



Tillamook County Tiller

HORTICULTURAL NEWSLETTER FOR TILLAMOOK COUNTY

WINTER 2011



OSU Master Gardener™ Class - 25th Year

Oregon State University Extension Service



This is a very special year in Tillamook County for the Master Gardener™ Program. 2012 will be the 25th year that Master Gardener™ training has been offered. In the 24 years from its inception in 1987 to 2011, 458 people have taken the Tillamook training.

Does that mean that we have enough Master Gardeners in Tillamook County? People take the training for many different reasons. Some have a life-long love of gardening but have never had an opportunity for formal training. Newly retired people who now have time to landscape their home, grow dahlias or roses, or grow their own food for a healthy life style. Young people, who want to grow and preserve their own food for economic reasons or just to know that their family is eating food that hasn't been treated, enhanced, or genetically altered. People who have just moved to the area and want to know how to garden in our coastal environment. Other people take the training for employment purposes or to help other people through community gardens or social programs.

The OSU Extension Master Gardener Program is a voluntary educational program designed to meet community gardening needs. Its purpose is to teach people about the science and art of growing plants, with the aim of providing information and technical assistance about general horticulture and sustainable gardening to the public through qualified, certified volunteers.

Applicants receive formal training from professionals in topics such as basic botany, sustainable pest management, plant problem diagnosis, and backyard food production. To become an OSU Master Gardener™, you must complete the training program, pass an open book exam, and volunteer a specific number of hours answering home horticulture questions and working

on approved Master Gardener projects. There were seventy four (74) OSU Extension certified or apprentice Master Gardener volunteers in Tillamook County in 2011. These volunteers spent over 5,950 hours on horticulture related activities.

Master Gardener volunteers make it possible for Extension agents to reach more people than they could alone. With expanded program services, agents are more efficient but also have more responsibility.

There is no monetary compensation for a volunteer but the rewards are many. For your commitment you become an OSU Extension Master Gardener™ with horticulture and communication skills that qualify you to do interesting work. The number of citizens who come to you with plant problems indicates that you and your knowledge are needed. You have the gratitude of the Extension office staff and the state staff. You should have a sense of accomplishment and pride in a job well done. Perhaps the best reward of all is the friendships that develop with persons who share your love of gardening.

The next opportunity to become a OSU Master Gardener™ in Tillamook is coming up very soon. Offered annually, classes will start in January 2012. Classes will be held one day a week on Tuesdays with classes starting at 9:00 a.m., continuing until 4:30 p.m. with an hour break for lunch.

To obtain a schedule and more information about the classes or a registration form, please contact the OSU Extension Service, Tillamook County, 2204 Fourth Street, Tillamook, phone (503-842-3433) or go to our website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/tillamook/what-master-gardener-program> ☞



Extension Service
Tillamook County

2204 Fourth St.
Tillamook, OR
97141

(503) 842-3433

[Gardening web page](#)
[Tillamook.MasterGardeners@oregonstate.edu](#)

Joy Jones,
4-H & Agriculture
Extension Agent

Tillamook County
Master Gardener
Association



Contributors

Laura Swanson
Editor

Diane Griffin
Assistant Editor

Louise Bogard
Evelynn VonFeldt
Margaret Tweelinckx

Layout & Design
Pat Penney

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


President's Corner

The Master Gardener activities are winding down for the year. We hope that many of you were able to come to the Gardener's Tea in November. For folks who missed it, we have started serving at the tea rather than having a buffet. We also took reservations early this year and people could reserve tables for 4 or 8. I believe this will continue as many of our patrons appreciated this.

Master Gardening classes start January 17th (with required orientation on January 10th) so if you are interested in taking the course give the OSU Extension Service a call. Also, this year it is possible to take individual courses for \$30. So take a look at the schedule and see if there is something you are particularly interested in. To recertify Master Gardeners need to take 9 hours of courses each year. It is amazing how I can keep taking the same classes and learn more each year. I can hardly wait until this year to see what new things I learn.

When those seed catalogs start coming in January it is a good time to think about what you want to plant in the spring. But don't order from the seed catalogs – get your plants locally. Mark your calendars for May 26th as the Master Gardeners will be having their plant sale early this year. The Garden tour will continue to be held in July but the plant sale will be held early along with the Quilt Show at the Fairgrounds. This will be a good place to get your perennials and vegetable starts.

The Master Gardeners are taking a break right now from their hours at the OSU Extension Service. We will be starting

Tillamook County
Master Gardener Association 

back in February to answer all of your pruning questions.

My project for this fall was to start some cuttings while I was doing my usual fall cleanup. My husband pitched in and built me a nice little cold frame. I kept the cuttings in my potting shed for several months and have now moved them into the cold frame. They seem to be doing well so far but we will see what happens this winter.

My winter projects are to do some serious reading about propagation and pruning. I have some wisteria to tackle this spring and I am going to be dividing a number of my ornamental grasses. I hope to have a little more time this spring as my term as President of the Master Gardener Association ends this month. While I will be the Past President, Laura Owens will now take over as President. She has been a fantastic Vice President so I know she will do a great job. If you don't know her already, she will greet you in the spring Tiller.

Jean Scholtz

TCMGA President 2011



Amaryllis

Amaryllis

Amaryllis are as easy to grow as they are beautiful. Huge trumpet-shaped blooms in red, pink, salmon and white top the tall stems that grow rapidly from these large lily bulbs. After blooming, long green strap-shaped leaves appear.

This time of year bulbs are commonly available in planting kits with a pot, peaty soil and growing instructions. If you have grown amaryllis before, you may want to try a more exotic variety, often sold as unplanted bulbs from nurseries and catalogs. Amaryllis bulbs have no root until they are planted in soil and have access to sun and a little water.

If you are starting with a bare bulb, find a well-draining pot about one inch bigger in diameter than your bulb. Fill the pot two-thirds full with rich, porous soil, preferably with some peat moss and compost. Plant the bulb, keeping the upper one-third of the bulb exposed. Water sparingly until growth appears. Keep the plant at about 60 degrees in a shaded area until blooming, then move into the sun.

New growth will appear a few weeks after planting. When a green shoot emerges, the plants will grow rapidly if watered freely. When the pot becomes

Source: Linda McMahan

filled with roots, apply a dilute, complete liquid fertilizer. The stalk will grow toward the sun or light source, so rotate the pot and stake the stem if it grows more than 20 inches tall. Keep your plant away from heat sources such as furnace vents and wood stoves.

Eight to 12 weeks from planting, the amaryllis will bloom. You can plan for blooms during a particular time just by counting back the weeks and planting your bulbs accordingly.

To keep the bulb healthy for many years to come, keep the plant growing once it has bloomed. Cut off spent flowering stems and continue to water and fertilize it through the winter and spring. In summer, place the potted plant outdoors. In October, stop watering to allow the pot to dry out. The foliage will gradually turn yellow. Cut off the leaves to within two inches of the soil line. Leave the pot undisturbed. Water only if the bulb begins to shrivel. New growth should appear from the top of the bulb. Then follow the instructions above from the start.

Refrain from repotting your bulb every year, plants seem to bloom better when pot-bound. Some growers repot about every three to four years, or add new fertile soil to the top one-third of the pot each year. ♪

Holiday Decorations From Your Garden

Look no further than your garden to make your own holiday decorations. Intertwined organic materials such as grapevines, evergreen boughs and berries make natural-looking wreaths, swags, garlands and centerpieces. Use grapevines twisted to wreath shape as the backbone of a garland. Boughs of evergreen foliage can provide the bulk of the material. Branches of conifers such as cedar or fir, or broad-leafed evergreens like rhododendrons and camellias can provide most of the bulk.

Thin, flexible floral wire helps bind small bundles to build wreaths. You can attach the bundles to a wreath backing or bind materials together to form a swag. A mix of two or more kinds of greens may make the arrangement more attractive. Try the bluish foliage of conifers such as juniper or blue spruce, or mix several

textures together, such as a conifer and a broad-leaf evergreen. The native sword fern has long elegant evergreen leaves that would be long-lasting in any arrangement. Clusters of colorful berries make good accents. Try blue juniper berries or a sprig from a native snowberry. Embellish with small clusters of moss or lichen that have fallen from a tree, or a cluster of leaves that still have their fall color or fallen cones and interesting seed pods or fruits. Bare twigs pruned from garden shrubs could also be used. If you plan ahead, you can have dried summer flowers such as lavender or pearly everlasting to add as accents.

For finishing touches, use colorful ribbons, clusters of fragrant cinnamon sticks, or traditional holiday decorations in your creations. Many web sources provide detailed "how-to" instructions. ♪

Fruit or Herb Vinegars Make Great Gifts

Home-made herb or fruit-flavored vinegars are easy and fun to make and are welcomed gifts during the holiday season. Plus, they are great additions to winter salad dressings, sauces, meat dishes and cooked vegetables.

To produce herb vinegar, all you need is some fresh herbs from your garden or grocery store, clean glass jars and lids, vinegar, some containers to put the vinegar into when it is done and some nice labels for the jars, explained Nellie Oehler, family and community development faculty member with the Oregon State University Extension Service.

Fruit-flavored vinegars are made in a similar way, using frozen fruit such as raspberries, blue berries or cranberries. Frozen fruit works better than fresh fruit because the cells of frozen fruit are broken down and release their juice more readily.

A great variety of herbs or fruits can be used to make flavored vinegars, either by themselves or in combinations. Mint, basil, tarragon, dill, oregano and chives all are popular in herb vinegars. Use about three to four sprigs of fresh herbs or three tablespoons dried herbs for each pint of vinegar. The new leaves at the tip of an herb plant are usually the most flavorful. You can also add other flavorings along with the herbs such as berries, lemon peel or garlic.

Follow these procedure for making herb vinegars:

Sterilize glass containers such as quart or gallon jars by boiling for 10 minutes. Sterilization inhibits microorganisms that cloud herb vinegars.

Insert the desired amount of herbs into a sterilized glass jar and fill the jar with the vinegar of choice.

Distilled white and apple cider vinegar are most affordable, but apple cider's amber color may not be as desirable for light colored herbs. White wine vinegar is more expensive, but has a very smooth flavor.

Put a pint of vinegar in the jar per each three to four sprigs of fresh herbs. The vinegar may be added either hot or cold.

Some people prefer to heat the vinegar to just below the boiling point and then pour the hot vinegar over the herbs. Others like the flavor better when cold vinegar is added.



Loosely cap the jar. Plastic lids or corks make the best seals, as metal jar tops will rust. Store your herb vinegar in a cool, dark place for several weeks. After the desired flavor is reached, filter the vinegar and put it into sterilized smaller containers for gifts or use in your own kitchen. Add a sprig of fresh herb for appearance. Or leave the vinegar unfiltered. Citrus rind, garlic, peppers or peppercorns can also add unique flavors to herbal vinegars.

To make fruit-flavored vinegars, put frozen fruit in a non-reactive bowl and pour vinegar over the fruit. Let it set a couple of weeks to steep. Then filter it, through cheesecloth or a paper coffee filter.

Don't forget to label your vinegars with the type of base vinegar used – white, apple cider, red wine, white wine, rice wine – the flavoring ingredients and the date. ***Use the vinegar up within three to four months for best quality.***

For more information on making herb vinegar, an instruction sheet is on-line available in PDF format titled, "[Flavored Vinegars.](#)" ↪

Source: Nellie Oehler

***Oregon State University Publications are available at: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/>
If you do not have internet, you may request a copy of most of the publications cited in this newsletter from the OSU Extension Service at 2204 4th Street, Tillamook, OR 97141. Phone: 503 842-3433***

Gift Suggestions for Gardeners

Here are 30 gift suggestions for your green-thumbed friends.

- ✿ A Gift Certificate for Master Gardener™ classes
- ✿ Gift certificate for 'x' hours of help in the yard
- ✿ Hand soaps and creams designed especially for extra dirty, chapped hands
- ✿ Colorful and interesting flower pots
- ✿ Leather gardening gloves to prevent injury and chapped, rough skin
- ✿ Flexible, rubberized cotton gloves that keep fingernails clean and hands dry
- ✿ Water timer for hose-fed sprinklers for carefree watering
- ✿ Bouquets and wreaths of dried flowers
- ✿ High-quality pruning saw to make winter pruning a pleasure
- ✿ Easy grip or smaller hand tools for gardeners with arthritis
- ✿ Collapsible compost bin to recycle kitchen and yard waste
- ✿ Small, beautiful vases to display single blossoms
- ✿ Long spouted water pot for easy house-plant care
- ✿ Ever-sharp garden scissors for snipping herbs and flowers
- ✿ Hand-woven basket with a handle for gathering herbs and vegetables

Source: Carol Savonen

- ✿ Large garden cart to carry tools and soil amendments to the garden in one trip
- ✿ Knee-pads or gardening stool to make weeding and low work less of a strain
- ✿ Metal supports for tall spring tulips and later to support tomato plants
- ✿ Permanent tags to mark the sites of your perennials and bulbs or rows in next spring's vegetable patch
- ✿ Seed sower to easily set tiny seeds into soil at exactly the proper interval
- ✿ A heavy apron with pockets to keep gardening tools handy or a caddy with pockets for your garden bucket
- ✿ Pocket thermometer to measure soil temperature, vital for spring planting
- ✿ Small soil home testing kit to test for plant nutrients essential for growth
- ✿ Long-handled bulb planter to make digging small deep holes for bulbs a cinch
- ✿ Gardening books
- ✿ Bulbs to plant in bowls and vases for early indoor bloom
- ✿ Gift certificate for plants or tools from a favorite nursery
- ✿ Children's gardening tools to encourage young folks to start gardening
- ✿ Presents for wildlife such as bird feeders or baths. ☞

A Garden Journal

Now is a good time to start a gardening journal. What worked in the garden this past year and what needs to change next time? A gardening journal can help you plan from year to year by a record of what, when and where seeds and plants were grown.

A yearly record helps with crop rotation, changing the types of vegetables and flowers planted in any given location each year to discourage depletion of soil nutrients, pest outbreaks and soil-borne disease.

Record precipitation patterns and unusual weather, dates of first bloom, arrival of hummingbirds and first frost. What kinds of butterflies and other pollinators did you see and when? Yearly records will let you compare the performances of different varieties.

Source: Barb Fick

Draw a sketch of your garden beds and write down the variety names and planting dates in the journal. Record weeding, fertilizing and harvest dates and how well each variety performed. Germination, flowering dates and pertinent weather information also are useful. Record details such as irrigation methods, what you used for trellising and other support or how you controlled pests. If you record pest outbreaks in relation to what plants they affect, it can help you plan next year's garden.

Keep track of the amount of money spent on seed, fertilizer and garden tools, and yields. Record the varieties of woody plants you plant. Too often, gardeners save the tag on a woody perennial for reference, but don't put the information elsewhere. ☞

Keep Holiday Food Safe

The kitchen can be the most popular room during the holidays and eating one of the most beloved traditions. It's a good time to remember that food-poisoning bacteria also love cooked foods that are high in protein, such as meats, chili, pasta, salad and custard.

If these foods sit at lukewarm temperatures for more than two to three hours, bacteria can start to grow.

What happens when you eat "spoiled" food? "You probably will not feel sick immediately," said Carolyn Raab, Oregon State University Extension foods and nutrition specialist. "It takes time for the bacteria and their toxins to work in the intestines. Some bacteria can make you sick in just two hours. Others won't strike for several days."

Sometimes, symptoms such as nausea or diarrhea last just 24 hours. Others last for a week or more. Side effects of botulism, the most harmful type of food poisoning, can last for years. Some people may be sicker than others because their immune systems are weak. Pregnant women, infants and young children, older adults and people with cancer, AIDS and other diseases are more at risk.

It's important to see a doctor if symptoms are severe or last a long time.

A common concern about food-borne illness is when you don't know what food eaten during the previous 24 hours could have been a source of bacteria. Rare or undercooked foods from animals – meats, poultry, eggs, seafood – can be a source of harmful bacteria. So is raw, unpasteurized milk. Adequate heating kills most bacteria and their toxins.

Source: Carolyn Raab

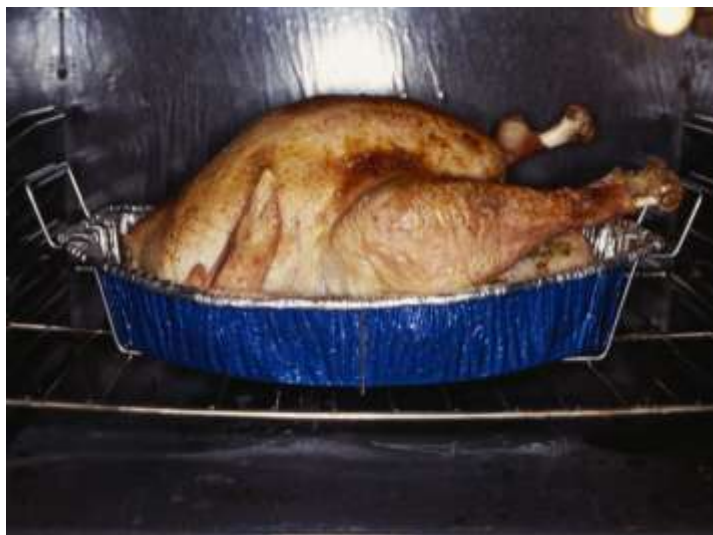
Another common cause of food-borne illness is cross-contamination, which spreads bacteria from raw meat, seafood and poultry to other foods that aren't cooked before eating. This can happen when lettuce is put on a cutting board that was not cleaned after raw chicken is cut up.

Here are basic rules to keep food safe:

Keep it clean: Wash your hands with soap and water before handling food, especially after using the toilet or changing diapers. Wash counters, cutting boards and utensils with soap and water after handling raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs. After washing, wipe or spray with diluted bleach (one teaspoon in one quart of water).


Don't sneeze on food. Put bandages on hand cuts. Keep insects, rodents and pets away.

Cook it well: Cook meat, poultry, fish and eggs thoroughly. This is how they should look: Ground meat is brownish (cook to 160 degrees). Poultry meat is light or dark



brown and its juice is clear (cook to 165 degrees). White fish looks milky and flakes easily with a fork. Egg whites are white and firm. Drink pasteurized milk and fruit juice that has been heat-treated to kill harmful bacteria.

Cool it soon: Keep hot foods HOT and cold foods COLD. Cool big pots of soups and stews by pouring them into shallow pans (two to three inches high). Refrigerate soon.

Several publications on food safety are available online from Oregon State University Extension Family and Community Health. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/fch/food-safety> 

Avoid & Correct Home Moisture Problems

Mold season is here, and although excess moisture – both inside and outdoors – can cause a wide variety of problems in the home, knowledge and simple measures can help keep a house mold-free.

When winter weather arrives, heated air can trigger moisture problems because it holds more moisture than cool air. When warm air comes in contact with a cold surface, it cools down and excess moisture condenses, usually on the spot – notably single-pane windows or non-insulated walls. The moisture left behind can lead to mold, mildew and high concentrations of bacteria and dust mites.

An important first step to prevent and correct indoor moisture buildup is to use bath and kitchen fans to quickly pull moisture out of the room before it spreads to the rest of the house, according to Jeanne Brandt, family and community health faculty member with the Oregon State University Extension Service in Washington County.

If a fan that vents to the outside does not exist in the kitchen and bathroom, consider having one installed. Most indoor moisture is caused by normal respiration of people and pets, but other activities also can be a source of excess moisture, such as baths and showers and hanging wet towels and clothes inside to dry.

Firewood stored indoors, though seemingly dry, can be a problem, as well as uncovered aquariums and large numbers of houseplants (more than five to seven). Indoor humidity levels are best when between 30 and 50 percent relative humidity. You can measure levels with a hygrometer, a low-cost purchase from a hardware or electronics store.

An OSU publication, "[Home moisture problems](#)," EC 1437, is a thorough guide on how to identify moisture problems and control them. The publication, which can be downloaded free of charge, explains the symptoms of excess indoor moisture, outdoor and indoor sources of moisture and how to solve home moisture problems with ventilation, outdoor drainage and insulation.

Source: Jeanne Brandt

Following are common clues of indoor moisture problems:

- Musty smells may signal mold, mildew or rot. Household odors that linger may indicate too much moisture in the air.
- Frost and ice on cold surfaces from condensation can be a sign of excess moisture in the air.
- A sensation of dampness is common with high humidity.
- Surface discoloration, staining and texture changes may appear as black or dark streaks or lines. Mold and mildew often appear as a discoloration that can be white, orange, green, brown or black. Conditions often are noticed as a musty odor and are found under carpets, behind cupboards, on framing between sub floors and in crawl spaces and attics.
- Wood swells when it becomes wet and warps, and it cups and cracks when it dries.
- Wood rot and decay indicate advanced moisture damage. Fungi penetrate the wood and make it soft and weak.

Outdoor moisture gets into houses by rain, snow or ground water leaking into basements, crawl spaces, roofs and walls. Water also moves in through porous materials, such as vertical movement through a cement block wall. Vapor diffusions allow moisture to permeate even through solid surfaces such as cement, gypsum board or wood.

The following OSU information about mold also is available online:

[Household Mold](#) - Information sheet with tips on dealing with household mold.

[Resources and References](#) - Web sites and publications that provide reliable, unbiased information related to moisture & mold control, assessment, remediation, moisture resistant construction practices.

[Winter Storm Damage Checklist](#)

[Mold Control: Home Inspection Checklist](#) - Guidelines for inspecting your home for sources of moisture and steps for control.

[Stamp Out Mold in Your Home](#) - 1 page flyer with helpful hints for stamping out mold in your home. ☞

Feeding Wild Birds

Backyard bird feeders can help birds get enough food to maintain sufficient body heat during cold. Once you start a winter feeding project, be sure to continue until spring, when the birds' natural foods are available again.

Knowing what and what not to feed wintering birds and the best place to put feeders can make a difference in how well they survive the coldest months. When you begin feeding birds, put out a seed mix in an open place to see what kinds of birds are attracted and what seeds are pushed aside.

Black oil sunflower seeds are the most popular food for wild birds that use feeders, such as chickadees, white-crowned sparrows and evening grosbeaks.

Avoid commercial wild mixes that contain a lot of milo or millet, which most wild birds won't eat, although unwanted species such as starlings and rodents are likely to show up.

Nyjer seeds (sometimes called thistle) are favorites of many finches. Peanuts, either kernels or in the shell, are attractive to jays, chickadees and nuthatches, but must be roasted; raw peanuts contain toxins harmful to birds. They also attract squirrels.

Another popular bird food is suet, which is fat processed from cows and sheep. It attracts insect-eating birds that need animal fat for energy. Woodpeckers, chickadees, bushtits and nuthatches are especially fond of suet. You can buy suet cakes at specialty shops or make them at home. Details on how to make them are in the OSU Extension Service publication EC1554, "[Feed Wild Birds](#)."

Foods to avoid feeding birds are bakery goods such as bread, donuts, cookies or crackers. They do not provide the nutrition birds need and can mold easily, making the birds sick or killing them. To avoid mold in bird food, store it in a hard plastic or metal resealable container. This also helps keep the food dry and mice and rats out. A five-gallon container with a tight-fitting lid stored on a shelf is ideal.

Sources: Nancy Allen & Dana Sanchez

To minimize the spread of disease at your feeder, follow these steps:

- Give the birds enough space. If you have one feeder that is crowded, consider getting an additional feeder.
- Clean your feeder and the droppings on the perching area each time you fill your feeder.
- Disinfect the feeder once or twice a month with one part liquid chlorine household bleach in nine parts of warm water. If possible, immerse the feeder for two to three minutes and allow to air dry.
- Feed birds only high-quality food. Moldy seed or bread or spoiled leftovers don't do them any good.
- Keep rodents out of the food. Mice can carry bird diseases.
- When you see sick birds huddled at the feeder, spread the word quickly in your neighborhood.
- Check your feeder for sharp edges, where birds might cut themselves. Small scratches or cuts allow bacteria and viruses to infect a bird more easily.

Salmonellosis is the most commonly spread disease at feeders and can kill birds quickly. Infected birds spread the bacteria in their droppings. Trichomoniasis is caused by a one-celled protozoan parasite. Mourning doves are particularly susceptible. The disease spreads when sick birds drop contaminated food or water at a feeder or watering area. Aspergillosis is a mold that grows on damp feed and in the debris beneath feeders. Birds inhale the mold spores and infection spreads in the lungs, causing bronchitis and pneumonia.

Avian Pox is a virus that causes wartlike growths on featherless surfaces of a birds face, feet legs or wings. Virus spreads by direct contact, by insects or by viruses shed on food by infected birds.

Put your feeder where a cat cannot ambush and squirrels cannot jump to it. Make sure it is five to six feet off the ground and six to eight feet from nearby vegetation and that escape cover is within 10 feet. ↻

Food Safety Starts in the Garden

An outbreak of E. coli O157:H7 in fresh strawberries sickened at least 10 people in Oregon in July and reminds us that food safety starts in the garden.

Fruits and vegetables can be carriers of pathogens that cause foodborne illnesses such as E. coli O157:H7 and salmonella especially if untreated animal manure has been used in or is near the garden. If animals have access to the garden, that could be a source of manure.

Sam Angima, a soils specialist, and Carolyn Raab, a foods and nutrition specialist - both with the Oregon State University Extension Service – offer these words of caution.

The risk associated with garden produce is small, but it's there. Foodborne illness outbreaks have been linked with many foods, including raw fruits and vegetables and unpasteurized apple cider.

What does this mean for gardeners?

Use particular care if and when you use animal manure in the garden. To avoid potential food safety risks follow these recommendations:

Use recommended food preparation techniques with garden produce. Always wash produce in clean water before eating it. Use a vegetable brush to remove visible soil. Peeling may also help reduce risk.

Keep fruits and vegetables and other raw food separated from cooked food. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap after handling raw foods, as well as before preparing food and eating it. Always wash hands after using the toilet and after changing diapers.

People who are more prone to foodborne illness include young children, pregnant women, older adults and those with cancer, AIDS and other immune-compromising diseases. If a family member is at risk, serve cooked or canned vegetables and fruits for an extra margin of safety. Heating kills bacteria and parasites.

Sources: Carolyn Raab and Sam Angima

In the vegetable garden, use of compost rather than manure is preferred. However, if you use any kind of manure, ensure that the edible portion of the crop does not touch the soil. Use straw or mulch to separate the crop from the soil.

If you do choose to apply fresh or partially composted manure to the vegetable garden, apply it to a crop with a low pathogen-contamination risk, such as sweet corn. Plant crops whose edible parts contact the soil such as carrots, potatoes, lettuce and melons in a section of the garden where manure is not applied.

Backyard composting can be an effective way to kill pathogens in manure. But the composting process must be carefully managed. To be certain of pathogen kill, the pile must reach temperatures greater than 130 degrees. The pile must be turned often to ensure that the cooler material on the edges of the pile gets into the hotter center of the pile.

You'll need about five turns during the hot composting phase to assure pathogen kill. After each turn, temperatures greater than 130 degrees for three days are needed to kill human pathogens.

We know that the microorganisms in manure that could be harmful to humans are not adapted for long term survival in the soil. After application to the soil, these pathogens are killed by unfavorable temperatures, pH, desiccation and by predation and competition from native soil organisms.

"My best advice for using manure in the home garden is: 'When in doubt, leave it out,'" Angima said. "It is best to keep manure out of a cool home compost pile that is not managed intensively." ♪



by Evelyann
VonFeldt
OSU Master
Gardener

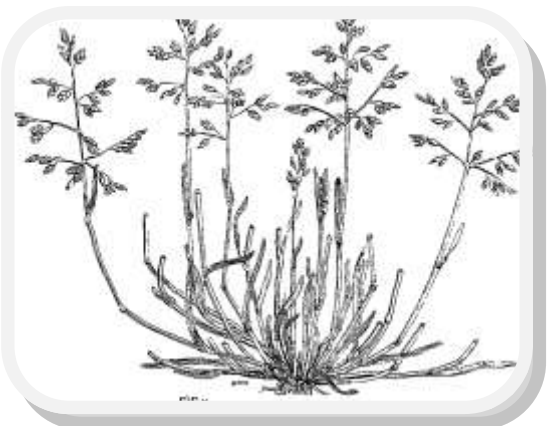
The Weed Patch

Poa Annual Bluegrass

Now is the time when a spare minute is available to remove any of our local winter annual weeds. I know I'm not the best example, but when you have some dry-ish weather try to take a half hour to rid one side of your yard or at least one flower bed or raised garden bed of those pesky weeds that without any heat or sun light still can produce seeds to plague us for years to come. One of the ones perhaps hiding under your perennials is Poa annual bluegrass.

Poa annua L. is an annual (meaning its life cycle is over in 1 year, *poa* can complete its life cycle in as little as 6 weeks). This grass is the little one you find in the flower beds and maybe in your lawn. It is usually quite small, consisting of a low tuft of vegetation about 4" across and 1½" tall. In researching this grass I found that it is found in all states and all but the farthest providences of Canada, originally from Eurasia.

Leaves of the grass are hairless, boat-shaped at leaf tip and form into low clumps. Seedheads can form during any weather in our area, but if let go in lawns they will release seeds in early spring and could lead to dead patches in lawn during summer when you would like an even green lawn.



The "bluegrass" name comes from the bluish-green color and it is one of 200 species in the *poa* grass family, 15 of which are found in our area, Kentucky bluegrass being the most desirable cool season turf grass species.

Poa can be controlled with herbicides, but the recommendation is to apply three times during fall. That begs the question "How am I going to find 3 separate days of dry weather 4 weeks apart to apply herbicide?" So we're back to pulling.

Of course while you are pulling the *Poa*, you will undoubtedly encounter Little bitter-cress *Cardamine oligosperma* (the little lacy rosette with the shooting seeds) you know that !#%#**!! one. Remember that Little Bitter Cress will be producing flowers and seeds all fall and winter too so any plants that can be removed before those seeds mature will save you pulling for years. So let's all pray for a few dry days here and there this winter and the resolve to get out there to pull those weeds. Good luck! ☺



Sources:

Dennis, La Rey J.: *Gilkey's Weeds of the Pacific Northwest*

Pojar, Jim and Andy Mackinnon: *Plants of the Pacific Northwest*

Virginia Cooperative Extension: *Virginia Tech Weed Identification Guide* -- <http://www.ppws.vt.edu/weedindex.htm>

http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/grasses/plants/an_bluegrass.htm

http://www.spokane-county.wsu.edu/spokane/eastside/Weed_Information/weed_text/Annual%20Bluegrass.pdf

Garden hints from your OSU Extension Agent

DECEMBER

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Spread wood ashes evenly on vegetable garden. Use no more than 1.5 lb/100 sq ft/year. Don't use if the soil pH is greater than 7.0 or if potassium levels are excessive.
- Protect new landscape plants from wind. Use stakes, guy wires and/or windbreaks as needed.
- Yard sanitation: rake leaves, cut and remove withered stalks of perennial flowers, mulch flowerbeds, hoe or pull winter weeds.
- Turn the compost pile and protect from heavy rains, if necessary.
- During heavy rains, watch for drainage problems in the yard. Tilling, ditching, and French drains are possible short-term solutions. Consider rain gardens and bioswales as a longer term solution.
- Check stored flower bulbs, fresh vegetables, fruits for rot and fungus problems. Discard any showing signs of rot.
- Tie limbs of columnar evergreens to prevent snow or ice breakage. Do not walk on lawns until frost has melted.

Planting/Propagation

- Good time of year to plant trees, landscape shrubs.

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Avoid mounding mulching materials around the bases of trees and shrubs. The mulch might provide cover for rodents.
- Monitor spruce trees for spruce aphids. Treat if present in large numbers. Read and follow pesticide label directions. ☞

JANUARY

Planning

- Have soil test performed on garden plot to determine nutrient needs. Contact your local Extension office for a list of laboratories or view EM 8677 online: <http://bit.ly/qWOCAV>.
- Take hardwood cuttings of deciduous ornamental shrubs and trees for propagation.

- Plan to replace varieties of ornamental plants that are susceptible to disease with resistant cultivars:

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Reapply or redistribute mulches that have blown or washed away during winter.

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Scout cherry trees for signs and symptoms of bacterial canker. Remove infected branches with a clean pruner or saw. Sterilize tools before each new cut. Burn or send to landfill before bloom. See EC 631, *Controlling Diseases and Insects in Home Orchards*, online.
- Use dormant sprays of lime sulfur or copper fungicide on roses for general disease control.
- Mid-January: Spray peach trees with approved fungicides to combat peach leaf curl and shothole. Or plant curl-resistant cultivars such as Frost, Q1-8 or Creswell.

Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Protect sensitive plants such as weeping figs from cold drafts in the house.
- Propagate split-leaf philodendrons and other indoor plants by air-layering or vegetative cuttings.

FEBRUARY

Planning

- Tune up lawn mower and garden equipment before the season begins.
- Select and store healthy scion wood for grafting fruit and nut trees.
- Plan an herb bed in a sunny spot. Among the choices are parsley, sage, chives, lavender. Plant seeds or transplants after danger of frost.

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Repair winter damage to trees and shrubs.
- Fertilize rhubarb .
- Incorporate cover crops or other organic matter into soil.
- Prune fruit trees and blueberries.
- Prune deciduous summer blooming shrubs and trees.
- Prune clematis, Virginia creeper, and other vining ornamentals.

Planting/Propagation

- Plant fruit trees and deciduous shrubs.
- Plant asparagus if the ground is warm enough.
- Where soil is dry and workable, plant garden peas and sweet peas.
- Good time to plant new roses.

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Use delayed-dormant sprays of lime sulfur for fruit and deciduous trees and shrubs.
- Remove cankered limbs from fruit and nut trees for control of diseases such as apple anthracnose, bacterial canker of stone fruit and eastern filbert blight. Sterilize tools before each new cut.
- Elm leaf beetles and box-elder bugs may be seen indoors. They are not harmful, but can be a nuisance. Remove them with a vacuum or broom and dustpan. ☞

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.

In This Issue

- Pg 1 OSU Master Gardener Class-25th Year
 Pg 2 TCMGA President's Corner
 Pg 3 Amaryllis
 Holiday Decorations from Your Garden
 Pg 4 Fruit or Herb Vinegars Make Great Gifts
 Pg 5 Gift Suggestions for Gardeners
 A Garden Journal
 Pg 6 Keep Holiday Food Safe
 Pg 7 Avoid & Correct Home Moisture Problems
 Pg 8 Feeding Wild Birds
 Pg 9 Food Safety Starts in the Garden
 Pg 10 The Weed Patch - Poa-Annual Bluegrass

Coming Events

January - March - 2012 Master Gardener Classes

Jan. 10 - 2012 Master Gardener Class Orientation
 9:00 am to 12 pm

Jan. 17 - April 3th: 2012 Master Gardener Classes
 Tuesdays 9:00 am to 4:30 pm

Starting in March - Master Gardener Office Hours:
 Mondays and Thursdays 12:30 to 4:30 pm

3rd Wed. of the month Bonsai Club -
 Tillamook PUD Meeting Room
 9:30 am -11:30 am



OSU Extension Service - Tillamook County

2012 Master Gardener™ Class Schedule



Date	Class	Instructor	Date	Class	Instructor
Jan 10	Orientation - Required Mentor/ Apprentice	Joy Jones	Feb 21	Fruit Trees Composting L. Garden/ Pruning	Ross Penhallegon Evelynn VonFeldt Gary Johnson
Jan 17 potluck	Botany Plant I.D.	Linda McMahan	Feb 28 potluck	Pesticides IPM	Joy Jones
Jan 24	Vegetables Pruning	R & J Anderson Neil Bell	Mar 6	Plant Pathology	Jay Pscheidt
Jan 31	Soils Soil Amendments	Joy Jones	Mar 13	Weeds Plant Clinic	Joy Jones Joy Jones/ E.VonFeldt
Feb 7	Poisonous Plants Intro to PNWs Propagation	Joy Jones Nelson, VonFeldt, Stephenson Coffman, VonFeldt, Johnson	Mar 20	Coastal Plants Water Quality Small Fruits	E.VonFeldt Ben Frankamp Joe DeFrancesco
Feb 14	Lawns Entomology	Joe Balden Gail Langellotto	Mar 27	Spring Break	No Classes
			Apr 3 potluck	Computer/Office Tour Review Open Book Exam; Recognition	Joy, Evelynn, Pat Joy Jones

Register at 2204 4th St., Tillamook, or call 503-842-3433 for more information

Oregon State University Extension Service offers educational programs, activities, and materials without discrimination based on age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran's status. Oregon State University Extension Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer. This publication will be made available in accessible formats upon request. Please call 503-842-3433 for information. Se puede obtener esta publicación en forma alternativa. Por favor llame al 503-842-3433 para más