



# Advice to Grow by... Ask Us!

## Master Gardener Program

University of California Cooperative Extension 

### September 2023



Hello Tahoe Gardeners!

We hope the rainy Labor Day weekend didn't spoil too much fun. So much better than smoke! Our gardens could use a drink this time of year.

This container photo shows how summer color can hold on into the fall season. Annuals such as blue salvia, purple petunia, white pelargonium, and succulents combine for a Labor Day show. This group will bloom until frost comes. If you are thinking about adding a punch of fall color to your containers, I recommend marigold, chrysanthemum, pansy,

ornamental kale or cabbage and maybe primrose if you can find them this early. Coax them to hold on until Thanksgiving with some frost cloth on the chilly nights!

Of note: In late July, the South Tahoe Garden Club and the Master Gardeners gathered to host a book sale in honor of Joanne Geggatt, a longtime member of both organizations. Joanne passed away earlier this year. Joanne's book collection, along with other donated gardening books, raised money for both the Garden Club and the UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe.

Read on for September garden tips, information on seed saving, potato care, squirrels, and upcoming events around the basin. As always, we appreciate your feedback. Send us suggestions on what type of information you would like to see in this newsletter. Most importantly, enjoy the long days and warm weather.

#### **Sandy Gainza**

UCCE Master Gardener Volunteer, Newsletter Editor

### Join our Team!

## UCCE Master Gardener Volunteer Training

Register for an info meeting today



**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UC Master Gardener Program

**Want to be a Master Gardener?** The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) invites adults living in the Lake Tahoe area interested in helping others learn about sustainable gardening and landscaping to apply to train as a Master Gardener volunteer.

**Attend one of our informational meetings (in-person or online) to learn more about the volunteer requirements as well as the selection and training process.** Each session lasts one hour and a recorded version of the online presentation will be available. Attendance at or

viewing of the information meeting is a mandatory requirement of the application process.

1. **Friday, September 8: 10:00 am**, South Tahoe Public Utilities District office, South Lake Tahoe
2. **Tuesday, September 12: 7:00 pm**, Fairway Community Center, Tahoe City
3. **Tuesday, September 19: 7:00 pm**, online via Zoom

Please rsvp online to attend a training information meeting at <https://ucanr.edu/mgmt-info-mtg>. Meeting site addresses and link will be included in the confirmation email.

The UC Master Gardener training program consists of over 50 hours of intensive training and costs \$100. This price covers the training manual, insurance fee, class materials, and all class expenses.

**Applications** for the 2023/2024 training program are due by the end of **Tuesday, September 26, 2023**. A background check including fingerprinting is required upon acceptance.

For more information about becoming a UCCE Master Gardener volunteer, please visit our website at <https://ucanr.edu/be-ltmg>.

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## Upcoming Events



### Visit the Lake Tahoe Master Gardeners at the El Dorado Certified Farmers' Market

Tuesdays from 8 am to 1 pm until October 10  
2740 Lake Tahoe Blvd. South Lake Tahoe CA

Join us at the Farmers' Market soon. Get your gardening questions answered and pick up some materials on native plants, fire wise gardening, pest management and more.



### Slow Food Lake Tahoe Offers Volunteer Opportunities for Gardeners

Join Slow Food Lake Tahoe on Harvest Mondays, Workday Wednesdays, or Dig In Saturdays through October at the Food Bank Demonstration Garden in Truckee. Please sign up [HERE](#). You can learn from others and help feed your community.

**UCCE Master Gardeners and Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County Are Hosting Several Workshops this Month:**

[Click Here for Central Sierra Master Food Preserver Events.](#)

[Click Here for El Dorado County Master Gardener Events.](#)

(Of interest to Tahoe Gardeners: There will be a Garlic and Shallot class in Placerville, Saturday September 16. Guest Contributor to our newsletter Sheri Burke is holding a seminar on greenhouse gardening in El Dorado Hills on Saturday, September 23. See the link above for more details.)

[Click this link to go to the complete list of Central Sierra events.](#)

If you are closer to Placer County, [check out these autumn events by clicking this link.](#)



### UNR Extension Douglas County Master Gardeners Host Q and A sessions in September and October

If you're inclined to visit Heritage Park in Gardnerville NV on a Wednesday evening between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m, bring a chair and a friend and learn about:

[Check Out All Douglas County NV Extension Events](#)



### Hawaii Fires

# What Saved The 'Miracle House' In

# Lahaina?

Jessica Terrell of Civil Beat in Honolulu is the author of an article highly relevant to Lake Tahoe residents. This home survived where all the houses surrounding it did not. What made the difference for this Lahaina home? Please enjoy the [article](#), and the photo reprinted with permission from Jessica, Kevin Fujii, and homeowner Trip Milliken. Submitted by Mary Wall, UCCE Master Gardener and fire prevention neighborhood leader in South Lake Tahoe.



## Potato Notes for September

Melissa Guthrie, UCCE Master Gardener, AKA "Potato Lady"

Just a potato note. At this point your potato plants will not be so beautiful, which means they are right on schedule. As I write this, the weather is clearly changing, and a hint of fall is palpable with clouds and sprinkles in the air. If you are growing potatoes in our area, this is the time to **stop** watering them, especially if you have planted them in beds. If you planted them in containers or later than recommended, they may need to be watered a bit longer. I planted successive seed potatoes, in different areas, as an experiment. Some of

the late plantings have totally green foliage which I will keep watering for another week or so. Most of the seed potato plants that were planted late May/early June have flowered and are now looking a bit peaked. This is normal, but understandably not reassuring for new potato growers. Seed potatoes now go into a phase of above ground foliage die back. This conserves underground spuds and starts to toughen up the potato skin slightly for longer storage over winter.



My late plantings are still green, so I will continue to water these.



Foliage die back is normal. The potatoes are still growing under the soil surface!

Summary: Limit or stop watering in the next week or so depending on where they were planted. Potato plants will look not happy and that's ok. Do not use any fertilizer at this

point. It's tempting but not helpful. Plan to harvest after plants look dead. Use hands and /or a carefully placed tool to dig to approximately where mother seed potato was planted. Loosen soil horizontally and up to find all potatoes. Any missed potatoes will regrow in spring. Overwintered potatoes will possibly be smaller and can carry pathogens, so it's best to rotate plants to revive nutrients or use new local/potting soil mix each year.

Please see this Master Gardener [presentation](#) or [contact us](#) if you have questions.

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## September Gardening Tips

UCCE Master Gardener Annie Christy has these tips for Tahoe gardeners:

September is a great time for fall planting!

Look for a reduction in the number of insects, but keep your eye out for powdery mildew.

With cooler nights, bring in any houseplants that were set outside for the summer, like phlox and bee balm.

Now is the time to divide and replant overcrowded perennials.

Collect flower seeds to plant next spring or leave for pollinators and birds this winter. Check out this [article](#) we published last year on seed saving.

Shrubs and flower stalks saved for pollinators can be cut down in spring.

Plant spring bulbs for a beautiful spring garden.

Leave some leaves or mulch on plants for insects to spend the winter.

Pansies make great fall color spots!



### Got Squirrels?

In the fall around Lake Tahoe, squirrels can become a garden nuisance. They begin to dig small holes in containers, vegetable, and flower beds in order to hide food for winter. Often they will uproot plants in order to hide a pinecone or two. Bird netting and chili flakes or a spray made of cayenne pepper and water

can deter them from certain areas, but they are quite persistent as the weather cools. Here is [information](#) from UCANR on identification and control methods for squirrels. (Photo credit: Christopher L. Christie)

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