to home as possible. "Locavore" is a term that was coined in 2005 to describe people who value local as their primary food criterion. The local food movement can start in your own backyard, school, community farm, or simply by purchasing from farmers' markets. Slow Food USA is a grass roots movement with a vision of eating food that is good for you, the planet, and those who grow it. It is everything that fast food is not. Local chapters offer educational activities in their communities to promote sustainability and biodiversity. A developing local chapter of Slow Food Lodi has a goal of educating residents of San Joaquin County to the virtues and pleasures of locally produced food and drink.

Where does one begin? One easy way to start buying local is to choose one product to focus on. Vegetables are often a good place to start. Produce offers a good lesson towards eating food grown seasonally and that translates to local. Eating seasonal foods allows us to eat them at their peak of taste and ripeness. Locally grown has the benefit of freshness, nutritional value, and often costs less. Local and home-grown produce does not have transit time and has not been cold-stored. Eating local generates income for our local economy, thereby supporting family farms, utilizing community services and employing local workers. Small, local farms are run by farmers who live on their land, working hard at becoming good stewards while reducing environmental impacts created by industrial farming practices. Another bonus of purchasing local is that it allows local farmers to try new crops for niche markets that would never make it to big supermarkets.

The concept of sustainability includes buying food grown locally, but buying local food does not always guarantee sustainable food practices. Pesticides, chemical fertilizers, hormone and antibiotic use can all be involved in the local production of foods. When you purchase local, ask what you are buying. A consideration may be that you purchase from farmers using sustainable methods. As master gardeners, we endorse the use of integrated pest management-- IPM practices-- which utilize pest identification, use of beneficials, biological and cultural controls, and finally, only utilize synthetic chemicals as a last resort. Consider these practices of fruit and vegetable gardening in your own home sustainable production. Unlike organic standards which are defined by legal standards, "local" can mean different things to different people. Local does not necessarily mean organic. While local is certainly a flexible term, it does support a more sustainable food system because true sustainability goes far beyond the methods used in food production to include every step that brings food from the farm to your plate. The question arises: if you send an organic food halfway around the world before it is eaten (think transportation, processing and packaging) is it a sustainable practice or good for the planet?

So now that you have made an informed resolution to eat local, buy local and be local, where do you start? To learn even more and make thoughtful choices, you can visit websites such as: [Sustainable Table](#), [Local Harvest](#) and [Slow Food](#). Commit to growing your own very local backyard produce utilizing the [Master Gardener web-site](#) for questions, answers and a calendar of events for educational classes. Create your own family and friends "eat local challenge." There is strength in numbers! Purchase produce from local farms and wineries. Visit local food establishments that endorse the local food movement by both promoting local purchasing and growing of their own fresh seasonal ingredients. These last few months I sought out in my own small community Wine and Roses, Pietros, the Fruit Bowl, and Michael David Café and can attest to the pleasures and culinary delights of eating fresh locally. Finally, make local eating into a family adventure. What does your neighborhood have to offer in support of buying, growing and eating local foods? It is the knowing part of the story about your food that makes it such a powerful part of the enjoyment of a meal.

Choosing to eat local can definitely make you feel more rooted (no pun intended). So somewhere into this new year when you may begin to hesitate, perhaps forgetting your purpose, and go the fast route of drive-thru or the trip to the local mega-supermarket, remember the old adage: you are what you eat!



Sunday's Stockton Farmers Market

Ah, Beauty! How Quickly Thou Turnest to...*Compost?* Keep Your Holiday Plants from “Biting the Dust”!

Betty Liske Master Gardener

There are several traditional plants that enhance the holidays by bringing beauty and color into our homes. Still, our enjoyment of them is too often short-lived since they are not meant to thrive indoors, especially in a heated home during the winter season. With proper conditions, their stay with us can be extended, and many can live on to bloom again.

Care for Holiday Plants

Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrina*)

Home Conditions: indirect light; keep away from heating vents, ducts, and drafts.

Pot Conditions: water till moist, again when semi-dry; do not let sit in water. *Longer Life:* difficult and picky; hard to re-bloom, they need a precise regimen of light, moisture, humidity, and pruning; absolute darkness 15 hours October to Thanksgiving; blooms will not look as good even if successful.

Christmas Cactus

Home Conditions: easy; keep away from drafts; bright, not direct, light,

Pot Conditions: this is a tropical cactus. Water when top 1” of soil is dry; no standing in water; feed monthly with diluted fertilizer spring and summer until plant is setting buds, then resume after flowering.

Longer Life: easy propagation from cuttings; can leave indoors or put outside in summer months; after blooming, lightly prune to stimulate flowering; to encourage re-blooming, plant needs either 50-55° and 13 hours of darkness or 15 hours at 70° for nine weeks starting early to mid-September (easy plan: place in a corner of room with a window and no

artificial light).



Amaryllis

Home Conditions: put in brightest area; turn pot regularly so it doesn't become lopsided (when re-growing as well).

Pot Conditions: likes close quarters—keep in pot 1-2” wider than bulb; keep in same pot 3 years; blooms last about two weeks.

Long Life Possibilities: cut off flower stalk after bloom (not the foliage); keep in bright light and continue watering; feed with houseplant food once a month; when leaves yellow (August, September) slow watering and stop feeding; when leaves die, put in a cool, dark place; to re-bloom, return to bright place and resume watering and feeding; if there are offshoots as the years progress, you can take them off and re-plant or leave them for an impressive display; if planting a bulb as a gift for Christmas, plant it 6-8 weeks ahead; fill pot half way with soil, put bulb in, fill pot and pack firmly; the top 1/3 of the bulb should be exposed; water well, but don't let it get soggy.

Cyclamen

Home Conditions: especially likes humidity, but don't mist; bright but not direct light; 50-60° ideal.

Pot Conditions: do not let sit in water; fertilize with houseplant or bloom-buster fertilizer; remove faded blooms and old leaves.

Long Life Possibilities: when blooming stops, reduce water and fertilizer; place in a cool, dark place (basement/under a bed); in July, re-pot burying only half of the tuber; move back to cool, well-lit areas; keep moist.



Resources: [UC Poinsettia Care](#) [UC Holiday Cacti](#) [Our Ohio Holiday Plant Care](#)

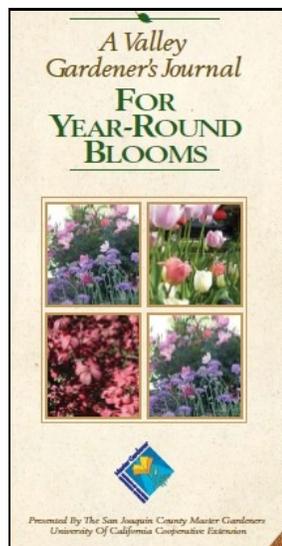


Mark Your Calendar 2012 Garden Tour

The Master Gardeners are busy planning the Spring 2012 Garden Tour that will be taking place in Central Stockton. The event will take place on Saturday May 12th from 10:00 am—4:00 pm. This would make a great Mothers Day gift! More information will be available in the next newsletter issue and on our web-site soon!

Garden Journals For Sale

In early 2012 the Master Gardeners will have available our first Gardening Journal that will focus on flowers in the valley. This journal will feature seasonal tips and articles and will have areas available for journaling, sketching, and pockets to save seed packets and other helpful reminders. These will be available for purchase online as well as in our office, local nurseries and various events we will be at. More info coming soon!!



Garden Chores Continued...

March – is it madness or the beginning of Spring Fever? Ideas for stepping into spring:

Planting –Beets, carrots, leeks, potatoes, and radishes can be planted from seed now. Wait until the soil is workable so your seeds don't rot in very cold or soggy soil. Potatoes can carry soil-borne diseases which are harmless to humans but devastating for a potato plant. Buy seed potatoes from a nursery or a mail-order company that certifies the seed potatoes are disease free. Whole potatoes can be divided to give you a bigger crop by cutting the potatoes into chunks that each contain one or two eyes (the small depression where sprouts will form). To prevent rotting, store the freshly cut pieces at room temperature for 3 days before planting to allow the cut surfaces to dry and form a callus.



Emptying water from containers

Pest Control – Empty any rain-filled containers around your yard to eliminate [mosquito](#) breeding areas.

Maintenance – Prune out suckers from trees and shrubs. Begin [fertilizing](#) cool season grasses, such as fescue, every 6 weeks now through June. Rose food should be applied every six weeks through October. Check, repair and/or install drip irrigation systems for your landscaping. Weather permitting, loosen your moist, not wet, vegetable garden soil to a depth of 6-10 inches and lightly work in [compost](#) and fertilizer. Rake and water the beds to be ready for planting in April.

Information gathered from : [UC IPM](#) [Sunset gardening](#) [Farmer Fred](#)



In fond memory of Master Gardener Ray Hinders. Ray loved to garden at his church, was very involved in the Stockton Family Shelter and was always looking for ways to help people. He loved to grow vegetables and flowers and enjoyed giving beautiful bouquets away to friends and family. He will be missed by the Master Gardener Program.

Planting Bare Root Roses

Marcy Sousa Program Coordinator



February is a perfect time to plant bare root roses. Bare root roses are dormant plants that are sold with no soil around the roots; instead, roots are surrounded by moist wood shavings. Plants are sold by grades and marked No. 1, 1½, or 2 and priced accordingly. No.1 roses are the best quality and No. 2 is the poorest.

When shopping for bare root roses, buy plants with at least three strong canes and avoid ones with shriveled, brown or damaged canes. Canes should be plump and green, with smooth bark, and feel heavy. A dried out plant will feel light and canes might be brittle. The graft union is a knot or swelling just above the roots, which should be firm and solid. A soft corky growth indicates disease. Roots should be healthy, light colored and symmetrical around the trunk.

You should plant as soon as possible or remove the plant from its package and store in a cool place. To prevent drying, use moist sawdust or peat moss to cover the roots. Choose a spot with at least six hours of sunlight and plenty of air circulation. Morning sunlight dries foliage and with good air circulation minimizes mildew incidence. Roses thrive in rich-well drained soils.

Before you are ready to plant, remove all packing and soak roots in water for 2 to 24 hours. This ensures a reserve of moisture to initiate growth. The planting hole should be at least 12" wide by 12" deep or larger. Rose roots are vigorous and need plenty of loose enriched soil in which to grow.

Prepare the planting area by mixing one-third to one-half organic material, such as compost or manure, with an equal amount of native soil. Mix thoroughly and refill the hole to planting depth with the mix. If necessary, add water to help settle the soil. Add ½ cup super phosphate or bone meal to the bottom of the hole and mix lightly with loose soil. Phosphorus is essential for root growth.

Remove damaged and broken roots and shorten healthy ones to 8-inches to fit in the hole. A No. 1 plant will have 3-5 healthy canes and each will be about six inches long. Remove any small or spindly canes. Cut ¼" above a bud pointing away from the center of the plant and cut at a 45-degree angle sloping away from where the bud points.

Place the newly trimmed rose on a cone shaped mound of soil and spread the roots over the cone. Be sure the graft union is above the soil. Holding the plant in position, place loose amended soil around the roots and fill the rest of the hole, pressing firmly to remove air pockets. Avoid compacting the soil and damaging the roots. Fill the hole to soil level then form a water basin around the plant that is slightly larger in diameter than the root system.

Join the Master Gardeners at our hands-on rose pruning demonstrations in February in Manteca and Lodi. Bring your pruning shears and gloves.

For more information on planting bare root roses visit [Sunset Gardening](#).



Photo taken from [Sunset Gardening](#)

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 topic!



Seed Starting cont. from page 1

- First of all, light and heat are keys to success. In February, day length is insufficient for tropical plants like tomatoes, eggplant and peppers to grow healthy and strong. Supplemental light is needed and I give my seedlings about 14 hours of light from florescent light fixtures closely hung above the plants. If hung with chains, they can be kept within two-three inches of the plants as they grow. Lights can be turned off and on automatically with a household timer. Commercially built plant starter stands can be purchased or you can build your own set-up as appropriate to your plant growing needs.
- Secondly, heat is needed to warm the soil for germination and growth, so provide a heat source beneath the plants. I use a seed-starting heat cable fastened to the bottom of a boxed frame which is buried in sand upon which I set my plant containers. The cable keeps the seed-starting medium in the 70-80 °F range. Cables can be purchased at hardware stores, seed, greenhouse or farm suppliers and will last several years. Last year I replaced a cable that I had used for over 20 years. There are also heat mats available that do the same thing. Damping-off fungi which attack young seedlings can be a problem, but I have suffered little from this disease. I keep containers well drained, don't overwater and the heat provided seems to discourage the disease. I do not sterilize containers or seed-starting medium as is often recommended.
- The third thing to think about is the seed medium to use in starting seeds. I use well-aged compost that I have made and have had good results for many years. There are various commercial seed starting products available or you can make up your own. Seed-starting guides all agree that you should not use garden soil for seed starting and they recommend peat moss mixed with vermiculite or perlite to retain moisture. I prefer sifted compost using ½ inch hardware cloth which has the benefit of being a very fertile medium unlike peat moss and vermiculite.
- The fourth issue is the container in which to start seeds. I have used half-gallon cardboard milk cartons laid horizontally with one side cut out for starting tomatoes, peppers and eggplants. Sometimes I plant more than one seed per location, so I often transplant these extras at 3 weeks post germination to 4 inch pots or quart yogurt containers. Remember to punch holes near the bottom for drainage. These containers provide lots of room for roots to grow; avoid shallow containers.

As the season approaches the spring equinox, supplemental lighting becomes less necessary with lengthening days, plants can be put out on the bench. Near the end of March, plants should be moved outside during the day to harden them up for planting out 2-3 weeks hence. This step is important to get them ready for transplanting, but if there is danger of cold evenings or frost it is wise to move them back into the greenhouse to protect your large investment of time and energy. They also may initially need some protection from sunburn as you harden them.

Starting flowers in the greenhouse can be more challenging as some require various treatments to germinate properly. Some of these techniques that you may need to use follow.

- Stratification is sometimes needed to get seeds to break dormancy. It is the process of subjecting seeds to both cold and moist conditions. Typically, temperatures must be between 34°F and 41°F for a period of 1 to 3 months, depending on the seed. It may require putting seeds in a planting medium and then refrigerating them for the time required. Check your seed pack or a plant propagation book for instructions on seed starting.
- Scarification is a technique that allows water and gases to penetrate into the seed. It may include methods that physically break the hard seed coats or soften them by chemicals. Means of scarification include soaking in hot water, poking holes in the seed with a pin, rubbing individual seeds with a file or sandpaper, and cracking them with pliers or a hammer. Moonflower is one seed that requires scarification.

I hope you enjoy starting your own plants as much as I do. A warm greenhouse on a cold day is a nice place to be. Happy Gardening!

Coming Events cont. from page 9

Saturday 18

San Joaquin Master Gardener Workshop:

Roses – Pruning and Care

10:30 am to 12 noon Classes are free
Manteca Library, 320 W. Center,
Manteca

All participants must register a week prior to the class by calling (209) 331-2055

Tuesday, February 28th, 2012

Alden Lane Nursery Gardening Inspiration Day

10:00 am to 3:30 pm

Enjoy a day of classes, demonstrations, and a good lunch. Cost is \$35.00 for the day and includes lunch.

All sign ups must be prepaid by Feb. 12th

March

Friday, Saturday, Sunday, March 2, 3, 4

Sacramento Home and Garden Show

Friday 12 noon – 6 pm

Saturday 10 am – 6 pm

Sunday 10 am – 5 pm

1600 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento

General Admission \$7.00

General Admission with can \$6.00 12 and under with Adult FREE

Saturday, Mar 3

Bloomin' Crazy at the Sacramento Zoo

3930 W. Land Park Dr., Sacramento, CA, 95822

(916) 808-5888

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Price: Included in the price of admission to the Zoo

Come join the sixth annual Bloomin' Crazy Plant Fest. Visit with gardening clubs and plant experts; get inspired to start your spring gardens. The Zoo has a significant plant collection and local organizations will educate visitors about gardening and plants. Plants serve a number of functions here at the Zoo. Some are used as cover or shelter and some, such as bamboo, acacia and mirror plants, are grown as browse (fresh treats) for the animals.

Saturday, March 10

San Joaquin Master Gardener Workshop:

From the Garden to the Table

10:00 to 11:30 am

Classes are free.

San Joaquin County Historical Museum (\$5 parking if not a Museum member).

11793 N. Micke Grove Road., Lodi

All participants must register a week prior to the class y calling (209) 331-2055

Saturday, March 10

Member Appreciation Plant Sale

UC Davis Arboretum (please see website above for directions)

9 a.m.–1 p.m., Arboretum Teaching Nursery

Members only—join or renew at the door—new members receive a free plant
Enjoy music, refreshments, and children's activities. Expert garden advice available. Bring your member card or join at the door for 10% member discount. Free parking in Visitor Lot 55.

Saturday, March 17

San Joaquin Master Gardener Workshop :

From the Garden to the Table

10:30 am to 12 noon

Classes are free

Manteca Library, 320 W. Center, Manteca

All participants must register a week prior to the class by calling (209) 331-2055

Saturday, March 17

Guided Tour: California Native Plants Spring To Life

UC Davis Arboretum (please see website below for directions)

2 p.m., Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center
Enjoy two of our favorite California spring bloomers, ceanothus and redbud, in the Mary Wattis Brown Garden of California Native Plants.

Wednesday through Sunday, March 21-25

San Francisco Flower and Garden Show: Gardens for a Green Earth

1346 Saratoga Drive, San Mateo CA 94403

Hours: Wednesday – Saturday – 10:00 am -7:00 pm; Sunday – 10:00 am-6:00 pm
Please visit the website below for ticket prices.

Green living at its best – 20 gorgeous display gardens, container gardens, edible gardens, and new products designed to help Planet Earth thrive. Edible gardening workshops, cooking demonstrations, seminars on design and horticulture.

Enjoy a parade of celebrities such as Annie Somerville from Greens Restaurant and Ahmad Hassan from DIY Yard Crashers Joe Lamp'l, a favorite garden expert, is back and we are proud to present Martin Yan and many other celebrity chefs. Check the seminar schedule soon!

Attend our new Flower Show within a Show – put on by the California Garden Club members. Flower arranging, fragrant blossoms, a feast for the eyes. Free entry with admission.

Shop for in the marketplace for some super new garden products, and enjoy the expanded Plant Marketplace.

The San Joaquin County Home & Garden Show

Friday, Saturday, Sunday, March 23 – 25

San Joaquin County Home & Garden Show

Hours: Friday - 12:00 noon-6:00pm;

Saturday - 10:00am-5:00pm; Sunday -

10:00am-5:00pm

Sherwood Mall Event Center

(Formerly Gottschalk's)

The San Joaquin County Home & Garden Show offers homeowners and future homeowners the opportunity to visit several vendors in one place at one time. Guests can visit vendors and get tips and new ideas to help improve and beautify their homes and yards. This year we will feature an Interior Design and Floral Design Competitions. Many local designers will be putting their best designs on display!
Admission: \$3.00

San Joaquin County Master Gardeners

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E-mail: mgsanjoaquin@ucdavis.edu

Web-site: <http://sjmastergardeners.ucdavis.edu>



Have a Gardening or Pest Question?



How can I
improve my soil?

What's eating
my tomatoes?

What plants
grow best
in my zone?

How long should
I run the sprinklers?

I want to attract
bees & butterflies!

Can I control pests
without toxic chemicals?

Call the San Joaquin UC Master Gardener

**Hotline at
(209) 953-6112**

Join the Master Gardeners for
Fun - Free - Educational
Workshops

For More Information, Visit

<http://sjmastergardeners.ucdavis.edu>



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San Joaquin Master Gardeners 2012 Workshop Schedule San Joaquin County Historical Museum at Micke Grove

- January 14** **Heard It Through the Grape Vine** - Learn the basics in growing and pruning grapes. (This is a hands on class so come dressed to be outside. Please bring with you a pair of bypass hand pruners and gloves if you like.)
- February 11** **Roses – Pruning and Care** - A glorious flush of spring bloom and healthy growth all begin months beforehand with winter care. Learn how to prune, fertilize, mulch, and reduce disease for a beautiful garden display. (This is a hands-on class so come dressed to be outside. Please bring with you a pair of bypass hand pruners and gloves if you like)
- March 10** **From The Garden To The Table** - Learn how to grow vegetables your family will enjoy all summer long.
- April 14** **What's Bugging You?** - Common garden pests and how to deal with them in an environmentally friendly way.
- May 12** **Calling All Garden Helpers** - Gardening for the birds, bees, butterflies and beneficals.
- June 9** **Simply Composting: Turning Yard Debris into Garden Gold** - Learn how to improve your soil and the health of your plants by simply using your own kitchen and yard wastes.
- July 14** **The Grass Could Be Greener On Your Side** - How to have a healthy yet sustainable lawn.
- August 11** **Bulbs To Bloom - Seasonal Beauty** - Learn how to plant and care for bulbs.
- September 8** **Designing with California Friendly Plants** - Natural setting, less water, beautiful yard – a great combination for a stunning landscape!
- October 13** **Let's Plant a Tree** - Fall is a great time to add a tree to your landscape. Learn how to select, plant, stake and have a healthy tree in your yard for many years to come.
- November 10** **Refuse Into Resources** - Learn creative ways to recycle and repurpose in your garden and landscape.

Classes will be held at the
San Joaquin County Historical Museum

11793 North Micke Grove Road, Lodi, CA 95240-9426 • (209) 331-2055

Classes begin at 10:00 am and end at 11:30 am.

There is a \$5.00 parking fee into Micke Grove Regional Park.

Classes are free with regular museum admission

All participants must register a week prior to the class at (209) 331-2055





San Joaquin Master Gardeners 2012 Workshop Schedule

Manteca Library

New 2012 Time 10:30 am -12:00 pm

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| January 21 | Fill Your Own Fruit Bowl – Learn how to have your own backyard orchard. |
| February 18 | Roses – Pruning and Care - A glorious flush of spring bloom and healthy growth all begin months beforehand with winter care. Learn how to prune, fertilize, mulch, and reduce disease for a beautiful garden display. (This is a hands-on class so come dressed to be outside. Please bring with you a pair of bypass hand pruners and gloves if you like. This class will be held at the Manteca Senior Center Memorial Rose Garden, 295 Cherry Lane, Manteca.) |
| March 17 | From The Garden To The Table - Learn how to grow vegetables your family will enjoy all summer long. |
| April 21 | What's Bugging You? - Common garden pests and how to deal with them in an environmentally friendly way. |
| May 19 | Calling All Garden Helpers - Gardening for the birds, bees, butterflies and beneficials. |
| June 16 | Simply Composting: Turning Yard Debris Into Garden Gold - Learn how to improve your soil and the health of your plants by simply using your own kitchen and yard wastes. |
| July 21 | The Grass Could Be Greener On Your Side - How to have a healthy yet sustainable lawn. |
| August 18 | Bulbs To Bloom-Seasonal Beauty - Learn how to plant and care for bulbs. |
| September 15 | Designing with California Friendly Plants - Natural setting, less water, beautiful yard – a great combination for a stunning landscape! |
| October 20 | Let's Plant A Tree - Fall is a great time to add a tree to your landscape. Learn how to select, plant, stake and have a healthy tree in your yard for many years to come. |
| November 17 | Refuse Into Resources - Learn creative ways to recycle and repurpose in your garden and landscape. |

Classes will be held at the Manteca Library

320 W. Center Manteca, CA 95336 • (209) 937-8221

Classes begin at 10:30 am and end at 12:00 pm.

Classes are free.

All participants must register a week prior to the class at (209) 953-6100

