

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

University of Arizona and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.



the Cochise County Master Gardener

NEWSLETTER

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NOVEMBER 1994

PPP

Barry R. Bishop
Staff Writer

Everyone does it. In fact there are so many acronyms for it, it can be mind-boggling! However, PPP, Planning **DOES** Prevent Problems.

When you and your spouse are sitting down in easy chairs, thinking about your garden and what it produced, was it successful, did you get the amount you wanted, and last of all, was it good, ask yourselves questions such as did we produce too much of this and not enough of that? Do we really want to grow that? Was the crop we planted everything we wanted?

If you are like me, you think of things in the spring long past last year's results. So, after we plant a crop we should write down what we planted and under what we plant there should be sufficient space for us to comment on the quality of it when we harvest it. Next year when we buy our seeds we have something to go on. If you were fortunate to have written down the variety and the amount you planted you really have something to go on. Look, I'm not trying to complicate your life. I'm not trying to take the fun out of gardening but only trying to make things easier and simpler.

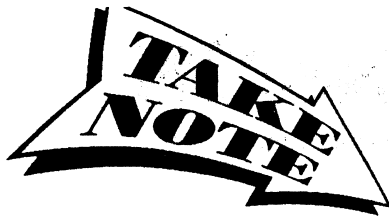
The U Of A Cooperative Extension office has a free bulletin *Vegetable Varieties for Arizona*, on the various varieties tested and suitable for this climate. Call or stop by for a copy at the office in Willcox or Sierra Vista. Another, *Ten Steps to a Successful Vegetable Garden*, is also available.

Now if you are from somewhere else and you have a favorite variety of a crop, like tomatoes, not recommended for this area, don't abandon it if it has done well for you. But, you just might like to try some of the varieties recommended for this area and maybe you might find a new favorite!

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Robert E. Call
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20h Annual Huachuca Mineral and Gem Show

"A Rock Rustler's Roundup" will take place on November 12 and 13, 1994 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Oscar Yrun Community Center, 3020 Tacoma Street, Sierra Vista. Free parking and admission and more than 35 vendors, displays, demonstrations, food vendors, and more will be waiting for your enjoyment.

LET'S RECYCLE!

U.S. West Direct and co-partners, the communities of Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Ft. Huachuca, Huachuca City, Sierra Vista, and Willcox are once again asking you to recycle your outdated phone books. They can be dropped off at specially marked bins through November 30. Please help preserve, protect, and restore our environment!



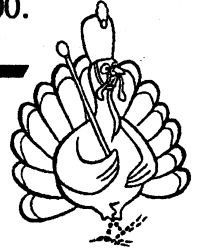
CORRECTION: Guess I have chili peppers splattered all over my face. My apology to Fiesta Canning Company. The factory is owned by Macayo Mexican Foods. They have several restaurants and they can for the retail market under their own brand found in several food stores nationwide, in addition to serving various other companies.

We enjoyed the factory and you can buy case goods direct from the cannery for less than going through their jobbers, that is if you don't grow chilies yourself!

— Barry

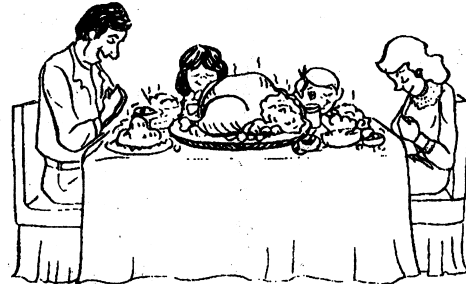
Turkey Talk

Got a problem roasting your turkey? You can call any of the following hotlines during the holiday months: Meat & Poultry Hot Line: 800-535-4555; Butterball Turkey Talk-Line: 800-323-4848; or Reynolds Turkey Information Line: 800-745-4000.



DID YOU KNOW?

At the first Thanksgiving in Plymouth, Mass. in 1621, pumpkin pie was scarce. The Pilgrims' flour was long gone, so pie crust was impossible. They served pumpkin, nonetheless—boiled!



FREEBIES!

Backyard Bird Problems, a treatise that talks about how to prevent birds from exhibiting such behavior as destroying garden plants and nesting in gutters and chimneys and *For the Birds*, a set of three pamphlets discussing how to attract different species, what to feed them, and how to buy or build suitable homes (almost free - send 50¢) are both available from the U.S. Government. Order from R. Woods, Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, CO 81009.

Also available is a new pamphlet from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture called *A Quick Consumer Guide to Safe Food Handling*. To order your free copy write to Consumer Information Center, Dept. 23, Pueblo, CO 81009.

ADIOS AMIGOS!

Barbara Kishbaugh
Staff Writer

My involvement with the Master Gardener Newsletter staff began a couple of years ago when I attempted to pick up the mantle left when our friend, Peter Whitman, died. I didn't realize, of course, the commitment this involved. Meeting each month with folks of like interests and attitudes has been a delight. But the time required in writing and research, while pleasurable, has not always been convenient. It is only at the end of the road that I realize what effort this obligation entailed.

The duty of Master Gardener volunteers is the sharing of information. This networking assists the newcomers to our area and continues a bond with other Master Gardeners. What other group of people will understand when you come to a meeting with dirt under your fingernails or an insect in your hand?

Our leader, Rob Call, is a great county asset. Not only is he knowledgeable in agriculture and horticulture, he has the ability to relate to a wide range of personalities. And, he continues to be cheerful through his efforts as our lead guide.

The people who make the newsletter interesting and informative are all trained Master Gardeners volunteers who work diligently to offer this service each month. Carolyn Gruenhagen has been involved with the newsletter since its inception in December 1989, although she will not take credit as the captain of our group. It has been her effort to coordinate all our bits of information into a pleasing format of a top quality, readable communication. She acts as a shepherd or sergeant, whatever it takes, to get those articles into print. And behind the scenes, her husband, Gary, offers advice in the technical aspects and sympathy when Carolyn's writers don't follow through. Gary's articles are written with the flair and sense of humor his personality evokes.

Elizabeth Riordon is our "artist de jour." Her fine work has been displayed in our newsletter many times, each rendering drawing her from her busy schedule and diverse interests. Elizabeth's abilities are much enjoyed—whether it be a

drawing or an article. She is a major link in the chain.

Most of us don't know Virginia Westphal, but it is she who coordinates the newsletter on the Willcox end, publishing it, and getting it into the mail to us.

Soon I will be leaving this high desert country but will perhaps be able to sink roots in another interesting place. I leave with a grateful heart for having worked with these fine people. The feeling of camaraderie is strong and sure. Those involved in this process are dedicated and committed to producing a successful newsletter, printed to open our minds yet bind us together.

Surely I'll miss you. Adios!



GODSPEED, BARBARA!

Carolyn Gruenhagen
Staff Writer

Just as surely, Barbara will be missed by us. She is leaving to join her husband in Georgia, formerly the USSR, where he is employed. Her dedication is remarkable. From your comments we know her monthly articles in this newsletter and her weekly articles in the local newspaper are much appreciated. We all wish her well and maybe, just maybe, Barbara will write for us on occasion from her new home.

Our newsletter goes on, and this month we officially welcome new staff members Barry Bishop and Jan Groth, also trained Master Gardeners. Many of you will remember Barry, former editor of *The Paper*, and Jan can be found nearly every day at her nursery, High Country Gardens, in Sierra Vista. We are very fortunate to have them join us!

Staff:	Barry Bishop
	Jan Groth
	Carolyn Gruenhagen
	Virginia Westphal

High on the Desert

The second annual High Desert Gardening and Landscaping Conference will be held Thursday and Friday, February 16 & 17, 1995 at the Ramada Inn in Sierra Vista, Arizona. Optional tours are scheduled for Saturday, February 18. The conference is sponsored by the Master Gardeners from the Cochise County Cooperative Extension office of the University of Arizona. Everyone with a love of the high desert and the gardening and landscaping problems it presents is encouraged to attend.

WATCH FOR DETAILS!

LOWER MATHEMATICS 101a

Gary A. Gruenhagen

If rocket scientists practice higher math, then I guess down and dirty gardeners practice lower math. Whatever you call it, there's no escaping it. Math is everywhere—even in the garden! Besides curling up with a good seed catalog this winter, how about learning a little lower math so that you're ready to use it next spring when its time to plant again?

For starters, let's suppose you have a garden that is 25 feet long and 30 feet wide that you want to fertilize. It's been recommended for your soil that you apply 2 pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet of garden area, and you have just purchased a 50 pound bag of 5-10-10 fertilizer that was on sale at the local garden supply store. How do you go about figuring out how much of it to apply to your garden?

The first step is to figure out how many square feet you have in your garden. That's not too difficult. Just multiply the length and width of your garden. In your case, 25 feet multiplied by 30 feet gives 750 square feet, assuming of course that your garden is rectangular. (If it isn't then you'll just have to make it rectangular!)

Before we continue, you must learn how to break the secret fertilizer code. Those three numbers that appear on the bag are the percentages by weight of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, respectively. The law requires those three numbers to be reported, and they are always in the same order. In your case, the amount of nitrogen (which is what you are interested in) is

5 percent. That means that there are 5 pounds of nitrogen in every 100 pounds of the fertilizer.

The second step is to figure out how much nitrogen is required for your 750 square foot garden. Since your garden is smaller than 1000 square feet, it will require less than 2 pounds of nitrogen. To figure exactly how much, you need to divide the area of your garden (750 square feet) by 1000 square feet. The result is 0.75. If your garden is only 0.75 the size of a 1000 square foot area, then it will need only 0.75 times 2 pounds the amount of nitrogen. This is 1.5 pounds.

The third and final step is to figure out much of the 5-10-10 fertilizer will contain the 1.5 pounds of nitrogen you need. Since you know that 100 pounds of the fertilizer contains 5 pounds of nitrogen, you will need to apply something less than 100 pounds to your garden. To determine exactly how much, divide 1.5 pounds by 5 pounds. The answer, 0.3, tells you what fraction of 100 pounds to apply. In this case, 0.3 times 100 pounds or 30 pounds.

See how easy that was. With all the time between now and planting time next spring to practice, you should become an expert lower mathematician.

November Reminders!

- It is a good time to install a drip system!
- Replace summer mulch with fresh.
- Start a winter herb garden.

THE AGENT'S OBSERVATIONS

Robert E. Call
Horticulture Agent

QUESTION: When will I know if pecans are ready to eat? How do I harvest them and prepare them to eat?

ANSWER: Pecan nuts are ready to eat when the shuck splits. The shuck is the husk or fleshy material around each individual nut. The nut consists of the shell and the meat. Commercial harvest in Cochise County usually begins around Thanksgiving. When the nut meat has filled the shell the husk will start to split, slowly dry and open. Many nuts will drop to the ground on their own. After several hard freezes nuts will really start to fall to the ground. Sometimes the shuck does not separate from the nut thus producing what is called a stick-tight. Many times the nut meat has not fully matured and is the cause of the stick-tight condition. Harvest is then a matter of picking up nuts off of the ground before wildlife does! Commercially mechanical shakers are used to shake nuts to the ground and then are swept up from the ground mechanically. Nuts need to be separated from the shucks if they are not already. This is done by hand if only a few trees are involved. Commercially there are hulling machines that are a set of brushes that rub the husks off, producing cleaned nuts. The final step is to crack the shell and just have the meats for eating. This is done by hand, one nut at a time or with the aid of one of several nut crackers. On a larger scale nuts are placed in a machine that will singulate them and mechanically crack them. The meats are removed by hand. Commercial shellers buy cleaned nuts from producers and use high-speed mechanical and/or pneumatic shellers. To determine if you had a good nut year collect a sample of your nuts.

Clean off all of the shucks and weigh it. Crack and shell all the nuts and weigh the remaining meats. Divide the meat weight by the nut weight to get a percentage. A good nut to meat percentage is between 50 to 55%. Anything over 55% is an excellent yield. If this was not accomplished, culture practices such as watering schedules and fertilization should be improved.

QUESTION: I have several fruit and shade trees that need to be pruned. Is now the time to prune these plants?

ANSWER: DO NOT PRUNE NOW! Plants are preparing to go into winter on the high deserts. Pruning is a dwarfing, stimulating and stressful event. Trees and shrubs are moving compounds from the leaves and branches and storing carbohydrates in the trunks and roots. If pruning is done now buds that are going dormant are stimulated and might begin to grow using energy and other resources that are normally stored to survive winter and the spring push of rapid growth and development of leaves and shoots. Next springs' growth takes a lot of energy and if used up in the fall and winter because of pruning stimulation can cause plants to become stressed and even die if winter conditions are severe. All of this growth needs to occur in the spring before photosynthesis can begin anew in deciduous plants. Even evergreens' growing activity in the winter slows and in some cases stops. Stimulating new growth is just opposite of what the plant needs to have happen to survive the winter season.

Prune most fruit and shade trees just before bud swell occurs in late winter or early spring, between February and April. With many flowering ornamental plants the recommendation is to prune after flowering occurs. If you have question on a specific plants' pruning requirements contact the Extension Office in Sierra Vista or Willcox.

Address correction requested

THANKSGIVING

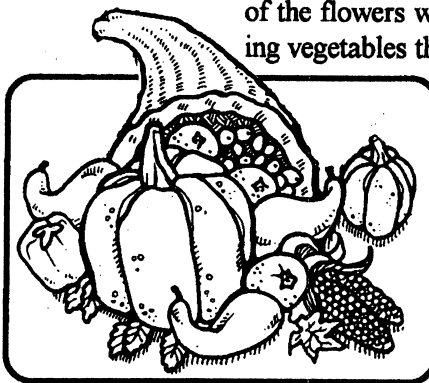
Barry R. Bishop
Staff Writer

Where is that cornucopia full of overflowing goodness from the garden?

Thanksgiving is an American holiday, and if you are a Thanksgiving celebrant, you enjoy a big feast on that day. Chances are you will have your plate piled high with your garden's best.

Oh, it is true, turkey contains a chemical that when eaten causes that person to slow down to the point that they may even want to take a small nap. It has been carefully documented and is not just an old wives' tale*.

We, the Master Gardener Newsletter staff, want to take the time to wish you and yours the very best. We all know, believe me when we say we do, how very hard you have worked to make your garden the best. We want to take time and reflect on what we consider the most important thing in our lives—our families.



Because we love them we care enough to make our garden the very best and we often dedicate its existence to them. We want them to enjoy and sense the beauty of the flowers we have grown, the sheer pleasure of eating vegetables that have a different flavor and more vitamins than those bought in the grocery store, and that it came from us is a way of showing them that we care.

Thanksgiving is a very special time because it gives all of us a day to reflect on what we have done in the past and where we want to go from here. The beauty of it is we get to share the time with our loved ones and enjoy the fruits of our gardens. God bless you

and may your garden grow green and healthy, full of great beauty, and with a bountiful harvest.

(*Turkey contains tryptophan, an essential amino acid that the body converts to serotonin, a chemical that has a lethargic effect on humans and animals.

—Bon Appetit, Nov. 1994)