

WILLIAMSON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

THE PERENNIAL



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**Check out our
amazing WCMGA
website!**

OUR ROOTS

A Message from our President

Spring is finally here, in all its glorious splendor. Temps in the 70's during the day, 50's at night. Perfect for our summer crops like tomatoes, peppers, squash, and cucumbers. Meanwhile, cabbages, onions, lettuce, and spinach are putting on a grand show. The waiting was hard, but the ability to be back out in the garden is worth every day of cold, rainy weather!

Our newest intern class has finished their coursework and is moving ahead with their volunteer hours and class projects. What a dedicated bunch of people! COVID has made everything harder so kudos to all of them for getting to this point!

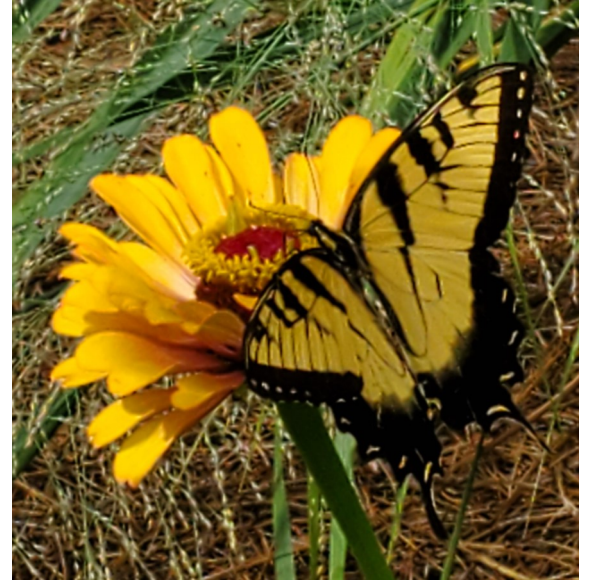
The Williamson County Fair is on the horizon and we need to get busy! Although we have several volunteers, we still need 2 project leaders.....one for the organization of our booth, the other for lining up and organizing our booth volunteers. The WCMGA needs to have a presence at the fair so please consider stepping up to help on either of these projects. I'll be there, every step of the way, but ongoing health issues prevent me from building a gazebo! We will also need lots of folks to staff the booth during the Fair.....did I mention you get free admittance?

All of our project gardens are in full swing and always needing volunteers to help out. Giving Garden has their hoop house up and is filling it with tomatoes and cucumbers. Other areas of the garden are set to receive cabbages, onions, and leafy greens. Potatoes are planted and they are praying for a ton of produce to pass out to their "clients" who desperately need the food. The Annabelle hydrangeas at Carnton House are about to burst into flower, the roses are setting buds, the annual flowers which attract so many of our pollinators are up. And so are the weeds! We need to jump in and keep the weeds under control. Urban Uprising at the Farmers Market is fully planted with lots of new and unusual herbs, pollinator plants, and even a small veggie plot. Jack Melnick is busy out at the Period Slave Garden at Carnton and, with the help of his dedicated team of volunteers, has got lots of "period" vegetables in the ground. Ron Novak has the Carter House heirloom fruit trees all pruned and ready to go. Let's all pray that the squirrels leave us a few peaches this year!

The bad news? We still can't meet at the Ag Center. Everyone is moving forward cautiously and we have to respect that. I am hoping that by November we can have our Thanksgiving dinner and intern graduation, but we'll just have to abide by the rules and recommendations at that time. But plan to come out to the picnic in June and rub elbows (no hugging!) with your fellow WCMGA gardener friends. We'll be providing the lunches so be sure to sign up!

I miss you all so much!

WCMGA President *Linda Horton*



WIN A RIBBON AT THE FAIR!



It's so easy to enter fruits and veggies in the Williamson County Fair. The entry is done online in advance. There is no cost to enter and you can submit items in as many categories as you wish. On August 5, you bring your entries to the Ag Center where friendly volunteers check-in your produce. Your part is finished! But behind-the-scenes, the work is ongoing. A panel of expert judges looks at each entry on a blind basis, meaning they can't see WHO submitted each item. By the time the Fair starts on August 6, the ribbons are proudly displayed. It is so fun to attend the Fair and look through the entries to see all the winners. First Place (BLUE RIBBON), Second Place (RED RIBBON) and Third Place (WHITE RIBBON) are awarded in each category. Did you know there is a monetary award with each ribbon? You can earn \$10 for a blue ribbon, \$8 for a red ribbon, and \$6 for a white ribbon. Checks are mailed after the Fair is over.

Here's a few tips for submitting your produce.

- Some basic rules apply; you should look at the entry form to make sure you qualify for each entry.
- PRE-REGISTRATION is required online and must be

submitted between June 15-July 25. If you submit an online entry, and then decide to NOT enter that item, no problem- just don't bring it in when you drop off your produce on August 5.

- On the day of drop-off, each entry must include the EXACT number of items specified. For example, if the entry rules specify 10 Pole Beans, make sure you have 10 to enter. You can bring extra and decide on the spot which 10 look the best, but if you have fewer than 10, your entry will be disqualified.
- If your best produce is ready a few days before the drop-off day, you can harvest and put the produce in the refrigerator to keep it fresh. There is no rule that says you have to pick the item that morning.
- If you maintain a fully organic garden, you can enter produce in the ORGANIC classes. Otherwise, your entries will go under CONVENTIONAL classes. This allows organic gardeners to compete with other organic gardeners who don't use conventional fertilizers, etc.
- Be creative- if you like to grow unusual vegetables, be aware that there is a category called "other vegetable" for anything that does not fit into an established category.



WCMGA PICNIC

Saturday, June 26, 2021

SPRING IS HERE!!!! It's time to shake off the winter doldrums and have a celebration! The Board has decided to host a spring picnic so we can begin to reconnect and enjoy this glorious weather. We will use this opportunity to hand out special badges to our "long-timers" as well as the pins.

Time: 11am – 2pm with lunch to be served around 12 noon and short meeting after that

Location: Jim Warren Park, 705 Boyd Mill Ave, Franklin

We have reserved the screened-in pavilion behind the tennis courts at Jim Warren Park in Franklin, so we can meet rain or shine and have plenty of room to still follow our COVID-19 safety protocols. Or, if you desire, bring a blanket and picnic on the lawns in small groups.

Box lunches to be provided. You may choose your preference of sandwiches when you RSVP.

Please RSVP [here](#) by Tuesday, June 22, 2021

Directions: When on Boyd Mill you will see the stone monument sign that reads Jim Warren Park, at the main entrance. You will also see a white park building with a US flag and that is the turn in, the main entrance. You follow that street until you see the tennis courts. **The screened pavilion is located behind the tennis court.**

The Williamson County Fair will happen

August 6-14, 2021 at the County Ag Center

Click [here](#) to go to the main Fair page.

Click [here](#) for more general information on the **Agriculture contests**.

Click [here](#) for the rules and categories. Scroll down to the **Horticultural division** (page 5) for detailed rules.



MINI MEETINGS

If you are interested in hosting a mini meeting, please let Holly Gardner or Linda Horton know. It will need to be in an outdoor area and include a small (very small) educational element. It can be as easy as walking through your garden and discussing what you have or how you have designed or implemented a planting, or even how the latest garden experiment failed. Or, even a garden craft idea at a local park. We are primarily trying to provide a good opportunity for us to get together, share experiences, and maybe learn a bit along the way. We all miss our fellow Master Gardeners!! Hosts will be able to count as volunteer hours. Please let Holly Gardner know if you have any questions.

(hollygardner@charter.net or 931-381-5364)

Diagnose This, Will You??

WOW ... with 2020 behind us, your Wilco DX Diagnosis Team took a few moments to reflect. Given Covid 19, our county had many many (did we say MANY) new gardeners for the year ... and all these newbies to gardening brought lots of interesting questions!! Our goal in this short article is threefold. First, we'll share some statistics from the many interesting cases we worked this year. Second, we'll highlight some of our favorite diagnosis dilemmas. And third, we'll remind our readers on how to contact us should you have diagnosis needs in the future.

Ready?? Let's go Diagnose!!

During the crazy year of 2020, your WilcoDX Team worked 412 cases. The table below summarizes the major categories of queries:

How Many	Question Category
228	Bug and thug threats
182	Plant identification and recommendations
112	Soil health insights
59	Turf tips
54	Fruit and vegetable successful growing ideas

Look at that table again ... the lockdown enabled Williamson Countians to focus on their homes, and a full 54 queries were from folks trying to figure out how to grow food!! Even more interesting, 181 queries were from folks trying to improve the landscape design of their castle ... can anyone spell privacy, please??!!

In working diagnosis cases, your Wilco DX team has thousands of archived research-based reference documents and books, plus access to the amazing repository of UT Extension publications. We'll highlight a few of our favorite cases from three areas: Vegetables, Turf & Landscape Ideas, and Thugs & Bugs. As we walk you through these cases, we will reference these publications for your access and future use.

Can you spell vegetables?? WCMG's May 2020 Perennial included a fabulous article by Kristy Bergstrom on Victory Gardens Cropping Up During the Pandemic. This was so true and the over 54 queries that came into the Wilco DX desk is evidence of the truth of this article from last May!!

Information on our Tennessee home vegetable gardening trials, the annual home vegetable calendar, and a countless array of articles going into depth on techniques for successfully growing specific vegetables is all available from this handy website. For example, one of our Wilco DX queries in August came from a gardener seeking information on where to find small plants for fall gardening. Turns out the customer was really interested in leafy fall greens, such as carrots, beets, kale, etc. Given that starter plants seemed tough to find and knowing that leafy greens are best direct seeded rather than as transplants, we coached this newbie gardener on seed sources and direct fall seed sowing. For those of you familiar with the Tennessee Home Vegetable Calendar <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W436.pdf>, you know that mid-August to early September is not too late to direct seed these leafy greens.

How about those newly improved landscapes around your neighborhoods?? Time spent at home really

motivated our county residents to improve their Turf and Landscapes!! For example, numerous callers were interested in privacy. Carol Reese, et el has an awesome article on Screen Plants for the TN Landscape: <https://www.uthort.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Screen-Plants-for-TN-Landscapes.pdf>

At the end of the year, the WilcoDX Team takes great pride in not only the volume of calls we handle but also the genuine delight and appreciation our Williamson County customers share upon being helped!! We hope this short article provides a window into the Wilco DX team’s approach to solving queries, as well as gives you access to a small sampling of our research resource treasure trove!! We hope this helps you solve your gardening challenges. In the event you have a ticklish issue with which you need more help, please send an email to wilcodxteam@gmail.com

CASE STUDY– DIAGNOSTIC TEAM

Residents new to our area, who have never experienced our fall needle drop are fraught with fear about losing their precious evergreens. Arborvitae seemed to be particularly afflicted this year. Three prevailing reasons seemed to be the recurrent themes on Arborvitae problems this year. For example, what do you observe when peeking at the picture below?? The interior browning could be the result of:

Environmental challenges:

notice how close the arborvitae are planted and how close they are to the fence line?? Arborvitae require good air flow and sun exposure on all sides. Given the shallow root system, we could also be observing challenges from last year’s drought ... remember September if 2019 where we had not a single drop of rain and temperatures higher than 90 degrees even at night??!!



Bugs: a culprit such as Spruce Spider mites or lingering effects from the troublesome but easy to control bagworms.

Normal browning: the third theory is normal fall browning and needle drop.

In the case of this customer, we coached him how to clean out the brown needles within interior of the plants to which the customer happily reported his Arborvitae “look much better”. Sadly, however, these will not be happy Arborvitae in the long term. As Taylor likes to say “Right Plant Right Place”; the poorly sited location for these Arborvitae do not bode well for the long term.

Do you follow Jefferson County Master Gardeners on Instagram?



jeffcogardener

Message



1,954 posts

3,218 followers

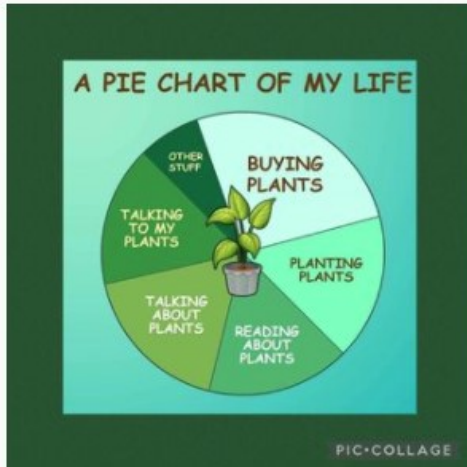
232 following

Jeffco Master Gardeners

We extend science based gardening knowledge through CSU Extension for improving & educating communities. Located in Jefferson County, Colorado, USA.
jeffcogardener.blogspot.com



Followed by benningtonbackyard, awronatherapy, sledging78 +10 more



THE BARK

MAY

- Harvest cool-season crops, and watch for pests/disease (see June).
- Seed succession plantings of common warm-season, direct seeded crops, such as beans and sweet corn. Some of the sweet corn cultivars that prefer warmer soil conditions may be best saved until this month.
- Prepare beds that will be covered in plastic prior to planting transplants. Black plastic can warm the soil and speed early growth of transplants. Make sure that irrigation is provided if plastic is used. Sometimes natural mulches, such as straw, are applied a few weeks after planting as they can reflect light and actually slow soil warming.
- Continue transplanting warm-season crops. Peppers and eggplants prefer even warmer soil conditions than tomatoes and are often planted later. Make sure that young transplants are watered in and given a starter fertilizer solution to support early growth.
- Set up your irrigation system as transplants are placed in the garden. Drip irrigation is best to maintain dry leaves and reduce disease risks.
- Set up stakes, trellises, cages and support systems for your plants. It is best to have these set up at or soon after planting.
- Don't let weeds get started in the garden — take control early with mulches and proactive management.

JUNE

- Be on the lookout for maturity in the first corn and bean plantings.
- Manage soil after cool-season crops are removed. Those areas may be a location for a summer cover crop, such as buckwheat, to prevent weed growth and add organic matter. If a warm-season crop is planted immediately after cool-season crops are removed, make sure to follow a crop rotation that moves to a different family.

- Some of the latest warm-season crops to be planted are often watermelons and pumpkins, as well as sweet potatoes.
- You can still be succession planting corn and beans.
- Make sure your irrigation system is functioning well and manage weeds.
- Scout for any issues with pests or disease at least weekly.
- If conditions support disease infection, or if you see signs of disease, a protective spray program may be needed.

JULY

- Consider succession planting of zucchini or later season tomatoes.
- Pick tomatoes, beans, corn and other warm-season crops.
- Manage irrigation as needed, but try to reduce leaf wetness and overhead watering.
- Manage fertility through proper side dressing and in-season fertilizer applications
- Manage weeds.
- Scout frequently for insect or disease issues and spray as needed.
- Select cool-season crops and cultivars for fall and make seed order.
- Some cool-season crops (Brussels sprouts, cauliflower) will likely need to be seeded in July if you are starting your own transplants.
- Pumpkins should be seeded according to maturity. A 100-day pumpkin seeded on July 1 would be estimated to mature October 11. However, it is common in our Mid-South climates for pumpkins to mature a few days earlier than listed.

2021 TENNESSEE HOME VEGETABLE GARDEN CALENDAR

The complete *UT Extension publication*
W-436 can be accessed [here](#).

Newsletter/Website Articles Wanted

Special thanks to Carol Murphy and Linda Horton for their contributions to this issue. If you have photos or stories to share, you can get volunteer hours!

Keep contributing. Keep reading. Keep sharing. Please send your contributions to: wcmgatheperennial@gmail.com.

Be on the look-out for Cicadas!

When the soil temperatures reach and maintain 64 degrees (F), the Periodical cicadas will start to emerge, especially after a soaking rain. They are harmless, though noisy. For about 4-6 weeks, they will mate, lay eggs, and then die. The offspring will burrow underground to start the 17 year cycle all over again.



THE DIRT

PROJECT LEADERS NEEDED

The Fair season is fast approaching. If the WCMGA is to have a booth at the upcoming **County Fair**, we need a project leader **RIGHT AWAY**. This committee comes together quickly and the work is finished by mid-August. We typically get many volunteers to staff the booth. But as of now, there is no one stepping forward to get the ball rolling.

If you are interested, **please contact Linda Horton ASAP.**

WCMGA Mission

The mission of the Williamson County Master Gardeners Association (WCMGA) is to provide research-based, horticultural education, while promoting environmental stewardship, via community volunteerism.

WCMGA operates under the umbrella of UTIA and the UT/TSU Williamson County Extension Office.

Contact Us

General Email: wcmgatheperennial@gmail.com

Address: 4215 Long Lane Suite 200, Franklin, TN 37064