

# COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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



the Cochise County Master Gardener

## NEWSLETTER

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### FABULOUS FALL

Barry R. Bishop  
Staff Writer



It sounds silly, but September and October are yours truly's favorite months! Everything is green and we still have warmth. The sun brings forth a dry heat with pending wisps of winter and its cold weather to come.

Fall, football, soccer, school, and harvest time. Years ago when our forefathers arranged schedules the schools did as the forefathers wanted and arranged their classes to coincide with the growing season. Parents with children that had farms needed their children to work during the summer in labor-intensive work for little or no wages. When the produce was harvested school was started in the fall.

The school schedule has not really changed much today and we are living with a schedule that was created in the past. When things are accepted over a long period of time, persons being governed by the schedules are reluctant to change.

Farming has changed and is no longer a way of life, however the summer months have not changed nor the harvest time. The school schedule has not changed, although some districts have gone to year around schools.

The garden is changing from summer to fall and it has worked hard to produce, and it now takes a needed break. Sort of like us gardeners. We can take time to enjoy the fruits of our labors and enjoy the cooler nights and the green that we see everywhere, thanks to our late summer rains. You are allowed to feel sad that the summer is gone, but now you can also feel glad for we need the rest.

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert E. Call".

Robert E. Call  
Extension Agent,  
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After you work to make your garden ready for spring, read books about gardening. There is a lot we can learn. I remember with a chuckle the old phrase, "Don't confuse me with the facts. You'd be surprised what we can learn from reading—the big thing is to apply it. All the learning in the world won't help unless we use it!"

Staff: Barry R. Bishop  
Carolyn Gruenhagen  
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Virginia Westphal



### October Reminders

- Be ready for the first frost
- Thin the seedlings
- Overseed lawns
- Plant spring bulbs
- Don't let weeds go to seed
- Divide perennials

### 20th 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 with RV hookups available and free dry camping. There will be more than 35 vendors, displays, demonstrations, food vendors, and more. For information call show chairman, Joan Vasey (602) 378-1563, or write to Huachuca Mineral and Gem Club, P.O. Box 1596, Sierra Vista, AZ 85636.



### 8th Annual Pumpkin Festival

On the first three weekends in October a pumpkin festival will be held at Hundson Farms. Wagon rides and narration of the farm will start at the sales shed. Wagons take people to the field to pick their own pumpkins. Other produce and decorative items will be on sale also. To get to Hundson Farms take Willcox exit 340 off I-10 and go 13 miles north on Ft. Grant Road. There are other produce growers along the way. Why not pick up some apples or freshly squeezed apple cider, Indian corn, chili strings, gourds, or other items! You will enjoy the country farm sights and smells as you travel to the Willcox area direct marketing farms. You will be glad you made the trip! For further information the *Fresh! Farm Produce Guide* is available at either the Cooperative Extension Office in Sierra Vista or Willcox.



## THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

**Barry R. Bishop**  
**Staff Writer**

On September 24th Elfrida offered to the 16 or so Master Gardeners and friends a real opportunity to learn about High Desert Gardening and Cochise County. Cochise County ranks fourth in the state behind Pima, Yuma, and Maricopa Counties in the field of Agriculture. Elfrida was at one time the hub of lettuce and cabbage growing in the Sulphur Springs Valley. The cost of pumping water from further underground to the surface caused a lot of would-be growers to get out of the business. Since that time many land owners turned to growing peppers that could be canned by the Fiesta Canning Company located a couple of miles South of Elfrida.

The Fiesta Canning Company changed names after one partner, the owner of Papagayo Restaurants, let the other partners, two brothers, seek greener pastures. Not only does the canning company can for their own restaurants but for other commercial companies as well. They have approximately 500 employees during the peak season and a lesser group, but more permanent, the rest of the time.

They can Anaheims, Big Jims, Jalapenos, Serranos, dice as well as whole. The peppers are cooked before they are canned and the hard outer

skin is removed. This is done by high pressure and not the usual way of using hot oil which can get into calories.

We were asked to venture into the area where they can Jalapenos. The area was filled with flying molecules and the people doing the actual canning wear masks, glasses, and gloves. One can conclude that those peppers are hot!

A visit to Irma Poe's garden will cause some jealousy. She and her husband, both in their eighties, enjoy the fruits of the garden which includes (you name it!) if it grows naturally in Arizona. Chances are they have it. Visitors were treated to seeing two owls, two snakes, and all kinds of wild birds and little creatures. The Poe's have taken the land around the house, put in a watering system and water their Arizona ash, pear, apple trees, *etc.* causing them to reach great heights. Mrs. Poe enjoys having people come by and see how she has done gardening over more than 40 years. She is one of those special people that you become more interested in her than her garden. She wants another tour in the spring of the year when everything is in flower.

"It's really pretty and well worth it," she says.

On behalf of the many who treaded on her land and garden a heartfelt thanks for the wonderfully guided tour by Irma Poe, and to Mac at Fiesta Canning Company a big thank you! We all had a great time on a beautiful warm day in September!



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## 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!**

## GREAT GARDENING IN CONTAINERS

**Barry R. Bishop**  
**Staff Writer**

Summer is gone, winter is coming on, and you have the age-old urge to grow something besides your hair.

As long as you provide the basics...*i.e.* light, water, fertilizer, and soil...you can grow vegetables in window boxes, hanging baskets, or containers set on doorsteps, patios, or balconies.

### CONTAINERS:

- Give leaky buckets, discolored basins, rejected wastebaskets, and pock-marked polystyrene coolers a new life as garden containers. They must be about 12 inches deep to contain vegetables.
- Nail together simple and inexpensive boxes from scrap lumber. Treat all wooden surfaces with a non-toxic wood preservative such as copper naphthenate to keep the wood from rotting.
- Buy fancy pots from your garden center or hardware store.
- Add wheels to the bottom for easy moving around if you like.
- Try hanging baskets for plants with trailing growth like tomatoes or dwarf cucumbers. Make sure the baskets are sturdy. When they fall they are a real mess to clean up!
- It is important to provide good drainage material in the bottom of each container. Gravel, pebbles, pieces of crushed brick, or bits of broken clay pots work well. If the container has no drainage holes, increase this bottom layer to the depth of approximately one inch.

### GROWING MIXES:

- Use equal parts garden soil (Potting Soil), compost, and sand. To make potting soil combine these: 7 parts of rich garden soil, 1 part peat moss, 1 part vermiculite, and 1 part of perlite.
- Try a soilless growing medium especially if you are gardening on a rooftop. At roughly 25 pounds per cubic foot, regular soil can become heavy. SoilLess mixes are about half the weight.

- Mix up your own soilless potting material from 3 parts peat moss and 1 part coarse sand, perlite, or vermiculite. To neutralize the acidity of the peat moss, add six ounces of ground dolomitic limestone per bushel of mix.
- Faithfully replenish the nutrients in a soilless mix. Why? A soilless mix will release nutrients all at once.

### PLANTING AND CULTURE;

- Seed sown directly in containers and transplants will grow equally as well.
- Give container grown vegetables at least six hours of light daily. As a rule, leafy greens and some root crops can get by with less light and still produce, but fruiting plants need nearly full sun for a successful harvest.
- If your containers cannot be set in a well lighted area, make use of reflected light. Place the containers against light colored walls, or make a portable reflective backdrop by painting boards white and placing them on the East and West sides of your container. This simple solution will markedly increase the amount of light your plants receive and if in a breezy place, the boards will act as a wind break.
- Check the soil at least once each day. In warm weather the plants will need to be watered twice a day. If the top soil feels dry to the touch, add water until it drains out the bottom. (If you are using water that is treated with chlorine or fluoride, let it sit over night before using.)
- Conserve moisture by applying a mulch of wood chips, pebbles, shredded leaves, or peat moss on the surface of the soil. If you have cats they may want to use this as a sand box. The use of large rocks, coat hangers, or tin foil may prevent the problem from arising.
- Throughout the growing season, feed the plant at every third watering or a least once a week with dilute solutions of manure tea, compost tea, or fish emulsion. Another approach to fertilizing is to feed every third week with a nutrient-rich solution of equal parts bonemeal, granite dust, flaked seaweed, blood meal, and either fish emulsion or manure tea.

## THE AGENT'S OBSERVATIONS

**Robert E. Call**  
**Horticulture Agent**

**QUESTION:** Surflan is called a preemergent herbicide. What does that mean, how and why are they used?

**ANSWER:** Preemergent herbicides are a class of weed killers that are applied to the soil before weeds emerge from the ground. The activity of these compounds usually kill germinating seedlings before they emerge from the soil. The new roots and/or shoots absorb some of the material and the plants die. The herbicides are applied to the soil and are usually incorporated into the soil by tillage or irrigation after application. This is necessary because environmental factors such as sunlight cause these products to degrade over time. With pesticides there are several names of each compound that must be understood to avoid confusion. For a single pesticide compound there are three classes of naming. The first is the long chemical name from which a good chemist can reconstruct the molecular structure. The second is the common name, which is registered and approved by the EPA and is peculiar to that compound no matter who is the manufacturer. This common name is analogous to a specific or Latin name of a plant. The third name is the trade name. This name is copyrighted by the seller, but the same chemical can have many trade names - similar to common plant names. After patent rights expire on the compound anyone can manufacture the chemical and give it any name they choose. All of this information is found on the label by law.

For example, a common preemergent herbicide has a chemical name of: 3,5-dintro-N<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>4</sub>-dipropylsulfanilamide. The common name is oryzalin. Some trade names are Surflan (this is the name that the manufacturer uses), Monterey Weed Stopper, or Weed Blocker. The manufacturer sells this compound to others who package Surflan in smaller home use size containers and give their packaged material another name like Monterey Weed Stopper.

Surflan and several other preemergent herbicides are yellow to orange in color. This is because they were synthesized and discovered they had herbicidal activity by the dye industry. Surflan is bright orange. When it is being applied by city employees, for example, on median islands or in park landscapes, people have become irritated thinking they were using "Agent Orange!" This is not the case. The two are not related.

The best time to apply Surflan herbicide in the landscape is in the spring and/or again in the fall. Surflan persists from four to six months depending on environmental conditions. It works well over crushed granite or gravel that does not have plastic under it. Surflan can also be applied to lawns, flower beds (where flower seed is not planted), or it can be transplanted through. Surflan must be watered in within 30 days or it is broken down by sunlight. Here in the high desert it is best to get it watered in within the first week. With proper and timely application a "weed barrier" is formed and many grasses and broadleaf weeds will be controlled. As with all pesticides read the label and follow all instructions.

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Address correction requested

### WHAT'S A HILL?

**Barry R. Bishop**  
**Staff Writer**

If you are like me, everything said by an informed, learned profession in the field of agriculture is gospel.

Plant in hills. Planting in hills causes all of us sweaty palms, wonder, and some apprehension. Every mountain has hills. Every garden, unless it has been leveled, contains hills, but when a person tells me to plant it in hills just what does it mean?

A "hill" in gardening refers to the grouping of seeds or plants in clusters and not necessarily to mounds.

A "hill" of squash or corn can consist of two or three plants growing together on a level with the rest of the garden.

"Hills" or clusters, are usually contrasted with rows in which plants are spaced equal distances apart.