Horticulture Tips
March 2006

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Oklahoma State University

GARDEN TIPS FOR MARCH!

David Hillock, Consumer Horticulturist

Lawn and Turf

- Remove excessive thatch from warm-season lawns. Dethatching, if necessary, should precede crabgrass control treatment. (F-6604)
- Broadleaf weeds can easily be controlled in cool-season lawns at this time with post-emergent broadleaf herbicides. (F-6421)
- Pre-emergent crabgrass control chemicals can still be applied to cool- and warm-season turfgrasses (F-6421). Heed label cautions when using any weed killers near or in the root zone of desirable plantings.
- March is the second best time of the year to seed cool-season turfgrass; however, fall is the best time to plant. (F-6419)
- Cool-season lawns such as bluegrass, fescue and ryegrass may be fertilized now with the first application of the season. Usually, four applications of fertilizer are required per year in March, May, October and November. (F-6420)
- Begin mowing cool-season grasses at 1 ½ to 3 ½ inches high. (F-6420)

Flowers & Vegetables

- Cultivate annual flower and vegetable planting beds to destroy winter weeds.
- Apply mulch to control weeds in beds. Landscape fabric barrier can reduce the amount of mulch but can dry out and prevent water penetration. Thus, organic litter makes the best mulch.
- Prune roses just before growth starts and begin a regular disease spray program as the foliage appears. (F-6403 & F-7607)
- Avoid excessive walking and working in the garden when foliage and soils are wet.
- Start warm-season vegetable transplants indoors.
- Divide and replant overcrowded, summer and fall blooming perennials. Mow or cut back old liriope and other ornamental grasses before new growth begins.
- Your cool-season vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, carrot, lettuce, onion, peas, spinach, turnips etc. should be planted by the middle of March.
- Watch for cutworms that girdle newly planted vegetables during the first few weeks of establishment. Cabbage looper and cabbageworm insects should be monitored and controlled in the garden. (F-7313)

Trees & Shrubs

- Prune spring flowering plants, if needed, immediately following their bloom period.

- Plant evergreen shrubs, balled and burlapped, and bare root trees and shrubs.
- Anthracnose control on sycamore, maple and oak should begin at bud swell. (F-7634).
- Diplodia Pine Tip blight control on pines begins at bud swell. (F-7618)
- Chemical and physical control of galls (swellings) on stems of trees should begin now. (F-7168 & F-7306)
- Dormant oil can still be applied to control mites, galls, overwintering aphids, etc. (F-7306)
- The first generation of Nantucket Pine Tip Moth appears at this time. Begin pesticide applications in late March. (F-7306)
- Control Eastern tent caterpillars as soon as the critters appear.

Fruits

- Continue to plant strawberries, asparagus and other small fruit crops this month.
- Start your routine fruit tree spray schedule prior to bud break. (F-7319).
- Remove winter mulch from strawberries in early March (F-6214).

Crabgrass Pre-emergent Control Tips

Dennis Martin, Turfgrass Specialist

For areas where pre-emergent crabgrass control is desired and pre-emergent herbicide application has not yet been made, applicators and homeowners are encouraged to make the application as soon as possible. Crabgrass usually begins germination in the spring when soil temperatures at the 4 inch depth reliably reach the 53°F to 58°F level. Remember to water the product in immediately with at least 1/2 inch of water through one or two irrigation events. Failure to move the pre-emergent herbicide from the turf canopy to the soil surface by rain or irrigation can result in erratic weed control. Pre-emergent herbicides are subjected to decomposition by sunlight and evaporation to the atmosphere when they set in the turf canopy for weeks on end. Ideally, application of pre-emergent herbicides and immediate watering in of the pre-emergent product should occurred at least 2 to 3 weeks prior to the onset of conditions conducive to the germination of crabgrass. Next year try to get the application made by February 15 throughout most of Oklahoma to be on the safe side. This management schedule allows the product to become activated and in place to provide the best scenario for control. Thus far in 2006 our scouting efforts have not revealed any emerged crabgrass in the Stillwater area. However, based on current Oklahoma Mesonet soil temperatures around Oklahoma, crabgrass emergence is probably just a good rainfall event away!

Upon scouting and finding crabgrass beginning to emerge, some applicators may choose to use tank mixes of their pre-emergent herbicide with post-emergent products such as MSMA or Drive. Others may choose to tank mix or substitute in a sprayable form of Dimension, which can have post-emergent crabgrass control activity on very small seedling crabgrass up to the 5 leaf stage. Yet others will choose to continue with pre-emergent applications but scout suspect areas more intensively in the days to a few weeks after application to make a more informed decision as to whether a post-emergent application is necessary.

One should make certain that their intended turf use area and application rate (among other factors) is on the herbicide product label. Remember to read and follow all label directions - the

label is the law! Among other environmental considerations, do not apply herbicides when drift is likely. Do not apply herbicides to water, curbing, sidewalks or other landscape features where the product is likely to run off into storm drains and surface waters. If accidental application to curbs and driveways do occur, sweep dry granular products into the turf or use a pressure nozzle to rinse spray residue into the turf area. Do not apply pesticides to saturated soil if rainfall in 24 to 48 hours is eminent. Note - saturated soil has not been a problem in Oklahoma thus far in 2006! If heavy rainfall is eminent, consider rescheduling the application after the threat of additional heavy rains is reduced, to reduce risk of runoff - be a good steward of the land! Also, remember to use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as chemical resistant gloves and boots as well as long sleeve shirts and trousers as well as proper eye protection and observe any reentry intervals necessary to treated areas as discussed on the product label.

Most commercial/professional grade pesticides labeled for use in turfgrass management has labels accessible free of charge at Crop Data Management Systems Inc. (CDMS) at web address: http://www.cdms.net/manuf/manuf.asp?t=2. Other web-based sites may exist where pesticide labels can be accessed.

Most synthetic pre-emergent herbicide products have provided very good to excellent control of crabgrass when used according to labeled directions. Commonly used synthetic products include but are not limited to: Barricade, Pendulum AquaCap, Surflan and Dimension among others. Organic products tested thus far in our research programs have provided unsatisfactory crabgrass control.

The previous information was provided for educational purposes only. Remember to read and follow label directions. No endorsement for or against the products mentioned or those not mentioned is intended or implied.

Drought Update

Drought update provided by the Oklahoma Climatological Survey can be found at: http://ticker.ocs.ou.edu/archive/20060228/drought.20060228.pdf

Of course, the news isn't good. For example, on a statewide basis, the last 90 days, 120 days, and 180 days (periods ending February 28) are the driest such periods for the past 85 years of record.

Much additional drought information is available at: http://climate.ocs.ou.edu/drought/

Dr. Ronald L. Elliott, P.E.
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Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering Dept.
Oklahoma State University

Firewise Landscaping

David Hillock, Consumer Horticulturist

Wildfires are common in Oklahoma and many other portions of the United States, but have not been as prevalent in the 9 years that I have lived here as they have been this winter. As a result of the drought and the many wildfires we have encountered there is obviously an increased awareness and request for information that will help us control the wildfires and protect our homes and property.

In 1992 several agencies came together and coined the term Firewise. This became the catalyst for educational resources and programs to help homeowners, communities and firefighters to make sensible choices in the wildland/urban interface which would help control wildfires and protect property. Such programs and materials include the National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Program, the National Firewise Communities Program and educational materials such as the Firewise Landscaping Checklist shown below.

Firewise landscaping is the practice of designing, installing and maintaining a landscape to minimize fire hazard to structures, residents and neighbors, while maintaining components of the native ecosystems that attracted people to live in such areas in the first place. Firewise landscaping can be aesthetically pleasing while reducing potential wildfire fuel. Plant choice, spacing and maintenance are all critical factors as well as construction materials used for and around the home.

By studying the literature and other materials available sensible decisions may be made to help protect both life and property. Access additional information on the Firewise home page: **www.firewise.org.**

Firewise Landscaping Checklist

When designing and installing a firewise landscape, consider the following:

- ❑ Local area fire history.
- ❑ Site location and overall terrain.
- ❑ Prevailing winds and seasonal weather.
- ❑ Property contours and boundaries.
- ❑ Native vegetation.
- ❑ Plant characteristics and placement (duffage, water and salt retention ability, aromatic oils, fuel load per area and size).
- ❑ Irrigation requirements.

To create a firewise landscape, remember that the primary goal is fuel reduction. To this end, initiate the zone concept. Zone 1 is closest to the structure; Zones 2-4 move progressively further away.

- ❑ **Zone 1.** This well-irrigated area encircles the structure for at least 30' on all sides, providing space for fire suppression equipment in the event of an emergency. Plantings should be limited to carefully spaced low flammability species.

- ❑ **Zone 2.** Low flammability plant materials should be used here. Plants should be low-growing, and the irrigation system should extend into this section.
- ❑ **Zone 3.** Place low-growing plants and well-spaced trees in this area, remembering to keep the volume of vegetation (fuel) low.
- ❑ **Zone 4.** This furthest zone from the structure is a natural area. Selectively prune and thin all plants and remove highly flammable vegetation.

Also remember to:

- ❑ Be sure to leave a minimum of 30' around the house to accommodate fire equipment, if necessary.
- ❑ Widely space and carefully situate the trees you plant.
- ❑ Take out the "ladder fuels" — vegetation that serves as a link between grass and tree tops. This arrangement can carry fire to a structure or from a structure to vegetation.
- ❑ Give yourself added protection with "fuel breaks" like driveways, gravel walkways and lawns.

When maintaining a landscape:

- ❑ Keep trees and shrubs properly pruned. Prune all trees so the lowest limbs are 6' to 10' from the ground.
- ❑ Remove leaf clutter and dead and overhanging branches.
- ❑ Mow the lawn regularly.
- ❑ Dispose of cuttings and debris promptly, according to local regulations.
- ❑ Store firewood away from the house.
- ❑ Be sure the irrigation system is well maintained.
- ❑ Use care when refueling garden equipment and maintain it regularly.
- ❑ Store and use flammable liquids properly.
- ❑ Dispose of smoking materials carefully.
- ❑ Become familiar with local regulations regarding vegetation clearances, disposal of debris and fire safety requirements for equipment.
- ❑ Follow manufacturers' instructions when using fertilizers and pesticides.

Firewise Plants

A frequent question related to the recent wildfires is what landscape plants are fire resistant? While choosing "fireproof" plants is an important part in creating a firewise landscape, remember that **where** and **how** you plant may be more important than **what** you plant. However, plant species that tend to be more resistant to fire should be considered. Firewise plants have several characteristics in common. Some important points to remember when selecting plants include:

- No plant is fireproof. All will burn in a very intense fire.
- Firewise plants all have one or more of the following characteristics:
    - Tissues contain more moisture, especially during the fire season.
    - Tissues contain low amounts of volatile oils and other readily flammable chemicals.

    - Plants provide less fuel, either by producing less litter or by staying small.
    - Plants are compact or low to the ground, allowing them to be used in the landscape to interrupt fire pathways.
- All trees provide large amounts of fuel to a fire, so they should be carefully placed and maintained. Broadleaved trees generally are less flammable than conifers (pines, junipers, spruces).
- When choosing a particular plant species or cultivar for firewise planting, favor those that are low to the ground, compact and that stay green and healthy with low maintenance and minimal water.
- All firewise plants should receive periodic maintenance, including removal of dead leaf and stem material within the crown and on the ground, pruning to keep crowns thinner and to keep tree crowns high and removal of individual plants to break up fuel continuity.

The following plants can be firewise if used properly in the landscape and maintained properly. (Note: most plants listed here are very adaptable to western Oklahoma. Species marked with an asterisk * are more adapted to eastern Oklahoma.)

Trees

Acer ginnala	Ginnala maple
Betula spp.	Birch
Carya illinoinensis	Pecan
Celtis spp.	Hackberry
Cercis canadensis	Redbud
Chilopsis linearis	Desert willow
Crataegus spp.	Hawthorn
*Liquidambar styraciflua**	Sweetgum
Malus spp.	Crabapple
*Nyssa sylvatica**	Blackgum
Platanus spp.	Sycamore, Planetree
Populus spp.	Poplar, Cottonwood
Prunus americana	American wild plum
*Prunus serotina**	Black cherry
Quercus spp.	Oak
Salix spp.	Willow
Syringa vulgaris	Common lilac

Shrubs and Vines

Amorpha fruiticosa	False indigo
Callicarpa spp.	Beautyberry
Cornus stolonifera	Red osier dogwood
Cotoneaster spp.	Cotoneaster
Euonymus alatus	Burning bush
Hedera helix	English Ivy
Lagerstroemia spp.	Crapemyrtle
Lonicera spp.	Honeysuckle
Mahonia aquifolium	Oregon grape holly
Mahonia repens	Creeping grape holly

Opuntia spp.	Prickly pear cactus
Physocarpus	Ninebark
Potentilla fruticosa	Shrubby cinquefoil
Pyracantha spp.	Firethorn
Rhamnus spp.	Buckthorn
Rhus spp.	Sumac
Ribes aureum	Golden currant
Rosa rugosa	Rugosa rose
Viburnum spp.	Viburnum
Vinca spp.	Periwinkle
Yucca spp.	Yucca

Flowers and Ground Covers

Achillea spp.	Yarrow
Aconitum spp.	Monkshood
Ajuga reptans	Bugleweed
Alchemilla sp.	Lady's mantle
Allium	Ornamental onions
Anemone patens	Pasque flower
Antennaria rosea	Pink pussytoes
Aquilegia spp.	Columbine
Artemisia spp.	Various names
Aurinia sp.	Basket of gold
Centranthus ruber	Jupiter's beard
Convallaria majalis	Lily of the Valley
Coreopsis spp.	Coreopsis, Tickseed
Delosperma spp.	Hardy iceplant
Delphinium spp.	Delphinium
Dianthus spp.	Pinks
Echinacea purpurea	Purple coneflower
Gaillardia spp.	Blanket flower
Geranium spp.	Hardy geraniums
Helianthus maximiliani	Maximilian sunflower
Hemerocallis spp.	Daylily
Heuchera spp.	Coral bells
Iberis sempervirens	Evergreen Candytuft
Iris spp.	Iris
Kniphofia spp.	Red-hot poker
Lamium sp.	Deadnettle
Lavandula spp.	Lavender
Leucanthemum X *superbum*	Shasta daisy
Linum lewisii	Blue flax
Liriope spicata	Lily-turf
Monarda fistulosa	Bergamot
Oenothera spp.	Evening primrose
Papaver spp.	Poppy
Parthenocissus quinquefolia	Virginia creeper

Penstemon spp.	Penstemon, Beardtongue
Perovskia atriplicifolia	Russian sage
Phlox subulata	Moss phlox
Polemonium foliosissimum	Jacob's ladder
Ratibida columnifera	Prairie coneflower
Rudbeckia hirta	Black-eyed Susan
Salvia spp.	Sage
Saxifraga spp.	Saxifrage
Scutellaria drummondii	Scullcap
Sedum spp.	Stonecrop
Sempervivum spp.	Hen and chicks
Thymus spp.	Thyme
Zinnia grandiflora	Rocky Mountain zinnia

Starting with a Soil Test

David Hillock, Consumer Horticulturist

The soil test provides a starting place for a soil improvement program for the home gardener. Unless you know the problems in your garden soil, you are only guessing when you apply fertilizer. Check with your County Extension Director or horticultural specialist at the county Extension office for soil testing information. The Extension office is generally located in the county courthouse and the phone number is listed with other county offices.

Use a soil probe, spade or shovel to sample the soil profile to a depth of 8 to 12 inches. It is important to obtain a representative sample of the soil in the root zone rather than only the surface soil.

It is generally advisable to take several samples (at least 10) around your garden area, and then mix these thoroughly in a clean bucket or pail. This gives a representative sample of the entire garden area.

From the bucket or pail, select about a pint of soil. Special soil sample containers are available from your county Extension office or fertilizer supplier. You may also use a clean milk carton, ice cream container or similar package. Make sure the container is clean and labeled with your name, address and information on the garden crops to be grown. If you send more than one sample, be sure to clearly label each.

If you suspect a particular area in your garden is extremely different than the rest, or if you have a problem area, include that area as a separate sample. Be sure to label the sample as such.

Your County Extension Director will send the sample to the Oklahoma State University soil testing laboratory. Recommendations will be made on the amounts of fertilizer to use on your garden area.

Dividing Perennials

David Hillock, Consumer Horticulturist

Perennials need dividing when their vigor is beginning to decline as expressed by smaller flowers, floppy stems, dead centers of the clump, a large number of underdeveloped shoots or when the lower foliage is sparse and poor. March is a good time to divide perennials that bloom in summer or fall; it is best to wait until late summer/fall to divide perennials that bloom in the spring. To divide crowded perennials gently dig them up, separate or divide the crowns making sure to include at least three to five healthy shoots. Discard small, weak, damaged or diseased portions; replant only the largest and healthiest divisions.

Pollination Needs of Fruits and Nuts in Oklahoma

David Hillock, Consumer Horticulturist

Apples, apricots, blackberries, cherries, figs, grapes, muscadines, peaches, pears, persimmons, plums, strawberries, pecans and walnuts are found growing in many areas of Oklahoma.

Fruit set must be secured before a crop can be produced. Many factors influence pollination: general health and nutrition, insects and diseases, late frost or winter injury and too much rain at blossoming time. The chief cause, however, in most instances is that of poor pollination. The flavor or color of fruit is not affected by cross-pollination.

Fruits do not cross-pollinate outside of their own species. For example, stone fruits (peaches, plums, apples and apricots) do not pollinate one another.

Most fruits are insect pollinated. Two or more varieties of each kind of fruit should be used in all fruit plantings unless it is positively known that the variety is self-fruitful. Following is a brief discussion of selecting varieties to improve fruit set. (For more information on fruit pollination and growing see fact sheets: F-6229 *Pollination Requirements for Fruits and Nuts*, F-6222 Ho*me Fruit Planting Guide* or contact your local County Extension Office.)

Apple - Most apple varieties require cross-pollination. Those not requiring it usually produce more and better fruit when crossing occurs.

Brambles - Most of the bramble fruits produced in Oklahoma are considered self-fruitful. The recommended varieties are self-fruitful. The Dallas variety of blackberries requires cross-pollination.

Apricots - Apricots are generally considered self-fruitful.

Cherries - Sour cherries are self-fruitful. It is better to have two varieties (Early Richmond and Montmorency). Sweet cherries are self-unfruitful.

Figs - Figs generally need cross-pollination.

Grapes - Grapes are mostly wind-pollinized. Most of the varieties are self-fruitful and cross-compatible. Most varieties of muscadines are self-sterile. Pollen is carried by the wind from the

male plant to the female plant. About one-fourth of the planting should be made up of male vines. Where only a few vines are planted, the male vines may be located nearby on the fence row or edge of the field.

Peaches - Most varieties of peaches are considered self-fruitful. The exception is J.H. Hale. It produces abortive pollen but can be pollinated by almost any variety.

Pears - Most varieties of pears are partly self-fruitful. Usually, two or more varieties will result in a better pear crop. Bartlett and Seckel are cross-incompatible. Bartlett and Kieffer are considered cross-incompatible. Garber is a good pollinizer for Kieffer.

Pecan - Pecan trees are monoecious (having both male and female flowers on the same tree). The male flowers are three-branched catkins produced on last year's wood. The pollen is carried by the wind to the female flowers, borne in clusters on the current season's growth. Most varieties are considered self-fruitful; however, better production is obtained when more than one variety is planted. Wet weather during the pollination period may reduce dissemination of pollen. A good plan is to leave a few native pecan trees in the vicinity of the pecan grove to furnish additional pollen. Some native trees bear their pollen early and some late. Pollination is usually completed most years during the last days of May.

Walnuts - No pollination difficulties have been experienced in Oklahoma among the native or improved varieties of walnuts. The male and female flowers of the walnut occur in a similar manner as found in pecans. Two or more varieties of walnuts are recommended for a planting. (Some difficulty may be experienced with the Carpathian varieties.) Some of the young trees produce female flowers for two or three years before they develop catkins to furnish the pollen.

Persimmon - Japanese or Kaki persimmon (also referred to as Oriental) is dioecious. Some plants produce male (staminate) flowers and some produce female (pistillate) flowers. Some produce both and are self-fruitful. Some persimmons bear male flowers only when the tree is young, later change to the production of female flowers only, and in some cases, produce both male and female flowers. The persimmon tree is usually a male or female. American and Japanese trees are not inter-fruitful.

Plum - Most of the Japanese plum varieties are self-unfruitful, though some varieties are considered self-fruitful and cross-compatible. It is a good plan, however, to plant two or more varieties.

Strawberries - The recommended varieties of strawberries are self-fruitful. Pollination problems, however, do occur in some of the everbearing varieties, but in most cases it is the result of high temperatures.

Selected Sources for Small Fruit Crops

Eric T. Stafne, Fruit & Nut Crops Specialist

Listed below are some possible resources for blackberries blueberries, and grapes. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive, exclusive of other potential sources, nor an endorsement of any

of the plant material providers. The intent here is to give county educators a fast source-list of nurseries that carry small fruits.

Blackberry:

Arkansas Berry & Plant Farm
10340 Turner Bend Drive
Mulberry, AR 72947
479- 997-1480
berryplants@aol.com

Boston Mountain Nursery
20189 N. Highway 71
Mountainburg, AR 72946
479-369-2007

Brambleberry Nursery
PO Box 327
Winslow, AR 72759
479-369-2189

Cox Berry Farm
1081 Highway 818
Clarksville, AR 72830
479-754-3707

Creekside Berry Farm
30 Soda Creek Road
Buffalo, MO 65622
417-345-1745

D and D Nursery
420 Rickey Drive
Shreveport, LA 71106
318-687-4257

Enoch's Berry Farm
1662 MC 40
Fouke, AR 71837
870-772-2806
plants@berryfarm.com

Grayson Farms/Nursery
PO Box 699
Bald Knob, AR 72010
501-724-5549

Indiana Berry & Plant Co.
5218 W. 500 South
Huntingburg, IN 47542
812-683-3055
berryinfo@inberry.com

Nourse Farms Inc
41 River Road
South Deerfield, MA 01373
413-665-2658

Pense Nursery, Inc.
2318 Hwy 71 N.E.
Mountainburg, AR 72946
501-369-2494
www.alcasoft.com/pense

Sargent Farms
PO Box 228
Prairie Grove, AR 72753
800-321-5671
214-649-0188

Simmons Plant Farm
11542 N. Highway 71
Mountainburg, AR 72946
479-369-2345

Stark Brothers Nursery
PO Box 1800
Louisiana, MO 63353
800-478-2759
www.starkbros.com

Twin Creeks Nursery
PO Box 287
Mountainburg, AR 72946
479-369-4669

Womack Nursery Company
2551 Highway 6
DeLeon, TX 76444
254-893-6497

Blueberry:

Cox Berry Farm
1081 Highway 818
Clarksville, AR 72830
479-754-3707

Wells Blueberry Farm
8605 North State Highway 309
Ozark, AR 72949
jhwells@cswnet.com
479-963-8552

Stark Brothers Nursery
PO Box 1800
Louisiana, MO 63353
800-478-2759
www.starkbros.com

Simmons Plant Farm
11542 N. Highway 71
Mountainburg, AR 72946
479-369-2345

Bluebird Song Farm
5620 Chastain Rd
Mulberry, AR 72947
drldl@ipa.net

Highlander Nursery
PO Box 177
Pettigrew, AR 72752
479-677-2300

Grapes:

Arkansas Berry & Plant Farm
10340 Turner Bend Drive
Mulberry, AR 72947
479-997-1480
berryplants@aol.com

Blossomberry Nursery
2662 Highway 21
Clarksville, AR 72830
479-754-6489

Boston Mountain Nursery
20189 N. Highway 71
Mountainburg, AR 72946
479-369-2007

Double A Vineyards
10277 Christy Road
Fredonia, NY 14063
716-672-8493
www.doubleavineyards.com
vine@rakgrape.com

Lon Rombough
PO Box 365
Aurora, OR 97002
503-678-1410
lonrom@hevanet.com
www.hevanet.com/lonrom

Pense Nursery, Inc.
2318 Hwy 71 N.E.
Mountainburg, AR 72946
501-369-2494
www.alcasoft.com/pense

Saint Francois Vineyards and Nursery
1669 Pine Ridge Trail
Park Hills, MO 63601-8226
573-431-4294
www.stfrancoisvineyard.com

Stark Brothers Nursery
PO Box 1800
Louisiana, MO 63353
800-478-2759
www.starkbros.com

Timmons Farms & Nursery
PO Box 480
Tontitown, AR 72770
479-361-2293

Twin Creeks Nursery
PO Box 287
Mountainburg, AR 72946
479-369-4669

Grape Pruning Workshop

Eric T. Stafne, Fruit & Nut Crops Specialist

A grape pruning workshop led by Dr. Eric T. Stafne, in conjunction with the Oklahoma Grape Growers and Wine Makers Association will be held on Tuesday, March 7 from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Perkins Experiment Station. A one-hour educational session on pruning will be followed by a one-hour hands-on session. Bring your own pruners. There is no charge for this educational opportunity.

Master Gardener Corner

David Hillock, State Master Gardener Coordinator

2006 Oklahoma Master Gardener Continued Training Summer Conference, May 19, 2006
"*Master Gardeners – Nature's Helping Hands*" is this year's State Master Gardener Conference theme, which by the way, is shaping up to be an awesome event. The conference will be held at the Southeast Expo Center in McAlester. The McAlester area offers unique gardening experiences and due to the rich Italian heritage in the area is often referred to as "Little Italy." Speakers for the conference include keynote speaker Steve Aitken, Associate Editor of Fine Gardening Magazine. Steve's keynote address will be titled – "Container Gardening – Thrillers, Spillers and Fillers"; other topics covered include Season Extension Techniques for Home Gardeners, Controlling Moles and Gophers, Flower Arranging, Growing and Using Herbs, Growing Grapes, Color Oklahoma with Wildflowers, Xeriscape Gardening, Simple Strategies for Charming Combinations and Nature's Pollinators – Bees.

A preconference social is scheduled for Thursday evening at Chadik Park from 6 to 8 p.m. Chadik Park is the home of a unique collection of dogwoods and other plant material. Tours of the gardens will be provided along with live music from the Balcony Brass Band and lots of Italian food. Special door prizes from local businesses will also be a feature of the conference. **Hope to see you all there!** Program and registration information will be sent out in early April. For more information contact David Hillock, Master Gardener Coordinator, Oklahoma State University, Dept. of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture, 360 Ag Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078, email: hillock@okstate.edu, phone: 405-744-5158.

Southern Region Master Gardener Conference, June 8-12, 2006
In 1999 a Committee on Master Gardener and Consumer Horticulture was formed as part of Southern Region ASHS. One of the duties of this committee is to conduct a regional conference to be held on even years opposite of the International Master Gardener Conferences. The first Southern Region Master Gardener Conference was held at the University of Georgia in 2000. This year the conference will be held in Chattanooga, TN. On average we have about 400 Master Gardeners in attendance from the Southern Region which includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and the Virgin Islands.

The Master Gardeners of Tennessee cordially invite you to be their very special guests at the 2006 SRMGC. They are working very hard to make this conference an eventful one. So come

join us for an exciting and worthwhile experience. To view the schedule and register today, visit http://srmgc.tennessee.edu/.

Upcoming Horticulture Events

Turf & Nursery Field Day
May 17, 2006, OSU Botanical Garden, Stillwater

State Master Gardener Continued Training Conference
May 19, 2006, McAlester, Oklahoma

Landscape IPM Workshop
May 31, 2006, OSU, Stillwater Campus

Workshop Topic - *Quality of Mulch Makes a Difference* - Landscapers should be wary of sour smelling mulch that can result in phytotoxicity to plants. Research has shown that by-products such as formaldehyde, methanol and acetic acid can be generated in stagnant mulch piles (not properly aerated). For more information on the workshop, contact Mike Schnelle at 405-744-7361 or mike.schnelle@okstate.edu.

Oklahoma Gardening Summer Gardenfest
June 10, 2006, OSU Botanical Garden, Stillwater

Greenhouse Production Short Course
June 28-29, 2006, OSU-Oklahoma City
Contact Mike Schnelle at 405-744-7361 or mike.schnelle@okstate.edu

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu.