



University of California Cooperative Extension

Master Gardener Program of Riverside County

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Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us!

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UC Master Gardener Program Mission Statement

"To extend research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices to the residents of California and be guided by our core values and strategic initiatives."

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Are You Leaf Peeping in CA?



Lake Cuyamaca in Julian, CA

Garden Views is published bi-monthly by
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UC Master Gardener Riverside County (MGRC) Organization Development (OD) Project Meeting Synopsis

Contributed by Rita Clemens, Area County Director San Bernardino, Riverside and Orange Counties

Please review the following description of the new Master Gardener Riverside County (MGRC) Organization Development (OD) Project that kicked-off on Tuesday, September 24. This is a high-level summary of what you can expect. The recorded presentation and PowerPoint deck were emailed last Friday, September 27, 2024, and can be found on VMS. We plan to regularly keep you informed about how the project is going as it progresses.

How Will the Project Work?

The overall Organization Development (OD) Project involves three major steps: (1) the design of a new organization structure to better meet the needs of the MGRC, (2) planning how to implement the redesigned organization, and (3) implementing the plan.

To initiate the reorganization project, our first task is to identify up to nine (9) MGRC members to serve on an Organization Development (OD) Project Team - Step One. They will be working with OD consultant Robin Russell. We intend to select team members that represent all larger Riverside County population centers.

At the end of each step, that project team will dissolve, and a new team will be selected for the next major step. (Note: There might be limited overlap in team members between steps, but that is not the intention of the selection process.)

I plan to extend an invitation in the next few weeks to all MGRC members to identify people who are interested in joining the OD Project Team.

Desired Project Team Member Experience

It is our goal to select team members with (1) experience planning or implementing changes in a division, department or a medium-to-large

group of people working together but performing different tasks, and/or (2) that have experience with defining new roles and tasks plus responsibilities for a newly created role and position.

We will consider the requests that come in from all members interested in joining the team before making the selection of team members. However, while we deeply appreciate the support of all members who wish to join this project team, members with the greatest related prior experience will be given greater consideration.

Project Objectives

Collectively, the project teams have three major objectives to accomplish the overall goals of the reorganization project:

- Provide all members with regular access to in-person MGRC support and member focused activities/events wherever they live in the County
- Build MGRC membership in all County areas - which supports the Gold Miner program
- Design/revise/implement processes, procedures and systems and ensure they are followed consistently across the County

Major Project Team Tasks

To reach the project objectives we anticipate the need to accomplish the following major tasks:

- Establish Chapter areas representing all major Riverside County population centers
- Redesign the structure of the MGRC including defining new roles and responsibilities; taking the Chapter model into account
- Design an in-person administrative and project support process for MGRC members throughout the County- following the "Chapter" model

Project Timing and Length

• Timing

Step One will begin once we name the members of the Organization Development (OD) Project Team - Step One.

Please note that the tasks associated with project implementation are not expected to be completely sequential. We anticipate that different project tasks can/should be done at the same time.

• Length

We anticipate that it could take two-to-three years end-to-end to get the revised structure fully in place. For example, building membership in geographic areas where MGRC is under-represented now will take some time. BUT, this said, we also know that long before project completion the MGRC will begin reaping the benefits from initiating the project.

Project Benefits

Many organizations describe what they want to accomplish in terms of goals, objectives and purpose statements. The purpose statement for UC Master Gardeners (MG) is "to extend research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices to the residents of California". The leaders of the MG also described the MG mission and public values as including three major impact areas: sustainable landscaping, food gardening, and community well-being. All of these statements focus on long-range, strategically critical issues facing society today.

High-level statements like these are important because they attract people to join an organization with goals they support. However, there is one other equally important, but often unstated reason why people join organizations. People join groups to meet and collaborate with other people who enjoy the same things they do. Many of our members became Master Gardeners for the sheer joy of working with plants. So – if you can pursue your passion for

plants at the same time you are enjoying the company of other people, who also want to be working with plants, what's not to love? This desire for affiliation is a vitally important aspect of why people join the Master Gardeners, and we take this seriously.

The MGRC Organization Development (OD) Project will support many goals:

- Provides all members with regular access to in-person administrative/organization support
- Supports local in-person member engagement activities which increases member retention
- Supports the Gold Miner program which increases volunteer venues and attracts new members
- Creates consistent, coordinated methods of operating in each area

...and even more important to me, to Rosa and to the entire MG leadership....

.... we want each of you know absolutely that the MGRC values, appreciates, and acknowledges your contribution of time and energy, your membership, and your on-going support!

Rita Clemens



Grow Lab Plant Sale

Contributed by *Debra Corbin-Euston, UCCE Master Gardener*

Fall is in the air, and cooler weather is on the horizon, very thankfully so. Fall also brings us to our Fall Plant Sale hosted by the Grow Lab and Compost Lab of Riverside County Master Gardeners.

It takes many dedicated months of planning and planting with dozens of Master Gardener volunteers putting in many hours to accomplish this planting season and prepare for the sale. Our dedicated UC Master Gardeners of Riverside County spent a very productive day propagating a variety of plants to share with our community at our next Grow Lab Plant Sale.



We made it through some extreme triple digit heat in the Inland Empire that required twice a day watering by our Watering Team. Everyone was keeping a close eye on our little seedlings and caring for them to get through the sweltering hot days.



We look forward to our bi yearly Plant Sale days which are ONE DAY ONLY now, 9:00-3:00, each sale date. This year's sale date is **Saturday, October 12, 2024**, at the Grow Lab located at 3555 Crowell Avenue off the dirt alley between Helena and Diana Avenue. Follow the Master Gardener signs and Plant Sale Flags. You'll find us!



We have many educational and fun things for the kids to see and participate in. The Compost Lab will be giving educational presentations and demonstrations. We will have a Haunted Hut with many Halloween creatures for your viewing pleasure and ready to give a giggle to the little ones.

The Conference Crafters will be there selling some seasonal items beautifully created, ready for holiday gifts.

Come on down and bring a friend! Our six packs of herbs, vegetables and flowers are only \$3.00 each! Try finding that price anywhere else!





UC Master Gardeners Tour CR&R Environmental Services in Perris!

Contributed by Pam Elias and Margaret Parascand, UCCE Master Gardeners

Pam Elias, veteran Master Gardener, recounts on Wednesday, September 18, 2024, our UC Master Gardeners had an amazing opportunity to tour the CR&R Environmental Service facility in Perris.

We were in awe of their state-of-the-art anaerobic digestion facility that processes organic waste into renewable natural gas. This gas powers their compressed natural gas collection trucks and helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Their cutting-edge technology also produces high-quality compost for agricultural use, diverting waste from landfills, and contributing to California's recycling and sustainability goals.

We also learned about Senate Bill 1383, which was passed in 2016 and came into effect in January 2022. It mandates the reduction of organic waste sent to landfills by 75% by 2025! Non-compliance can result in penalties to governmental agencies and businesses. CR&R is tasked by law with auditing both residential and commercial waste routes.

CR&R's commitment to sustainability aligns perfectly with the UC Master Gardeners' mission of environmental responsibility and stewardship.

A big thank you to UC Master Gardener Linda Powell for organizing this excellent continuing education tour and to our knowledgeable guides and presenters, Barbara Jimenez, Senior Sustainability Manager, and Parisa Jebelli, Sustainability Coordinator. And, of course, a special thank you to CR&R for treating us to delicious coffee and pastries!

For more information on CR&R's sustainability practices:
<https://crrwasteservices.com/sustainability/>

Margaret Parascand, First Year Master Gardener, shares that she would like to express her gratitude to the CR&R staff for their exceptional hospitality and informative tour. The staff members were professional, friendly, and readily answered all of our questions. The presentation was well-organized and educational. I was impressed by CR&R's dedication to sustainable practices.

On the CR&R website it states:

"Thanks to our groundbreaking technologies and pioneering reclamation programs, we can recycle over 500,000 tons of materials each year, creating cleaner communities, reducing air and water pollution, conserving landfill space, and extending our natural resources."

Their state-of-the-art streamlined operation includes recycling green and brown waste to create a compost product. They sell this finished

product in stores such as Home Depot under the Kellogg GROMULCH Brand. Additionally, they provide the schools they serve with access to this resource for their School Gardens.



One of the highlights of the day was the bus ride around the facility with some of my favorite people. We were all impressed and excited, taking pictures and asking our fantastic tour guide, Barbara Jimenez, lots of questions. We left with a wealth of new knowledge to share with others and a strong sense of reassurance that CR&R is aligned with the part of the mission of self-sustainability shared by the UCCE Riverside Master Gardeners program.

I am really happy to be part of this amazing program!

Photo Credit: Christal Ferlisi and Pam Elias



Anaerobic Digester, Mounds of Mulch



CR&R Tour

Butterfly Corner: Great Copper, *Lycaena xanthoides*

Contributed by Ann Platzer, UCCE Master Gardener

There are 16 species of coppers, Subfamily *Lycaeninae*, in North America, and they are considered a favorite of many butterfly enthusiasts. Can you imagine that Tioga Pass, east of Yosemite national park boasts 10 species!

The Great Copper, *Lycaena xanthoides*, is the largest American copper with a wingspan of one 3/8 to one 3/4 inches. The dorsal side is a dark gray color while the ventral side is a grayish white color. Dorsally (Photo 1) the adult butterfly shows that the fore wings are mostly brownish gray with reddish orange on each hind wing border. Ventrally, (Photo 2) both males and females are pale gray with a similar pattern of numerous black dots, some of which are surrounded by a white circle. Posteriorly there is a reddish orange hind wing border. The tail is small and black tipped.



Photo 1, Adult Copper, Dorsal



Photo 2, Adult Copper, Ventral

The Great Copper's rapid and jerky flight makes this butterfly difficult to watch except when it stops to take nectar from flowers. The ventral view shows an adult sipping nectar from yerba santa). The margins of the fore and hind wings are whitish. The eyes are large and black, and the antennae are striped back and white with a black knob tipped with orange.

Their larval host plants are many docks: herb family, Polygonaceae, genus, *Rumex*, such as willow dock, *Rumex salicifolius*, curly dock, *Rumex crispus*, western dock, *Rumex occidentalis*, and California dock, *Rumex californicus*. Dock stems are green with a red base. The young true leaves are egg shaped, smooth and flat along edges, hairless, possibly red-flecked. The female lays her eggs singly on dry or dead leaves at or near the base of the

host plant. They overwinter as **eggs**. During this time the eggs are capable of surviving prolonged bouts of flooding. Habitat is chaparral, wet meadows, grasslands, marshes, grassy hillsides, and open fields.



California Dock, *Rumex californicus*, host plant

The range of this copper is throughout California but rare in the north and is only found through portions of western Oregon. In California there is only one flight each year from April to early July depending on the area: for example, adults fly early April to early June in the coastal and inland lowlands, and June-to early July at higher elevations.

Please plant California native and butterfly friendly plants in your garden to help restore a habitat for butterflies. Thanks to Edward Platzer for proofing this article.

HAPPY BUTTERFLY GARDENING
AP

West County Compost Lab Updates: Exciting Upgrades and Community Support

Contributed by Dr. Clifford Morrison, UCCE Master Gardener

Since the West County Compost Lab's inception in late 2021, we've continued to evolve to meet the needs of our volunteers and community. This past year saw significant upgrades, particularly with the addition of six custom-built compost bins. These improvements have made a major impact on our composting operations.



Figure 1 - The Compost Lab in 2022



Figure 2 - The Compost Lab in 2023



Figure 3 - The Compost Lab in 2024

for help with design and construction, First Year Master Gardener Nick Koranda stepped up as lead designer and builder. Many of our volunteers gained valuable woodworking skills during this project, making it a true learning experience for everyone involved.



New 5'x5'x5' bins

The implementation of California SB 1383, which mandates statewide organic waste collection, has sparked a surge in public interest in composting. This enthusiasm has been evident in the increased turnout for our Compost Lab Volunteer Day events. First Year Master Gardeners have been particularly active, contributing significantly to our composting efforts. At the same time, we remain deeply grateful for the continued dedication of our veteran Master Gardeners whose support is essential to our success.

Thanks to the improvements we've made to our Compost Lab, we've seen firsthand how our Master Gardeners are benefiting from our collective experience. First Year Master Gardener John Warren shared his recent success, saying, "I mixed grass clippings, hay, and food scraps, and for the first time achieved a 160°F hot compost pile!"

Veteran Master Gardener Pam Elias noted that she "learned valuable composting techniques from Dr. Clifford Morrison, including the importance of maintaining the carbon-to-nitrogen ratio [and] monitoring compost temperature...which have helped me improve soil health and promote sustainable gardening practices."

We've transitioned to larger 5'x5'x5' bins, which allow us to process more material while consistently achieving temperatures up to 160°F. When we reached out to the community

First Year Master Gardener Glenda LaCroix also writes, "Under Dr. Morrison's guidance, I gained not only a strong understanding on the art of composting but also gained the confidence to build my own compost bin at home and teach others. The camaraderie with fellow volunteers has enriched my experience by learning carpentry skills, while constructing new compost bins has been an added bonus."

Looking ahead, we're excited to expand our educational offerings with several new projects. If you'd like to contribute sign up on VMS and join us on Wednesdays or Saturdays from 8:00 am to 11:00 am at the West County Grow Lab. Everyone is welcome, regardless of experience or physical ability.



**Master Gardeners Celebrate
These New Riverside County
Recognition Awards!
August-September 2024**

2500 Hours Silver/Platinum Badge
Kim Coons-Leonard

500 Hours Watering Can Pin
**Lynn Coffman
Cathy Godfrey
Kathy Steckman**

250 Hours Gardeners' Trowel Pin
Bob Freel

100 Hours Bumble Pin
**Glenda LaCroix
Ann Moore
Audrey Rowland**

Desert Compost Lab Updates

Contributed by Dee Kongsliie, UCCE Master Gardener

Check out what Desert Compost Project is doing around the valley! Our volunteers currently serve four community composting sites in Palm Desert and Palm Springs. Each one is unique! We are also seen at information tables at the Palm Springs Farmers 'Market and other community events providing outreach to the public.



Master Gardeners Thomas Weidemann and Kathy Miller are ready to greet the public at Sunnylands Center & Gardens Earth Day event.



Volunteers working compost at College of the Desert (COD), Dee Kongsliie in hat & mask.

Our first community site began October 2022, with the great Pumpkin Smash. Since then, this closed food loop program at McCarthy Child and Family Development Center has composted over 128,000 pounds of food scraps, keeping these materials out of the landfill, and turning them into soil that is used to grow food in their

Garden Views

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very own community garden and chef's garden. Not only is this remarkably efficient, but it is also equivalent to keeping 32 metric tons of CO2 out of the atmosphere! Sign up on VMS for the 1st Friday of the month if you want to see and learn more about this program. You will be impressed! Once trained you may want to join us weekly as a volunteer!



First Year Master Gardener Shelly Westebbe at College of the Desert (COD) compost site



Checking the temperature at COD

David Lahti, MG, is the Coordinator of the Prescott Preserve Community Site. Summer months were hot, and composting started early, but as the weather cools, look on VMS for new start times to be 7am and 8am by October. Training of the stacked system is the first Monday of month with weekly composting every Monday.

Composting education is key to our program at community events, farmers 'market and in our schools. We're always eager to share the reward of creating rich soil amendments from our own food waste.

Brad Harrison, MG School Garden Coordinator, recently assisted with a presentation on vermicomposting. The Painted Hills Middle School students handled the worms and learned how worms contribute to healthy soils. Students were left with their own classroom bin with worms to maintain.

Composting is growing! Our success this year has been the addition of more opportunities to educate and volunteer! Our partner, Desert Compost, continues to add new sites and educational opportunities. Our challenge has been keeping up! We need volunteers to sign up on VMS to assist at the community compost sites and education tables. Please consider the many opportunities. For more information about our partner, go to DesertCompost.org.



We are excited to continue our support. Composting is fun, rewarding, and so good for our earth! We want to spread the word. Hope to see you at one of our events or community sites!



Free Workshop

Tree Pruning

Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024 10 a.m.



Learn about the importance of proper pruning, including basic techniques, how to protect yourself, and how to hire a qualified professional. The workshop will include an outdoor demonstration.

Dr. Fred Roth is a retired professor of horticulture from Cal Poly Pomona who has a PhD in plant pathology from Cornell University. He owned a private tree pruning company, and is a certified arborist, certified urban forester, and a member of the Inland Urban Forest Council



Ask a Master Gardener First Saturdays from 9 a.m. - noon.

Stop by the Master Gardener booth to have all your gardening questions answered.



Open Daily, 8 am to 4 pm
4500 Glenwood Dr., Riverside, 92501
For more information, please contact us at
(951) 683-7691 ext. 207 or llc@RCRCD.org.

The Peanut Journey Continues

Contributed by Burt Boss, UCCE Master Gardener

In the last newsletter you read about the unusual way in which peanuts grow. The “peanut patch” was just underway. Well, now we can see some amazing growth and development. The picture below was taken on September 12, about 3 months after the seeds were planted. The patch has been watered daily and not only survived the desert’s hottest summer on record but has thrived! The plants are lush and are still flowering.



Unlike their relative the pea, they do not vine but grow into an upright, self supporting plant. What you see is the result of 12 peanut seeds which, when they first sprouted back in June, they looked like this.



UC RIVERSIDE

ONLINE FALL PLANT SALE

October 5th, 6am-12am- Member sale
 October 6th, 6am- 12am- Public sale
 October 15th & 17th- plant pick up (BG closed)

JOIN THE FRIENDS NOW!

GARDENS.UCR.EDU | 951-827-7090
 1 BOTANIC GARDENS DRIVE
 RIVERSIDE, CA 92507

Garden Views

Not 100% sure of what I was going to find, I pulled back some upper growth and started looking at the base of the plants. And...



Notice the thin tendrils coming from the right side of the picture and attached to the peanut. Those are the offshoots of the flowers after they have been pollinated. The tendrils are the “root” on which the peanuts grow. Searching a bit more I came across these tendrils touching down to the soil. More peanuts on the way!



Tune in next time when I will attempt to harvest and process some homegrown PEANUTS.

P.S. Thanks to the Boys and Girls Club of Cathedral City and the members of the afterschool garden club of 4th and 5th graders. The Garden club will be back in session starting Oct 19 and who knows what wonderful things we will plant this season.

Sept Oct 2024

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANTS

 **SATURDAY, OCT. 12, 2024 AT 10 A.M.**
Speaker – George Spiliotis

Join us for an engaging workshop about integrating our region's vibrant native plants into your landscape!

This session offers an introduction to using unique and diverse native plants, focusing on their benefits, essential pre-planting considerations, design tips, and maintenance requirements.

For more than 15 years, UC Master Gardener George Spiliotis has immersed himself in California native plants, which now dominate 70% of his personal landscape. Produced by Landscape Integrity Films and Education (LIFE), George and Elaine's yard stars in a [series of 23 short videos featuring native plants](#).

George's expertise extends to presentations on pollinator gardening and enhancing garden enjoyment. As a docent at UC Riverside Botanic Gardens since 2014, he leads tours for both youth and adult groups. George's dedication to sustainable gardening led him to become a UC Master Gardener in 2020. George has also served as a board member of the Rivers and Lands Conservancy since 2022.

We hope you can join us!
Sign up at: WesternWaterCA.gov/MasterGardener

FREE!
VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, November 11 at 10 a.m.
Landscape Transformation | Lynn Coffman

Looking For a Unique Information Table Volunteer Opportunity?

Contributed by Kim Coons-Leonard, UCCE Master Gardener

Looking for a unique information table volunteer opportunity? Join us for our STEPCon 24 exhibit Thursday, October 10th in Riverside. This annual event features science and engineering practices for fourth through twelfth graders and their teachers from throughout the Inland Empire.

Garden Views

Sept Oct 2024

This year Master Gardeners will be featuring arthropods. We will be joined by a Cooperative Extension entomologist to share insect displays and information on beneficials, including a spin-the-wheel activity to identify a variety of arthropods as beneficials or pests.



This all-day event is broken into two volunteer sessions/shifts, and the event sponsor will be providing breakfast snacks and lunch.

Free food, arthropods, and an information table that will be a magnet topic drawing both children and adults. What more could a Master Gardener volunteer ask for? Sign up today on VMS!

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BOTANIC GARDENS
EST. 1963

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT!
THE BOTANIC GARDENS WILL BE OPEN FOR MEMBERS ONLY ON THE 2ND SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH FROM 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Join the Friends today!
gardens.ucr.edu/friends

UC RIVERSIDE
Botanic Gardens

UC RIVERSIDE
BOTANIC GARDENS
EST. 1963

Art in the Gardens

POP UP PLANT SALE

Saturday, November 2, 2024
10:00 am - 3:00 pm
UCR Botanic Gardens

Come spend a pleasant day strolling through Alder Canyon, where California artists and craftspersons are showcased representing a variety of media including ceramics, jewelry, mosaics, metal work, fiber arts, wood, and photography. *Art in the Gardens* is a great opportunity to shop from local artists while supporting the programs and activities of the UCR Botanic Gardens.

Free parking in Lot 13 Blue with shuttle
gardens.ucr.edu | ucrbg@ucr.edu | 951-827-7090
1 Botanic Gardens Drive
Riverside, CA 92507

UC RIVERSIDE
Botanic Gardens

Let's Celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month!

Contributed by Georgia Renne, UCCE Master Gardener

When I celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month, September 15 to October 15, I always remember the very first time I tasted tacos when I was eight years old. My family was eating dinner at our friend's home, Lucille and Paul Galvan, and Lucille was cooking tacos. After tasting these delicious new treats, my mom and I looked at each other and said together, "We have to learn how to make these tacos!" We soon did, and probably every week we would cook tacos for my dad and brother. Later as a wife and mom tacos were a weekly dinner at the Renne home.

Over the years I've expanded my Hispanic cooking to include one of my favorites, chile rellenos. The first time I made this dish was for

guests. I unfortunately purchased jalapeño chiles instead of poblano chilies. Graciously my guests tasted the chile rellenos, quickly drank their drinks, and then we all laughed at my mistake. I now carefully follow the recipes in my favorite Mexican cookbooks!

As Master Gardeners we have a lot to be thankful for with the addition of Hispanic cuisine to our favorites. If we did not have Hispanic foods, we would miss many plants, herbs, and spices ingredients we regularly use in our cooking. This thought led me to do a dive into the history of Hispanic foods in the United States.

Research on the internet took me to first read the blog, "Introduction to Mexican Food History" by nutritionist and chef, Krista Linares, nutritionconsabor.com/Mexican-food-history/#What_foods_are_originally_from_Mexico. She taught me that Indigenous Mexican food is responsible for many of the hallmarks of Mexican food today: corn, beans, squash, tomatoes, avocados, chocolate, and chiles. Pre-Hispanic Mexican food was also strongly influenced by the rest of Mesoamerican cuisine since the Aztec and Mayan empires had strong trade routes across the continent. Our favorite Mexican dish may well trace its roots back to this era including corn tortillas, tamales, mole, salsa, guacamole, tacos, and pozole.

The Spanish introduced most of the common proteins we see in Mexican food today, including beef, pork, chicken, and goat (not my favorite). I was surprised to learn the Spanish introduced the concept of frying food in oil to the Americas. Prior to this, oils were used rarely if at all in Mexican food. This means olive oil was also a Spanish introduction. Some foods that represent this fusion of Mexican and Spanish cuisine include tostadas (fried in oil), refried beans (sautéed in lard), and flour tortillas. The Spaniards brought to their settlements many crops that are still California staples, including oranges, olives, peaches, corn, and wheat.

My dive into Hispanic foods led me to discover all of the herbs and spices we use daily. From Krista Linares' blog I was surprised all these spices come from our Hispanic heritage: cilantro (coriander leaves), cumin, oregano (Mexican oregano), epazote, chili powder, paprika, cinnamon, garlic, bay leaves, and cloves. How could we cook without them? How many of these are herbs in our gardens?

Of course, celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month is not only about food! This recognition is annually celebrated from September 15 to October 15 in the United States for recognizing the contributions and influence of Hispanic Americans to the history, culture, and achievements of the United States. We have much to celebrate.

National Hispanic Heritage Week was established by signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson and expanded to a month (September 15 to October 15) first proclaimed by President George H. W. Bush on September 14, 1989 in Presidential Proclamation. Since 1989, all Presidents have given a Presidential Proclamation to mark Hispanic Heritage Month. September 15 was chosen as the starting point for the commemoration because it is the anniversary of the start of the Mexican War of Independence and thus resulted (in 1821) in independence for the New Spain Colony, now Mexico and the Central American nations of Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

What dishes should I plan for my weekend fiesta to celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month?

