



University of California

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Master Gardener Program

July 2021 Merced Master Gardeners Public Newsletter

Join Us in January 2022!

Merced County Master Gardener Training Class is coming soon. The information sessions will be on September 18 at noon and September 25th at 9:00 am. Applications are due on October 22 by 5:00 pm. Interviews will be scheduled and classes will commence on January 22.

Men and women from all walks of life become Master Gardeners: homemakers, business people, educators, retired persons, and many others. No degree is required, just a strong desire to serve the community. More information available here soon.

Have gardening questions?

The Helpline Number is 209 385-7403.

**The Helpline email is
anrmgmerced@ucanr.edu**

Hours: Nov-Feb, Th 9-11 a.m.

March-Oct M 2-4 p.m.; Th 9-11 a.m.

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**Officers: Jay Hawkes - President
Nicolai Laquaglia - Vice-President
Luwanda Jones - Secretary
Mary Shasky - Treasurer
Helpline Co-leads: Kaaren Morgner, Liz Swenson
Larrae Incarelli - Affirmed as Past President**

Happy Gardening!

Hot Weather Gardening Mistakes
By
Tom Dinwoodie

“My plants are wilting in the heat of mid-afternoon.” Do NOT water! Wilting and long-term loss of leaves is simply the plant’s self-defense (physiological) systems response to heat. Water very early morning (4am-5am) to allow the plant to prepare for the day ahead. Water deeply so roots can establish a root zone far from the warm surface. Mulch to retain moisture and to keep the soil surface cool.

Do NOT fertilize. Your plants do not need energy to stimulate growing under heat stress. Most plants suffer from stress at temperatures above 90°. Do not stimulate plants to grow in hot weather.

Do NOT spray insecticides that will harm distressed leaves. Pest activities should also show...hand remove pests. Even a cold-water spray will shock the plant structure. Small water drips will serve as miniature magnifiers burning the leaves.

Do NOT leave ripe or nearly ripe fruit on the plant... indeed remove nearly ripe tomatoes or squash, eggplant etc. while small. The extra energy required by fruit stored on the vine could better be used to keep the plant alive.

Recap:

Do NOT over water or water at the wrong time

Do NOT fertilize

Do NOT spray insecticide or even water

Do NOT “store” fruit on the plant...harvest early

Monthly Watering Adjustments

By

Tom Dinwoodie

It is a given that plants need more water as they grow larger and days get longer and hotter. Think of the water needs of a six-inch tomato transplant and a six-foot plant loaded with juicy fruit. The opposite is also true. Plants need less water as the autumnal solstice approaches...cracked tomatoes.

Follow me on this math...assuming peak usage should occur in July, 100% or example 30 minutes. Your August and September usage should decrease 15% per month. By the end of September, that 100% should decrease 70% to 21 minutes water usage. The January to

December, plus/minus is nearly a perfect bell curve.

Monthly Watering Percentages - Merced County

Month	Rounded Percentage	Proposed Settings	Sprinkler Time Example - Min
January	10%		
February	20%		
March	40%	40%	12
April	60%	60%	18
May	80%	80%	24
June	95%	95%	28.5
July	100%	100%	30
August	85%	85%	25.5
September	70%	70%	21
October	40%	40%	12
November	20%	20%	6
December	10%		

$.85 \times 30 = 25.5$