



# Country Living

Provided to you by the

**OSU Extension Service Columbia County**  
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Office hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The office will be closed Fridays from Noon to 1 p.m.

Website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/>

## October 2013

### Programs for you . . .

Listen to the Gardening Spot on KOHI (1600 am) radio - Every Saturday, 8:05 to 8:15 a.m.

- Oct. 1..... Scappoose Bay Watershed Council. 7 p.m., Scappoose Bay Watershed Council's office, Warren
- Oct. 3..... Demonstration Garden and other MG Extension Projects Planning Meeting. 3:00 p.m. (notice new time), OSU Extension Classroom, St. Helens
- Oct. 3..... Master Gardener™ Board Meeting. 3:30 p.m., OSU Extension Classroom, St. Helens
- Oct. 8..... Lower Columbia Watershed Council. 7 p.m., SWCD office-35285 Millard Rd., St. Helens
- Oct. 16..... Soil & Water Conservation District. 7:30 p.m., SWCD office-35285 Millard Rd., St. Helens
- Oct. 19 & 20 The All About Fruit Show. The Clackamas County Fairplex, Canby OR. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. A great opportunity to taste hundreds of apples, pears, kiwi and grapes. You can order a custom-grafted tree, made just for you, to be delivered in the spring. Great speakers, experts to answer all your questions, pie baking contest, exotic fruit sorbet to taste. The ID Team will try to identify your mystery apples. Home Orchard Society Members pay \$4 per Person or \$8 per Family; Non-Members \$6 per Person or \$10 per Family; Become a Member at Entrance and Admission is Free
- Oct. 20..... Oregon Mycological Society Annual Fall Mushroom Show. 12:00 noon-5 p.m., Cheatham Hall, World Forestry Center, Portland, OR, Photo/slide show exhibit; identification tables; mushrooms as dyes; truffle exhibit; cooking demonstrations; cultivation information; and mushroom guide books. Open to the public, \$5 adults; \$3 seniors and students; under 12 free.
- Oct. 24..... Master Gardener™ Chapter Meeting. 6:30 p.m. Speaker will be Claudia Groth, "SLUGS," OSU Extension Classroom, St. Helens. **The public is invited. Free.**
- Oct. 24..... Upper Nehalem Watershed Council. 7 p.m., Vernonia Grange, <http://nehalem.org/> 503-429-0869

*Chip Bubl*

Chip Bubl, OSU Extension Faculty, Agriculture



Agriculture, Family and Community Development, 4-H Youth, Forestry, and Extension Sea Grant Programs. Oregon State University, United States Department of Agriculture, and Columbia County cooperating. The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

## In the garden

### Plants for pollinators article

Dr. Gail Langellotto, our statewide Master Gardener program leader, recently wrote an excellent article on pollinator plants for the *Digger* published by the Oregon Association of Nurseries. She made several important points:

In some cases, pollinators may feed heavily from non-native plants, even when native species are available and in bloom. So a plant doesn't necessarily have to be a native species to support pollinators.

Group plants with showy flowers to better attract pollinators.

Trees, shrubs, and herbaceous and perennial flowers all play important roles in the pollinator complex.

Gardens that have plants flowering from early in the spring to late in the fall will provide support for the broadest range of insects and pollinating birds.

Butterflies and moths need trees and shrubs to support their larvae. Willows are especially popular.

Here is a link to her article:

[http://www.oan.org/associations/4440/files/digger2/Digger\\_201305\\_pp33-37\\_Pollinators.pdf](http://www.oan.org/associations/4440/files/digger2/Digger_201305_pp33-37_Pollinators.pdf)

### Bacterial canker on blueberries

Bacterial canker is a persistent problem on blueberries. It enters woody tissue



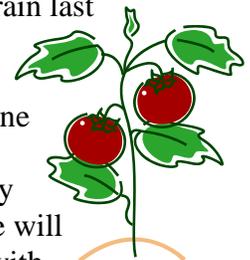
through wounds, freeze injury, or the points where leaves fall off in autumn.

Management of the disease is through growing resistant varieties and spraying twice in the fall (now and in about four weeks) and again in the spring before budbreak with copper. Remove any dead wood as soon as possible.

There is concern about bacterial canker resistance to copper that has developed in some location in the Pacific Northwest. Unfortunately, except for the non-spray ideas mentioned, there is nothing else. For more information (and to get introduced to OSU's great plant disease website) go to: <http://pnwhandbooks.org/plantdisease/blueberry-vaccinium-corymbosum-bacterial-canker>

### Tomato requiem

It is now clear (irony intended) there will be no "Indian summer". Continuous rain last weekend kicked late blight into high gear and most of the tomatoes are done for. The only one looking even remotely normal in my garden is *Indigo Rose*, a variety bred at OSU. I believe, in time, we will have other good tomato varieties with late blight resistance. *Legend* (another OSU variety) and *Peron* have some but I didn't grow them this year. Breeding for this disease is complex since there are strains that, when they meet, create new and often more pathogenic strains of the fungus. The easy coast has been hit hard with late blight (especially in 2009) since they normally have summer rainfall. So they have lots of incentive to find new resistant cultivars. With our normally dry summers, it usually is less of a concern here. But the sudden closure of the fresh tomato season this week is very sad.



## More from the garden

### One large spider

There have been an inordinate number of spiders brought into the office this fall. I don't know how to account for the influx. Did this year particularly favor spiders or is arachnophobia on the rise? Many of the specimens

were

*Tegenaria gigantea*.

This spider can be almost three inches wide from leg-tip to leg tip. It has the

“chevron” markings that put it in the same group as the hobo or aggressive house spider. However, unlike the hobo, it is harmless. In fact, some spider experts say that where the “Gigantea” thrives, the hobo will be absent. However, from my survey of people bringing spiders into the office, they want neither.

It is a bit of a mystery how these spiders enter the house. Young ones can slip under doors but then there have to be enough insects to grow them to adult sizes. Adults can flatten themselves and slip under sliding glass doors.

Don't spray lots of pesticides to control them inside. The cure is worse than the disease, especially if you have children around. You might treat the outside of sliding door and window tracks.

### General gardening observations

**Field mice (voles)** are present in rather high numbers. You can reduce damage to your trees and shrubs by mowing tightly around them and/or pulling back mulch to about 12



inches away from the trunk. The furry rascals hide under the mulch or in taller grass. Quarter-size holes are a good indication that you have voles. Trapping can be effective on a small scale. Baits are tricky since the baits are toxic to other animals. Always read and follow instructions when using any pesticide (organic or conventional, including baits).

It is hard to tell what this winter will bring. If you have **arborvitae** hedges, it might be worthwhile to tie up individual plants with twine in the upper third of the plant) to keep them from flopping over in a heavy snow load. Sometimes when they do that, they don't recover their normal form. The binding keeps them looking good.

If you haven't fertilized your **lawn** this fall, do so soon. And if you haven't limed for three or more years, spread about 80 pounds per 1000 square feet as well.

**Lawn mushrooms** worry some homeowners. But there is nothing that can be done to prevent them and, generally, the fungi are beneficial partners with the trees in the yard. Some mushroom-producing fungi recycle organic matter like old tree roots in the soil. A few of these mushrooms may be poisonous so be careful with children or pets. A quick mowing will obliterate the mushrooms if they really worry you.

Some flowers lace their nectar with caffeine that helps the bees remember where the flowers are and have them coming back for more.

Fava beans interact through plant-to-plant root contact to repel aphids. When aphids appear on one plant, it signals adjacent plants “*the aphids are coming*”. Those plants start producing volatile compounds that repel aphids and/or call aphid predators to the feast.



# *That's the Way it Grows*

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## **Fall is Here!**

My days of sitting on the patio with a glass of iced tea are over. It's fall! Fall is my favorite time of year, which may seem odd for a gardener. But I just like the return of the cool weather, the colorful leaves, green grass once again, and pumpkins on my porch. Not to mention a rest from weeding. Of course, I will miss all the fresh fruit and vegetables that summer delivers.

I love fresh, sun-ripened tomatoes. There are so many varieties to choose from and always new ones to try out. Unfortunately, I have to limit myself to three or four plants, because my family of four cannot possibly eat them fast enough. The Brandywine beefsteak toms are my absolute favorite, and I plant them every year. A thick slab of a Brandywine with fresh mozzarella, a balsamic vinegar reduction and fresh basil is the best salad ever!

Once the rains start, I begin losing the Brandywines to splitting and rotting. To combat that, I pick them when they begin to turn pink and let them ripen on the counter. Some flavor is lost, but I end up with edible tomatoes instead of having to throw them out.

To encourage my toms to ripen at the end of the season, I prune off the sprawling stems that are still blooming. The plants' energy will be directed into ripening the remaining fruit, instead of into flowering. If you still have some green tomatoes, try this out.

When the plants are absolutely done for the season, or frost threatens, pick all the remaining fruit and place them in a single

layer on newspaper in a box or tray, not touching. Check them every so often, and with luck, some may ripen enough to eat, although they may be chewy and less flavorful. I think they are still preferable to the flavorless grocery store variety.

This time of year, I believe it's especially important to cover the soil of my vegetable garden, to protect from compaction due to rain, to smother and suppress weeds, and to keep the soil from getting waterlogged. Keeping the soil airspaces open allows microorganisms to continue their work. Worms stay in upper soil layer, but burrow deeper when the soil is wet and air spaces are closed.



To ready the garden for the winter, I spread my compost in October, then cover with cardboard or black plastic. Over the winter, the worms will pull a good amount of the compost into the soil below, aerating, improving soil structure, and producing castings. When you pull back the covering in spring, you may see clumps of red wriggler worms—this is a sign that your soil is healthy!

In early spring, I take off the covering in areas that I want to plant cool-season crops. The soil will be drier because it was protected from winter rains and will warm faster to allow earlier planting.

—Lisa M. Long  
Columbia County Master Gardener™  
Compost, rock and bark dust delivered;  
397-2989

# OCTOBER 2013

## Garden hints from your OSU Extension Agent

Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices. Always identify and monitor problems before acting. First consider cultural controls; then physical, biological, and chemical controls (which include insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, organic and synthetic pesticides). Always consider the least toxic approach first.

All recommendations in this calendar are not necessarily applicable to all areas of Oregon. For more information, contact your local office of the OSU Extension Service.

### Planning

- If needed, improve soil drainage needs of lawns before rain begins.
- Register to become an OSU Master Gardener volunteer with your local Extension office: [extension.oregonstate.edu/find-us](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/find-us).

### Maintenance and Clean Up

- Drain or blow out your irrigation system, insulate valve mechanisms, in preparation of winter.
- Recycle disease-free plant material and kitchen vegetable and fruit scraps into compost. Don't compost diseased plants unless you are using the "hot compost" method (120° to 150°F).
- Use newspaper or cardboard covered by mulch to discourage winter and spring annual weeds or remove a lawn area for conversion to garden beds. For conversion, work in the paper and mulch as organic matter once the lawn grass has died.
- Clean and paint greenhouses and cold frames for plant storage and winter growth.
- Harvest sunflower heads; use seed for birdseed or roast for personal use.
- Dig and store potatoes; keep in darkness, moderate humidity, temperature about 40°F. Discard unused potatoes if they sprout. Don't use as seed potatoes for next year.
- Harvest and immediately dry filberts and walnuts; dry at 95° to 100°F.
- Ripen green tomatoes indoors. Check often and discard rotting fruit.
- Harvest and store apples; keep at about 40°F, moderate humidity.
- Place mulch over roots of roses, azaleas, rhododendrons and berries for winter protection.
- Trim or stake bushy herbaceous perennials to prevent wind damage.
- To suppress future pest problems, clean up annual flower beds by removing diseased plant materials, overwintering areas for insect pests; mulch with manure or garden compost to feed the soil and suppress weeds.
- Cover asparagus and rhubarb beds with a mulch of manure or compost.
- Clean, sharpen and oil tools and equipment before storing for winter.
- Store garden supplies and fertilizers in a safe, dry place out of reach of children.
- Prune out dead fruiting canes in raspberry
- Train and prune primocanes of raspberry
- Harvest squash and pumpkins; keep in dry area at 55° to 60°F.
- If necessary (as indicated by soil test results) and if weather permits, spade organic material and lime into garden soil.

### Planting/Propagation

- Dig and divide rhubarb. (Should be done about every 4 years.)
- Plant garlic for harvesting next summer.
- Propagate chrysanthemums, fuchsias, geraniums by stem cuttings.
- Save seeds from the vegetable and flower garden. Dry, date, label, and store in a cool and dry location.
- Plant ground covers and shrubs.
- Dig and store geraniums, tuberous begonias, dahlias, gladiolas.
- Pot and store tulips and daffodils to force into early bloom, indoors, in December and January.

### Pest Monitoring and Management

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.
- Remove and dispose of windfall apples that might be harboring apple maggot or codling moth larvae.
- Rake and destroy diseased leaves (apple, cherry, rose, etc.), or hot compost diseased leaves.
- Spray apple and stone fruit trees at leaf fall to prevent various fungal and bacterial diseases. Obtain a copy of "Managing Diseases and Insects in Home" (EC 631) from your local Extension office.
- Control lawn weeds while they are small. Hand weeding and weeding tools are particularly effective at this stage.
- If moles and gophers are a problem, consider traps.

### Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Early October: Reduce water, place in cool area (50-55°F) and increase time in shade or darkness (12-14 hours) to force Christmas cactus to bloom in late December.
- Place hanging pots of fuchsias where they won't freeze. Don't cut back until spring.
- Check/treat houseplants for disease and insects before bringing them indoors.





**The Grapevine**  
 News for Columbia County Master Gardeners™  
[www.columbiacountymastergardeners.org](http://www.columbiacountymastergardeners.org)



**October 2013**

Deadline for THE GRAPEVINE - All materials will need to be into the OSU Extension office no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**Garden Notes**

Boy - summer sure flew by this year. The Sauerkraut Festival has come and gone and the rainy weather has just come - and stayed.

It has been a busy time with the garden - berries and apples. We have made cider with some of the early varieties and will follow up with the later varieties.

I have noticed that the weather has been good for the bugs. There is an increase in the apple maggots. Some varieties weren't bothered much while others suffered. We also had our first problems with the spotted wing drisophilia. It is a tine fly that lays its eggs in the softer varieties of nearly ripe fruit such as raspberries, blueberries, blackberries and grapes. Upon picking the fruit/berries they seem normal, but upon close examination, they have a tiny whole and inside a tiny white worm or left for another day, they turn soft and mushy.

We had no problems with the berries - but we did have them in our red flame grapes. Other varieties growing next to them weren't affected. Who knew that bugs could be so particular.

So now it's time to plan for next year, what went right, what went wrong and what we will do differently. Happy Gardening!

--Dennis Snyder



**Turn in Your  
Volunteer Log  
Sheet!**

**Calendar: At-A-Glance**

Oct. 3...	NEW TIME: Demonstration Garden and other MG Extension Projects Planning meeting, <b>3:00 p.m.</b> , Extension office
Oct. 3...	Board Meeting, 3:30 p.m. Extension office
Oct. 24.	Chapter Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Speaker: Claudia Groth-SLUGS, OSU Extension Classroom, St. Helens

**2014 Election of Officers**



The Columbia County Master Gardeners nominating committee presented at the September meeting a list of candidates for the 2014 year; nominations were also made from the floor. In October a ballot will be mailed out to members to vote. You will have the option to either

mail in the ballot, drop it off at the Extension office or bring it with you to the October meeting. We of course would prefer you take the time to attend the meeting and bring your ballot with you! We will count the votes at the October meeting and welcome our new officers at that time!

**Master Gardeners Contacts  
Officers for 2013**

<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>
President.....	Dennis Snyder
Vice President ....	Chuck Petersen
Past President .....	LeRoy Schmidt
Secretary.....	Debbie Broberg
Treasurer .....	Gail Martyn
Historian.....	Zelda Anderson
OMGA Rep .....	Andy Thayer
OMGA Alt. Rep. ....	Kathy Johnson
Demo Garden .....	Dennis Snyder
Spring Fair.....	Kathy Johnson
CCMG website: <a href="http://www.columbiacountymastergardeners.org">www.columbiacountymastergardeners.org</a>	
Webmaster .....	Larry Byrum

**OSU Extension Service:**

Extension Faculty..... Chip Bubl  
 Secretary..... Vicki Krenz

**Guide to Plant Disease Control:**

OSU.....<http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu>

## The natural landscape

### Skunks in your landscape (and under your house)

I visited with someone from Scappoose at the last Sauerkraut Festival and she asked me to write something about skunks. There aren't many people that like skunks but I happen, generally, to be one of them. In Columbia County, we have both striped and spotted skunks. I have found them to be relatively calm unless provoked by a dog, coyote, raccoon, or a human. However, it is not good if skunks have a den under your house. Two skunks can get into a tussle, as can skunks and their other enemies. The results are all too predictable. Skunk spray is powerful and impossible to remove from insulation. The insulation must go. Sometimes, harder surfaces can be sprayed with a skunk smell neutralizing mixture. I will give one mixture below. But spraying de-skunking concoctions under a house is a bit risky to you so be careful.



You should try to exclude skunks from that space. Check your foundation for openings and tighten them up. If skunks start to dig under your foundation (hard to do) or under manufactured home's skirting (much easier), you can watch when they go out to forage in the middle of the night and quickly put down some tight-mesh metal fencing to force them to leave. Warn your neighbors what you are doing at 2 am. Sometimes after the fact exclusion works and sometimes it does not. Don't do this when the babies are still underneath.

At some point in the late summer, skunks usually leave. Then batten down everything.

Skunks are omnivorous (they like fruit, insects, meat, etc.) and do most of their foraging at night. Skunks do some good. They will dig up little patches of lawn looking for crane fly grubs (so will raccoons). They will also dig out ground-nesting yellow jackets and eat the immature larva. They give birth to 3-6 little ones in the spring or early summer.

If your dog or cat gets tagged with skunk spray, here is a formula that will help reduce the smell:

- **1 quart of hydrogen peroxide**
- **¼ cup baking soda**
- **1-2 teaspoons liquid dishwashing soap.**

Mix together and work into the fur being careful to avoid the eyes. Wash off. You will need double or triple this recipe for a big furry dog. I know this works. Our dear departed (after 17 years) beagle once had a two-hour encounter with a skunk (both survived just fine). It is a long story but, by actual count, the skunk managed to "stand and deliver" at least 40 times.

### Trees, carbon dioxide, and water

Recent research has uncovered some surprising clues about our high CO<sub>2</sub> future. Trees appear to be slowing their water uptake from the soil in response to the enriched CO<sub>2</sub> atmosphere. This is good for tree growth but since they are transpiring less moisture through their leaves, the near atmosphere is shorted of moisture and farmers get less rain. Also, it appears that trees are better suited to this future than grass. The grass family evolved in very low CO<sub>2</sub> environments and may not be able to stave off the trees in this new one. Goodbye grassland prairies?



## Weed of the month: English hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)

English hawthorn is a small tree native to Europe, Eurasia, and North Africa. European settlers brought the tree to North America for its ornamental, medicinal, and utility as a living hedge. It is sometimes called single seeded hawthorn.

English hawthorn is in the rose family. It flowers in the mid spring with clusters of small white/pink flowers and a rather intense aroma. The small leaves have three to seven lobes. Sharp thorns found on the twigs make this quite an easy to recognize plant if you grab onto the wrong part. The fruit is bright red and birds consume it through the winter and into spring. There are many named cultivated varieties of this plant that have been sold in the landscape trade.

So why is English hawthorn considered an invasive plant, both here and elsewhere in North America? First, birds spread the seed readily. One average tree had roughly 2700 fruits. Passage through a bird's gut is thought to improve germination but is not absolutely necessary. It is often found around fence and under power lines because the birds rest and deposit their droppings there.

Because of the thorns, it can survive low browsing pressure from deer or livestock and can come to dominate pastures and natural areas. I have seen some very large tickets of the plant. It is very well adapted to our western Oregon climate

of wet winters and dry summers. Early naturalized collections were made in Oregon over 100 years ago.

Second, this plant hybridizes readily with other hawthorn species, both cultivated and native, and the hybrids can be even more vigorous. It is hard to find the native

hawthorn (*C. douglasii*) and if you do find it, the odds are that the seed it produces was crossed with the non-native species. *C. douglasii* has mostly non-lobed leaves and purple-black fruit. But hybrids can have intermediate leaf forms and also dark fruit, so it is hard to know what you are looking at.

The trees grow one to two feet per year and branch out to form a rather dense and scruffy crown. Growth is faster in full sunlight but they can also do well at the margins of sun and shade.

Hawthorn is hard to pull because it roots fairly deeply and even the stems have thorns. Armor up if you intend to pull them out. Best time to try is in the spring when the soil is wet.

Hawthorn will readily re-sprout from cutting so this is probably not useful. It is effective to cut a trunk or small stem and treat the freshly cut surface with glyphosate (Roundup type products), triclopyr (in Garlon and Crossbow), or picloram (there is a low dose version available without a pesticide license).

I have had some luck spot spraying the foliage with glyphosate this time of year, especially on 1-5 year old plants. Triclopyr also has fair to good foliar activity earlier in the summer-fall.

There is no biological control except for some very well-managed grazing.



## Farm and livestock notes

### Get off the grass

A livestock operation is only as good as the grass that supports it. Most Western Oregon cattle and sheep farms are leveraged to make money on the explosion of grass that comes between April and July. This grass is cheap and profitable feed.

The key to getting vigorous spring growth is good fall and winter pasture management. Grass plants store their reserves in their green leaves. This is different from alfalfa, which sends late season sugars down to the crown and root system.

The harder you graze the grass without rest periods, the sooner you will have to replant (or sell your livestock).

Rest periods vary by season and growing conditions. We have had some timely rains that gave us some good fall forage. Spring rest periods can often be as short as 15 days. In the summer, it might be 45 days before you should re-enter a field with stock.

Winter grazing is the very challenging. The cool temperatures and low light intensities slow growth. Ryegrass should not be grazed below 2" during the dormant season. Tall fescue and orchardgrass should be left at three inches. These heights allow roots to grow and tillers to form.

Livestock inevitably compact wet fields. Mild compaction can be managed if there are long rest periods. In that time, new root growth will help break up the compaction. Heavy compaction ruins pastures.

The take home message is to adjust livestock grazing and feeding plans to the residual fall grass. Don't throw away spring grass growth for the minimal gains from excessive winter grazing. Stock can be sold

to meet your pasture resources and feed budget. You can rent more pasture or buy more feed. Finally, you could feed and house stock strictly in the barn from November through March, giving your pastures a complete rest. That is a technique used in England where winters are like ours.

### Coccidiosis is a problem in winter months

Adult cattle, sheep, or goats can carry this insidious internal parasite asymptotically. They shed the oocysts in their feces and younger animals can become severely infected. As animal feeding and bedding areas become contaminated, the parasite can spread with surprising speed. Animals can die from it. Talk to your veterinarian about monitoring and treatment options. Keep a careful eye on your livestock as we go into the more confined winter-feeding cycle.

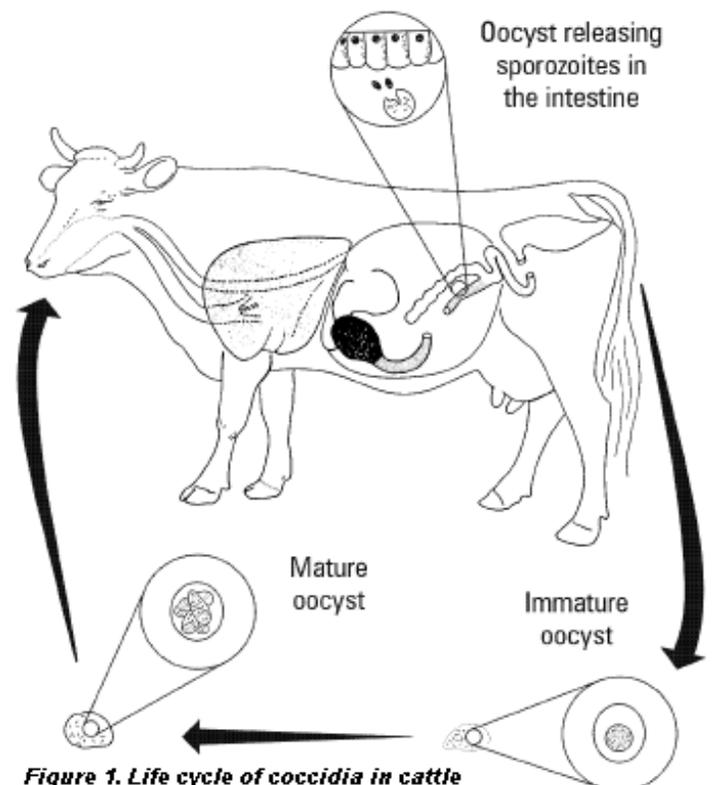


Figure 1. Life cycle of coccidia in cattle

## 2014 OSU/Columbia Master Gardener™ Class Will Be Held in Vernonia (again)

After twenty-one years of having the Master Gardener classes in St. Helens, Vernonia hosted the class in 2010. It was a wonderful class. After discussion with a number of people, we have decided to come back to Vernonia for the 2014 class. The classes will be held in Vernonia each Thursday from about 9:30 am – 3 p.m. starting March 6<sup>th</sup> 2014; there will be about 10 class days on successive weeks. Classes will start in March to avoid the worst weather and will go through early May. Cost of the class series will still be \$75. Gardeners from all parts of the county are welcome.



The classes will cover vegetable and fruit gardening, soils and fertilizers, insect and disease identification and management, weed identification and management, and lots of other topics of interest to gardeners.

Payback projects (an obligation for all Master Gardeners™) will be focused in the Vernonia area and nearby communities. If you are interested in the Vernonia OSU Master Gardener program, please call the Extension office 503 397-3462 to get more information and to get on the mailing/email list.

### **FOOD SAFETY/PRESERVATION HOTLINE - July 15 through October 11, 2013**

1-800-354-7319

9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.; MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, except holidays

Certified Family Food Education volunteers and OSU Extension staff will answer your questions.

You can get the OSU Extension Service publications at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog>, click on nutrition and foods for publications on canning, drying, pickling and freezing too!

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