



# Advice to Grow by... Ask Us! Master Gardener Program

University of California Cooperative Extension



Issue #38

Amador/El Dorado County Master Gardener E-News

August 2013

## What's That On My Plant?

Jackie Tarchala, Amador County Master Gardener

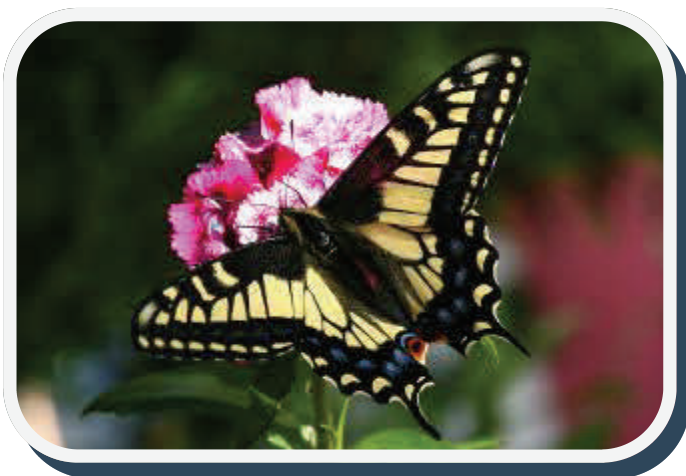
While cleaning up my summer barrels I noticed a giant caterpillar on my parsley! (Yes, I have parsley growing everywhere! I use a lot, and dry some too.) At first glance I thought it was a tomato horn worm and, DUH, there were no tomatoes! Then I remembered Jill North (Amador County Master Gardener) telling me about the Anise Swallowtail.



Black Anise Swallowtail Larva

Parsley is one of the Swallowtail's main foods. It enjoys all members of the carrot family including fennel, dill and rue (*Ruta graveolens*, a little known herb). The caterpillars are green with black, white stripes and orange dots.

The Swallowtails gorge on my parsley before they turn into chrysalis. I always have extra for them...we share.



Black Anise Swallowtail Adult  
Photo by Gene Pearson

The Anise Swallowtail is usually seen between April and July from British Columbia to Baja. It is black on the top and bottom with large yellow strips on the top of the wings. Bright blue dots are on the rear of the wings but are hard to distinguish from a distance. This caterpillar gets a bright orange "bump" on the back of its neck when disturbed.

Parsley. Plant it and they will come!

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### Contact Your Local Master Gardener

**Amador County**  
209-223-6838

Office hours: 10 am—Noon  
Tuesday—Thursday  
[mgamador@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mgamador@ucdavis.edu)

**El Dorado County**  
530-621-5512

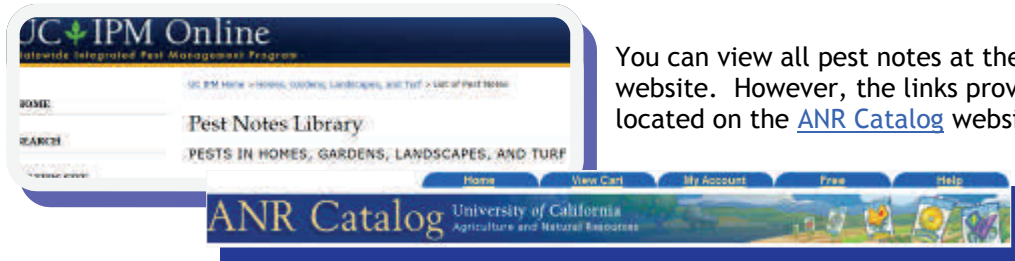
Office hours: 9 am—Noon  
Tuesday—Friday  
[mgeldorado@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mgeldorado@ucdavis.edu)



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## Updated Pest Notes

The UC Integrated Pest Management (IPM) website has several new and updated pest notes to help you tackle a variety of issues in your garden and home. You can view them online or download a PDF for further study. Each pest note includes at least the following sections: Identification, Life Cycle, Damage, and Management.



You can view all pest notes at the [IPM Pest Note](#) website. However, the links provided below are located on the [ANR Catalog](#) website.

[Aphids](#)



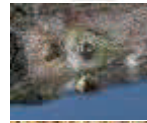
[Horsehair Worms](#)



[Bed Bugs](#)



[Oak Pit Scales](#)



[Clothes Moths](#)



[Pantry Pests](#)



[Grasshoppers](#)



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## What's In A Name?

*Val Whitmyre, Napa County Master Gardener*



If you can tackle “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious,” a catchy tune from Disney’s Mary Poppins, it should be a piece of cake to learn scientific plant names. I hear a few gardening friends groaning.

I hear my mother reminding me to sound out long, tricky words syllable by syllable. Just sound them out.

Sometimes easier said than done, but there is good reason for having scientific names. First, common names can misguide us. A bluebonnet in Texas is a lupine in California, and a jasmine in California is a pikake in Hawaii. Common names may work fine locally, but try to explain a local flower to gardeners in other parts of the world.

Also, when we have a sick plant in our garden, we have to know its correct

*Continued, Page 3*

## What's In A Name? *Continued from Page 2*

name before we can solve its dilemma. This is why gardeners look to scientific or botanical names. Botanical names are the same the world around and their meanings convey information we need to choose the right plants for our gardens.

During the 1700s, plant explorers collected many largely unknown plants from around the world, a quest that continues today. Carl Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist of that era, spent his life categorizing and naming plants. Using Latin, a universal language of the time, he developed the binomial naming system. This method gives every plant two names, the **genus** (generic name) and the specific epithet (**species**). The species name is often descriptive of the genus. He grouped these names into families of related plants. Just as we recognize similarities in our own families, like blue eyes or curly hair, Linnaeus used plant similarities and origins to classify his findings.

Before Linnaeus's system, a single plant might be saddled with many long Latin names that only a few interested scientists understood. The binomial system may seem daunting at first because many plant names are long tongue-twisters, but the information provided makes it worth mastering the code. Pronouncing the Latin name correctly is important if you are describing a plant to someone else. If you pronounce the name incorrectly, you are conveying wrong information. The 2013 edition of Sunset's *Western Garden Book* offers four pages on plant pronunciation and why we use botanical names. The "New Pronouncing Dictionary of Plant Names" (American Nurseryman Publishing Company) is a useful pamphlet that fits neatly in a pocket. The binomial system groups plants into categories, from least specific (the family) to most specific (the variety).

**Family** is the large umbrella group. Family names are capitalized and end in *aceae*, such as *Rosaceae*, the family that includes roses.

**Genus** is the first word in a botanical name, and it is always capitalized. With *Nandina domestica* (heavenly bamboo), for example, *Nandina* is the genus.

The **species** is the second word in a botanical name. It often describes a plant characteristic such as color, size, shape, scent or origin. It is not capitalized. With this knowledge, you can deduce that *Helleborus foetidus* has a less than captivating scent.

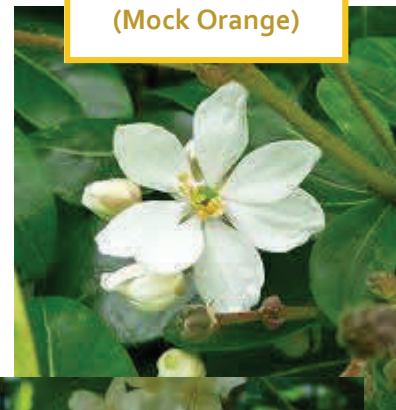
**Variety** names are often descriptive, such as 'Altissimo' (tall), or they may indicate an officially registered, cultivated and named plant known as a cultivar ('Bowles Mauve'). Varieties are enclosed by single quote marks.

Some species include many different varieties. If you want to buy a rosemary plant for cooking, look for *Rosmarinus officinalis*. *Rosmarinus* is the genus; *Rosmarinus officinalis* (meaning medicinal) is the species. You may find several named varieties at the nursery, such as 'Tuscan Blue,' 'Spice Islands' and 'Blue Spires.' Each one is slightly different, but all of them can be used in the kitchen.

Common names can be misleading, which is why we rely on Latin botanical names. For example, the fragrant star jasmine isn't really a jasmine. Its botanical name is *Trachelospermum jasminoides* (meaning jasmine-like), and it is in the *Oleaceae* (olive) family. The common name for *Choisya ternata*, an evergreen shrub, is Mexican orange, but some call it mock orange. *Philadelphus*, a deciduous shrub in the *Hydrangea* family, is also commonly known as mock orange. Both shrubs have fragrant white blossoms. There is much more to learn about plant names, but understanding the binomial system is a good start.

Oh dear, my dog, Sofie, is eating my *Philadelphus coronarius*. She has good taste.

**Choisya Ternata  
(Mock Orange)**



**Philadelphus Coronarius  
(Mock Orange)**



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## Overnight Brown Tomato

Tomatoes go through a variety of colors while ripening, but when a green tomato turns brown overnight, something's wrong.

This tomato turned brown because of double streak virus, a tobacco mosaic virus strain (ToMV), which happens when the virus mixes with potato virus X (PVX). Brown streaks occur along the petioles and stems, and small brown areas will appear on fruit. (Or in this case, many brown areas!)

Tobacco Mosaic Virus and Potato Virus X are individually easily transmitted by aphids and people working around their plants. However, for double streak virus to occur both viruses must be present in the same plant.

If young plants already infected with ToMV become infected with PVX, double streak occurs. Severity of symptoms are affected by virus strains, plant age and day length.

The use of ToMV resistant varieties in combination with the cultural practices of removing infected plants and avoiding handling of potatoes prior to working with tomatoes will reduce losses from this disease. Also, not planting in fields that were planted with potatoes the previous season and sterilizing tools after handling infected plants will reduce disease incidence.



*Tomato Subject to ToMV ad PVX Viruses*



*Potato Aphid Adults and Nymphs*

Sterilize tools by soaking them for 10 minutes in 10% Clorox solution. Do not rinse. Disinfest equipment, tools, work tables, and hands regularly while pulling, pruning, trellising, and harvesting plants.

In areas where tomatoes and potatoes are grown in close proximity, make sure to be vigilant about controlling aphids. Hose them off and keep ants away. The UC Davis IPM Aphid Pest Note has more information on aphid control. It can be found at:

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7404.html>

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## Goat Grazing For Weed Control



Every once in a while someone comes into or calls the Master Gardener offices asking for information on hiring goats to purge a field of weeds. Here's a website that lists various goat owners who hire out their herds:

<http://livestockforlandscapes.com/network.htm>

If you or someone you know has goats available to hire as a non-chemical solution to weed removal, please contact the website owner.

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## Bordered Plant Bug



*Largus Succinctus*  
Bordered Plant Bug

Master Gardener offices have been getting a lot of inquiries recently about the bordered plant bug (*Largus succinctus* or *Largus sp.*). The adult is pretty easy to identify, but the immature nymphs can sometimes be a bit more difficult as they don't look anything like the adults. The nymphs lack fully developed wings and are metallic blue/black with an orange, warning triangle at their center.

They feed using piercing-sucking mouthparts. Their food consists entirely of liquid extracted from plant tissues. Their feeding is concentrated on the most nutritious parts of plants such as flowers and fruit - the things you don't want them to touch! In most cases no control is needed as the insects often move on late in the summer and don't cause significant harm to ornamentals.

In the garden the insects can cause damage to developing fruits by scarring developing fruits. In this case, hand removal is easy by knocking insects into a mason jar, vacuuming them up using a Shop Vac or stepping on them. No chemical control is recommended.

For more about bordered plant bugs, read the following pest note on box elder bugs. Although not the same insect, they are similar and the biology and control are similar:

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74114.html>

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## Blooming African Violet

*Anonymous Gardener*

My sister gave me an African Violet pot a few years ago and I've managed to keep a plant alive in it for several years now. *(I have a tendency to overwater and kill houseplants. I know better, but ....)*

A few months ago, El Dorado County Master Gardener Sarah Preiss-Farzanegan wrote an [article](#) for our local newspaper about how to properly care for African Violets. It explained why the pot worked - it kept the plant out of the basin of water while keeping the area humid.

Sarah wrote: "African violets flourish in a tropical environment. So in your home, you need to keep them watered (a weekly watering schedule works best) and surround them with humidity.

To create a cozy humid climate around the pot, set the pot in a dish of stones and water; the water should not be accessible to the plant's roots."

El Dorado County Master Gardener Heidi Napier gave me another tip - if there's natural light available, put the plants in the bathroom where they will enjoy the moisture from steamy showers.

I put my plant next to the bathroom window to get filtered light, followed Sarah's watering advice, and for the first time ever, I've had an African Violet bloom. The advice worked!



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## What's Happening At The Master Gardener Office Gardens?

### El Dorado:

Joan Jenkins, El Dorado County Master Gardener

Spring came and went in the garden in Placerville. The clematis bloomed big, bright purple flowers and the volunteer Shasta daisy's white flowers are an unexpected bonus. However, along with spring came the mole everyone thought had magically vanished. New tunnels appeared and many of the violas shriveled up and died when they should have been blooming like crazy. Then one Friday, Max, my golden retriever, and I were the sole volunteers in the MG office. Being a nice spring day, Max told me he was going to sit on the porch and nap while I figured out what was eating a caller's hydrangea. When Becky, UCCE staff, returned from an appointment, she asked me in a rather strange tone of voice, "Do you know what Max is doing?" I sprung up from my seat and looked outside. There he was, sitting sphinx style on the shady sidewalk with the offending mole in his mouth! Max had dug up the mole's newest tunnel and "ferreted" him out. Natural pest control!



Max, Mole Hunter Extraordinaire

### Amador:

Jackie Tarchala, Amador County Master Gardener



Amador County Master Gardener Office Garden

Even without much attention our garden is looking good! However, like most gardens it still needs a little attention from time to time. Our Eastern Redbud is growing vigorously. It could use some limbing up and thinning; the limbing up to give it a nice head and to give the Ceanothus some more sun, and the thinning to keep it from being too top heavy.

News on the *Buddleia* 'Buzz Lavender'. It's been a great performer, better than I expected! All info told me they would only get 4' tall. Last year I only thinned them. This year I cut all of them to the ground in the winter except the one on the right. I left it as it was still blooming and wanted some color since the others would take time to re-grow. Now it is time to either head back or cut the big one to the ground so we can maintain its size.

The *Sedum* 'Angelina' is doing just great! It has been blooming quite a long time and will need its stems trimmed soon. Broken pieces have rooted and taken off. The foliage color is so nice. The garden grass, *Pennisetum* 'Oriental' is looking wonderful. They are getting quite large and can now be divided but we will have to wait until they are dormant in winter. The *Rosemarinus* (rosemary) is out of control! It's at least 2 feet higher than the wall. We need to cut it way back and let it re-grow....any one need rosemary? The *Ceanothus* has spread quite a lot and is nice and low to the ground. With the limbing of the Redbud tree we should get lots of blooms next spring. The *Chrysanthemum Hosmariense* bloomed vigorously during the cool spring. It will stay green (gray) all summer. I love that plant! The *Sempervivum* are ready to be divided and spread around. We lost the Blue Oat Grass to too much moisture earlier in the year.

There are only a few weeds to pull, about 10 minutes worth. I've added a nice layer of mulch to top off the garden. It holds the moisture and keeps the weeds down. Most of the plants are established enough that we no longer need the irrigation system.

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## Liquid Fence And Bees: Safe Combination?

A client asked the El Dorado County Master Gardeners if Liquid Fence, a deer repellent, was toxic to bees, and, if not, would it repel bees, reducing pollination activity.

We didn't find any research on the issue, so we went to the expert, Dr. Eric Mussen, UCCE Apiculturist. According to the product's website, the repellent odor of Liquid Fence is a combination of eggs and garlic. It didn't say how fresh an egg, but honey bees will forage on some flowers right after a pest control application of sulfur dust. Eggs were a component of an "it-didn't-work-very-well" pollen substitute from long ago. The bees ate some, but it didn't produce much brood. So the egg smell shouldn't bother them.

Garlic can't be very repellent to honey bees, either, since many people use garlic juice to kill tracheal and Varroa mites in their hives.

If there was a "reward" associated with the odor (sugar syrup, etc.) the bees would use the odor as a cue for finding the reward, regardless of how stinky it is. Honey bees feed on ivy blossoms, which smell like putrefied-meat.

Based on this information, Dr. Mussen saw no reason to believe that it would repel bees.



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## Annual Tomato Tasting Contest - August 31st



If you are like most gardeners, tomatoes are number one in your heart.

Most of us eagerly anticipate the first delicious fruit of the season. We are all looking for the perfect tomato.

Saturday, August 31st is your chance to put your tomatoes to the ultimate test! Amador County Master Gardeners host a tomato judging and tasting contest at the Sutter Creek Farmers Market.

Bring at least one washed tomato of each variety (at least five cherry tomatoes) to the Sutter Creek Farmers Market by 9:30 am on Saturday, August 31st. The judges will announce their favorites at 10:30 am. The largest tomato will receive a special award.

Join us for the public tasting and you will have the joy of tasting all kinds of tomatoes, from tiny grape-size tomatoes to giants the size of grapefruits.

See a variety of colors, including yellow, orange, pink, tiger striped, and of course, ruby red. We are sure to have a tomato you've never tasted before which may become your new favorite to plant in your garden next year.

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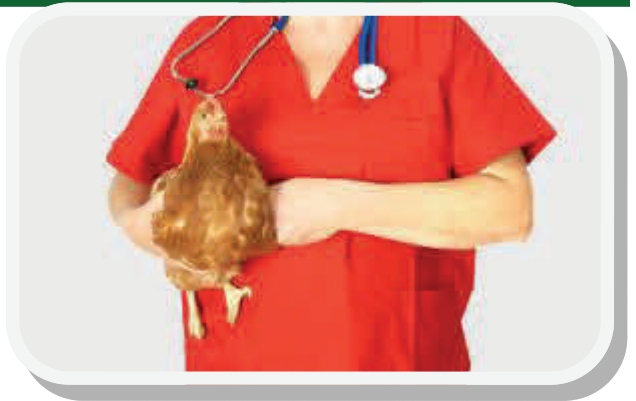
## Got Sick Chickens?

*Heidi Napier, El Dorado County Master Gardener*

For those of us with backyard chickens, illness in the birds can be worrisome and challenging, and not many veterinarians have expertise in poultry medicine.

If you have a sick chicken or if one of your chickens dies, help is available at the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory. The nearest lab is on the UCD campus. They will necropsy and test any poultry from a backyard flock at no charge because they want to monitor contagious poultry diseases. The necropsy includes tests for common diseases such as Salmonella and Avian Influenza.

If one of your chickens dies or is euthanized for any undiagnosed reason, see this website: <http://www.cahfs.ucdavis.edu/> or call 530-752-8700. The lab is open Monday-Friday, 8-5. Put the carcass in a plastic bag and chill it immediately, but **don't freeze it**. Put it in an ice chest with ice packs to keep the carcass as cold as possible, and take it to the lab in Davis. You will get the results of testing in about two weeks. \*



## Caring For Home Grown Eggs

*Heidi Napier, El Dorado County Master Gardener*

In my wanderings around the internet, I came upon useful information on the care and cleaning of eggs. I condensed this from several university extension websites.

Poultry may carry bacteria that cause no illness to the birds, but may cause serious illness to humans. These include Salmonella and Campylobacter, and they are especially dangerous to the very young, the elderly, pregnant women and anyone who is immune compromised.

- Keep nest boxes clean and free of droppings. Bedding helps prevent egg breakage. (I pad my nest boxes with fleece fabric, and that has stopped breakage.)
- Collect eggs at least twice daily; the longer an egg sits in the nest box, the higher the chance of breakage, soiling and quality deterioration.
- Wash eggs immediately after collection. Discard cracked eggs, since bacteria have probably entered the egg. Refrigerate only after washing, because refrigerating a dirty egg may pull surface bacteria into the egg as it cools and the contents contract.
- **Egg shells are porous**, so they should not soak in water because they will absorb bacteria. Use hot water, at least 20 degrees hotter than the egg and a detergent that is free of dye and fragrance. The hot water prevents the egg contents from contracting and forming a vacuum that pulls bacteria through the shell. One website recommends water hot enough to require rubber gloves.
- If you wish to disinfect the eggs, they may be immersed in a solution of one tablespoon chlorine bleach and one gallon of water.



*Continued, Page 9*



### Caring For Home Grown Eggs, Continued from Page 8

- Dry eggs and refrigerate IMMEDIATELY after washing. An egg left at room temperature may drop one grade a day.
- Store eggs in the coldest part of the refrigerator, not the door, which is relatively warm. Store them with the broader end (the end with the air sac) up.
- Properly cleaned and refrigerated eggs should maintain quality for 3 weeks.



Now, can someone tell me why all 6 of my hens insist on using the same nest box? I have seen 2 or 3 hens piled in the same box, even though there is an empty box to use!!

\*

## Oaks of the Central Sierra: Care & Preservation

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

**LEARN ABOUT:**

- Oak Ecology
- Landscape Values
- Landscaping Practices
- Why Oaks Need “Protection”

**Thursday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.**  
Veterans Memorial Bldg  
130 Placerville Drive, Placerville

**Saturday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. – noon**  
UC Cooperative Extension Office  
12200B Airport Road, Jackson

**Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.**  
Tuolumne County Ambulance Bldg  
18440 Striker Court, Sonora



*Oaks support over 300 species of animals and more species of butterflies and moths than any other plant!*



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Agriculture and Natural Resources

Presented by UCCE Central Sierra  
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For more information visit  
<http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu> or 209-533-6993

Making a Difference  
for California



## Public Education Classes & Events for Amador and El Dorado Counties – Free!!



Most classes are from 9 a.m. – Noon.

Please call ahead to confirm locations.

Click on the class title to go to our public website and schedule an email reminder for the class.

### Amador County

Unless otherwise noted, location for all Amador classes: GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road, Jackson.

#### August

##### 17: [Growing Great Vegetables, Part 3](#)

Vegetable gardens aren't just a spring/summer project – they are a year around adventure! Emily Beals, Master Gardener and organic farmer in Mt. Aukum will present information to help get your fall vegetable garden growing, discuss crop rotation and cover crops, and more. Master Gardener Penny Smith will explain standard and worm composting techniques as well as mulching. At the end of the class, the Master Gardeners will raffle off a bag of composting worms.

If you've never had a fall garden and kept it alive through the winter, or if you're looking for ways to improve your fall garden, this class is for you.

##### 24: UCCE Workshop

###### [Oaks of The Central Sierra: Care and Preservation](#)

10 a.m.–Noon

- Learn Why Oaks Are Important
- Understand Why Oaks Need “Protection”
- Gain Knowledge about What You Can Do

### Tuolumne County

Location: Tuolumne County Ambulance Building, 18440 Striker Court, Sonora

#### August

##### 29: UCCE Workshop

###### [Oaks of The Central Sierra: Care and Preservation](#)

7 p.m.–9 p.m.

Location: Tuolumne County Ambulance Bldg., Sonora

- Learn Why Oaks Are Important
- Understand Why Oaks Need “Protection”
- Gain Knowledge about What You Can Do

### El Dorado County

Unless otherwise noted, all El Dorado County classes are at the Veterans Memorial Building, 130 Placerville Drive, Placerville. Questions? Call 503-621-5512.

#### August

##### 3: Fall & Winter Vegetables

Would you like to continue to harvest luscious, home-grown vegetables even after the heat of summer subsides? If so, now is the time to plant for a Fall and Winter harvest. Learn how to grow a successful winter vegetable garden from Master Gardener Zack Dowell.

##### 10: [Container Gardening](#)

Do you want to add a splash of color around your front door? Are there times that your perennial beds lack color and bloom? Container gardening is a great way to add new elements of interest and beauty to your garden. MG Julianne Melchor will help you create a container garden that suits your needs.

##### 15: UCCE Workshop

###### [Oaks of The Central Sierra: Care and Preservation](#)

6 p.m.–8 p.m.

- Learn Why Oaks Are Important
- Understand Why Oaks Need “Protection”
- Gain Knowledge about What You Can Do

##### 24: [Raised Bed Gardening](#)

Do you have soil that is impossible to grow anything in because of its clay or rock content? Do you have physical constraints that make traditional gardening difficult? If so, this is the class for you. MG Eve Keener will explain the benefits of raised bed gardening, how to build the beds, what materials to use and how to maintain them for long term bounty.

**Save the Date: September 28, Fall Plant Sale**

Check out the [El Dorado County Master Gardener Facebook page](#).



## Master Food Preservers Classes In August

### Amador/Calaveras County

10:00 a.m. - Noon

- **Saturday, August 24: Tomatoes 4 Ways**  
*Location: Calaveras County MG Demo Garden, 891 Mountain Ranch Road, San Andreas*
- **Saturday, September 7: Tomatoes 4 Ways**  
*Location: Amador County GSA Bldg., 12200-B Airport Road, Jackson*

Both classes are free and no reservations are required. Call 209-223-6857 for more information. [Download the current Amador MFP class schedule.](#)

### El Dorado County

10:00 a.m. - Noon. *Location: El Dorado County Fairgrounds (Board Room)*

- **Saturday, August 3 & **Tuesday, August 6 - Tomatoes, Basic & Fancy****
- **Saturday, August 10 & **Tuesday, August 13 - Pressure Canning****
- **Saturday, August 17 & **Tuesday, August 20 - Dehydrating & Freezing****
- **Saturday, August 24 & **Tuesday, August 27 - Cheese Making****

[Download the full El Dorado MFP class schedule.](#)



### Pest Notes

Free Pest Notes are available on a variety of topics. For more information, call or email your local Master Gardener office.



To explore the Pest Notes on the UC Integrated Pest Management (IPM) website, go to <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu>.

Amador & El Dorado Counties Master Gardener Newsletter  
 Editor: Sue Mosbacher  
 Layout Editor: Kim Cohen

*Not on our e-newsletter distribution list yet? Know someone who would like to receive our newsletters and notifications on classes and events? Sign up online at <http://ucanr.org/mgenews>.*

### Get Answers to Your Gardening Questions Online

[http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/Master\\_Gardeners](http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/Master_Gardeners)

- Information about Master Gardeners and even how to become one
- List of public classes
- Calendar of Master Gardener events
- Useful links to gardening websites
- Home gardening publications

**Got a specific question? Just email us!**  
 Amador: [mgamador@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mgamador@ucdavis.edu)  
 El Dorado: [mgeldorado@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mgeldorado@ucdavis.edu)



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