

HOE! HOE! HOE!
Grimes County Master Gardeners Newsletter
*Winner of the Texas Master Gardener Association
 2nd Place Newsletter Award 2006*

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 7, July 2011

ON THE CALENDAR July/August 2011

July 8 Agrilife Private pesticide applicator license training at GC Go Texan Building, Fairgrounds. Info at County Extension office, 936-873-3907.

July 12 9.00am GCMG Reg. Monthly Meeting, program TBA

Aug 9 9.00am GCMG Reg. Monthly Meeting, program by Tesa Silva on Backyard Wildlife Habitats

GRIMES COUNTY FAIR 2011 – photos by Linda Jolly. Big Back Yard Project, and GCMG table on Senior Day



Officers, 2011

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 Vice President: Alvie Vesperman
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 Secretary: Helen Quinn

Committee Chairs

Go Texan Landscaping: Mike Arden
 Communications: Helen Quinn
 Children's: Kathy Laughlin
 Admin: Sandra Williams
 Class: Jennifer Corzine
 Plant Texas w/wildflowers: Edmond McGee
 Tesa Silva
 Co-op: Fred Vesperman
 Time: Kathy Denning
 Anderson Beautification: Janeth Nevill/
 Barbara Szymczak
 Publicity: Peggy Sloan
 Fundraiser: Linda Jolly
 Awards/Social: Connie Arden

Texas AgriLife Extension:

Shane Jennings: MG Coordinator
 Sandra Curl: Secretary

Newsletter Editor:

Helen Quinn
 Articles, photos and other
 Information due by 27th of each month.
 Send to:

hortiq@gmail.com

Website:
txmg.org/grimes
grimesmastergardeners@gmail.com

VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE

JULY



- 7/15 – 7/31 Melons, Okra, Peppers, pumpkins, tomatoes **
- 7/20 – 8/15 Cucumbers
- 7/15 – 7/31 Eggplant **
- 7/15 – 8/31 Peas (Southern, Edible Pod)
- 7/15 – 8/20 Sweet Corn
- 7/15 – 8/20 Squash, Summer & Winter
- 7/1 – 8/31 Romaine lettuce

** Use plants rather than seed

Use protective floating row cover to help reduce heat and Viral infection, and to provide a little shade to young plants.

EGGPLANT - *Solanum melongena*



The **eggplant**, aka aubergine, melongene, brinjal, or guinea squash is a plant of the family *Solanaceae* (also known as the nightshades). As a nightshade it is closely related to the tomato and potato. It is native to India, although it has been cultivated in southern and eastern Asia since prehistory, but appears to have become known to the Western world no earlier than ca. 1500. The first known written record of the plant is found in *Qi min yao shu*, an ancient Chinese agricultural Treatise completed in 544! The numerous Arabic and North African names for it, along with the lack of Ancient Greek and Roman names, indicate it was introduced throughout the Mediterranean area by the Arabs in the early Middle Ages. The scientific name *Solanum melongena* is derived from a 16th century Arabic term for one particular variety. The name aubergine (used in Britain and France) has all kinds of possible origins from French, Spanish, Catalan, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit (to name a few!!) And, of course, the color “aubergine” derives from the color of the skin of the most popular varieties of the fruit. In the seventh century the Moors carried their horticultural knowledge and pharmaceutical texts with them as they moved up through Spain, and it was said that while Moors could consume aubergines with impunity, Christians risked death if they ate them!! When it arrived in England it was not welcomed, partly because of its fearsome family connections and partly because it was blamed for all kinds of ailments and diseases.

It is a delicate perennial, usually cultivated as an annual. It grows 16 to 57 in tall in cultivation, but semi-wild types can grow much larger, to 7 ft tall, with large leaves over 12 in long and 6 in broad. The stem is often spiny, and can cause bodily harm! The fruit of the wild form is usually less than 1 ½ “ in diameter, but much larger in cultivated forms. The fruit is botanically classified as a berry, and contains numerous small, soft seeds, which are edible, but are bitter because they contain *nicotinoid alkaloids*, unsurprising as it is a close relative of tobacco. A warm-weather crop, it produces best in long, hot, summers. Fruit won't set when the temperature is below 60 – 65F. Eggplant requires plenty of moisture for best growth, and appreciates mulch as soon as the soil has warmed up and the plants are established. Common pests include aphids, Colorado potato beetles, cucumber beetles, cutworms, flea beetles, leafhoppers, potato tuber worms and tomato hornworms. Diseases can include fruit rot and verticillium wilt. Use same controls as for potatoes and tomatoes for insect control. Eggplant is not rich in nutrients but does have a moderate amount of dietary fiber, an only 27 calories per cup when boiled.

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EMAIL QUESTIONS

Questions received by email in June – (from Shane) “JB” called this afternoon and is looking for a type of pear tree. She is wanting to find out what type of pear tree her grandfather had and the best way she describe is by the fruit. She says that the pears are green in color (never yellow) apple shaped more round, the peel is thick and grainy and the fruit was very hard and sweet. All of the research that I have done leads back to a Japanese pear tree and she didn’t think that was the correct tree.

Answer - (Sandra W) I spoke to Joann and discussed a variety of pears. Given that there are 5000 pear varieties, it would be unlikely to find the specific variety she referred to. I did send her a list of old pears grown in Texas and a descriptive list of named varieties of the Asian pears which are grown in the U.S. I spent about an hour looking at descriptions and photos of various pears in an effort to match up with her description.

Tesa received a couple of interesting questions while working Thursdays at the Extension Office, though. One was on making a Backyard Habitat (Tesa will be giving a program on Backyard Habitats in August.) and the other was on how to save a 100 year old Oak Tree in Bedias from proposed new sewer lines.

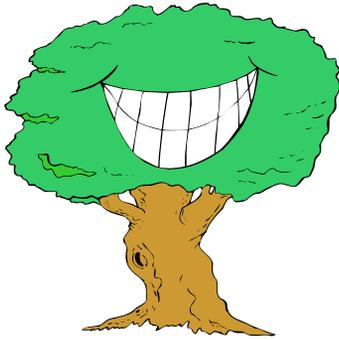
The remaining schedule of volunteers to answer questions by email through December 31st is :

July 1 – 14	Arden, Connie
July 15 – 28	Arden, Mike
July 29 – Aug 11	Flick, Kathleen
Aug 12 – 25	Laughlin, Kathy
Aug 26 – Sept 8	Nevill, Janeth
Sept 9 – 22	Silva, Tesa
Sept 23 – Oct 6	Szymczak, Barbara
Oct 7 – 20	Vesperman, Alvie
Oct 21 – Nov 3	Williams, Sandra
Nov 4 – 17	Arden, Connie
Nov 18 – Dec 1	Arden, Mike
Dec 2 – 15	Flick, Kathleen
Dec 16 – 31	Laughlin, Kathy



If you would like to join the team of “answerers” please let Helen know. Researching the answers is a great way to increase your own knowledge as well as earning volunteer hours.

GCMG Regular meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Go Texan Building, Grimes Co. Fairgrounds, 9.00 am., except as noted. Two field trips are planned annually, and two evening meetings held at members' homes to enable members who work to participate.



SMILE GARDEN

Submitted by Connie Arden

Smiling is the beginning of laughter.....plant some smile seeds to grow into laughter and reap blossoms of positive physical, mental, and social benefits.

Clear indications that you have **too much** Zucchini:

Your neighbor finds them every morning in his mailbox.

You are eating it for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks too.

You have a flute made out of a zucchini.

The stores pay you to take some off the shelves.

Even the field mice stop eating it.

You till under the zucchini plants, but still have more today than you had yesterday.

Nightmares about a giant zucchini wake you in the night.

You spray your zucchini plants with sugar water to attract insects, but even they are victims of “zucchini overload”!

Knock knock!

Who's there?

Honeydew!

Honeydew who?

Honeydew you want some ***zucchini***?