

A Garden Runs Through It

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UCCE Master Gardener Program



Colusa County

Whether it's a vegetable garden, houseplants or a landscape...

December 2018

UC Cooperative Extension,
Colusa County

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Upcoming events

[Click here to read our blog.](#)



February

Colusa Farm Show
February 5, 6, 7
Colusa County Fairgrounds
Main Exhibit Hall

Advice to Grow by ... Ask Us!



Do you enjoy Gardening?

Are you willing to volunteer your time and talent?



The UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County is now accepting applications for our 2019 training.

Application deadline is January 3, 2019 at 1pm.

Meet the Master Gardeners orientation is January 3 at noon at the CIP conference room.

Visit our website for more information and to download an application.

cecolusa.ucanr.edu

Questions, call 530-458-0570



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Poinsettia Care



Poinsettias are the traditional Christmas plant, and with the introduction of long-lasting cultivars during the past several years, its popularity has increased. It was introduced to the United States in 1825 by Joel Robert Poinsett, first U.S. Ambassador to Mexico who obtained plants from the wilds of southern Mexico. The common name for the exotic plant, poinsettia, came from his last name. Botanically, the plant is known as *Euphorbia pulcherrima*.



Light

If you get a potted poinsettia for your home or office, place it near a sunny window where it will get the most available sunlight.

Temperature

To keep the plant in bloom, maintain it at a temperature of 65 to 70 degrees during the daylight hours. Since root rot disease is more prevalent at temperatures below 60 degrees, don't put the poinsettia in a room colder than this. Poinsettias are native to semi-tropical climates, so plants located outdoors should be moved indoors or to another warm area when nighttime temperatures remain below 50 degrees for several hours. In Northern California, it is recommended to keep your poinsettia indoors.

Water

Examine the soil daily, and when the surface is dry to the touch, water the soil until it runs freely out the drainage hole in the container. The amount of water recommended in the following table for use in various size containers insures that enough water will be applied so that some will run out the drainage hole. If a saucer is used, discard the water that collects in it. DO NOT leave the plant standing in water. Overly wet soil lacks sufficient air, which results in root injury. A wilted plant may drop its leaves prematurely, so try to keep it well watered. Plants exposed to high light and low humidity require more frequent watering.

Recommended Watering	
Pot Diameter	Fluid Ounces of Water per Pot
4	6
5	9
6	12
7	16
8	20

Year Round Care

For information about year round care go to <http://cagardenweb.ucdavis.edu>

Are Poinsettias Poisonous?

Various reports over the years have led the general public to believe poinsettias are toxic to humans; however, this has not been authenticated. Research conducted at the Ohio State University using rats, which have a similar digestive system to humans, tests have not shown that leaves, bracts, or cyathia (true flowers) are toxic. Although no tests have been made (officially) on humans, it is reasonable to believe the alleged poisonous nature of the plant is very questionable. Other institutions have proven the old wives' tale that poinsettias are poisonous to be false.

Adapted for northern California from: McMahon, P., C. Pasian, J. Metzger, and J. Youger-Comaty. 1996. Poinsettia Care in the Home. Ohio State Univ. Horticulture and Crop Science Department Extension Fact Sheet HYG-1248-96.

Interesting Poinsettia facts for the University of Illinois Extension

- Poinsettias are native to Mexico
- Poinsettias are not poisonous. A study at Ohio State University showed that a 50 pound child who ate 500 bracts might have a slight tummy ache.
- Some people may have skin irritation from the milky sap.
- Poinsettias represent over 85 percent of the potted plant sales during the holiday season.
- Ninety percent of all poinsettias are exported from the United States.
- Poinsettias are commercially grown in all 50 states.
- California is the top poinsettia producing state.
- December 12 is National Poinsettia Day.
- The Paul Ecke Ranch in California grows over 80 percent of poinsettias in the United States for the wholesale market. 90 percent of all the flowering poinsettias in the world get their start at the Paul Ecke Ranch.
- There are over 100 varieties of poinsettias available.
- 74 percent of Americans still prefer red poinsettias; 8 percent prefer white and 6 percent prefer pink.
- 80 percent of poinsettias are purchased by women.
- 80 percent of people who purchase poinsettias are 40 or older.
- Poinsettias are the best selling flowering potted plant in the United States. In 2004 over 61 million plants were sold.
- Poinsettias are the most popular Christmas plant even though most are sold in a 6 week period.

For gardening questions please contact the Colusa County Master Gardeners at UCCE office, 100 Sunrise Blvd, Ste E, Colusa - 458-0570

Book of the Month

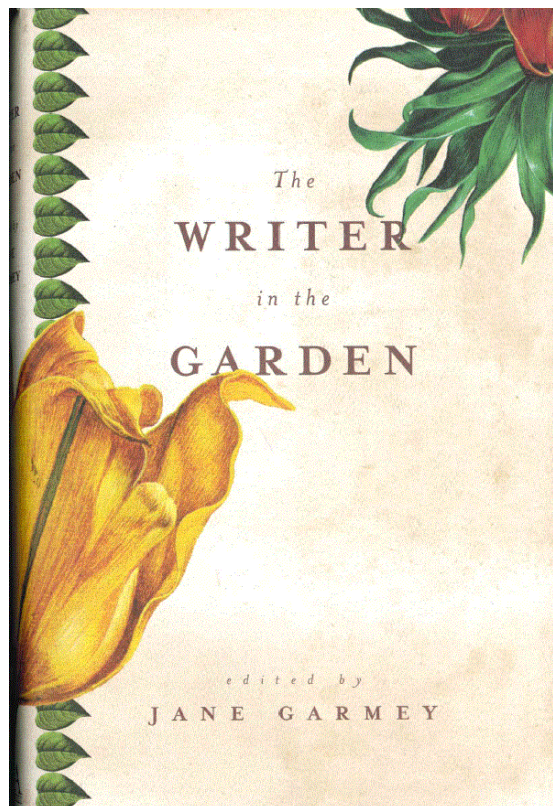
The Writer in the Garden

Edited by Jane Garmey

With the onset of winter, chores in the garden no longer require so much of our time. One thing I suggest that you can do with those extra hours is read *The Writer in the Garden* edited by Jane Garmey. This book is a collection of prose and poetry by more than fifty authors about their relationships with plants and gardens.

Edith Wharton celebrates the magic of Italian gardens. Charles Kuralt waits on the bloom of a single daffodil like an expectant father. Gertrude Jekyll, after a drought, praises the coming of rain. (We can certainly relate to that one!) Allen Lacy rails against hydrangeas.

Bursting with personality, strong opinions, and bright ideas. *The Writer in the Garden* is an enjoyable read. One entry a day for the winter months should help satisfy that yearning to be gardening when weather does not permit.



Submitted by Peggy Townzen

Ornamental Plant of the Month

Lollipop

Verbena bonariensis 'Lollipop'

One of my favorite plants in the garden is the lemon verbena. I am amazed at the other varieties in that same family and all worth the effort. There are few plants better for attracting butterflies than lollipop! It shows off lavender-purple flowers all summer and autumn. It grows just 30 inches tall and wide. Zones 7-10 -- but it can be grown as an annual in colder zones.

One of the things that I have noticed lately is that if the plant has some “character” to add to the garden it is well worth the effort. The upright verbena Lollipop has just that. For us in Colusa it can be grown as a perennial and loves to be on the dry side but well drained. It loves our sun and adapts well to container growth. Water when the soil feels dry to the touch. Be sure to remove the flower heads as they fade and the additional blooms will continue almost all summer.



Submitted by Cynthia White

Recipe of the Month

Lasagna for a Crowd

Ingredients

- 1 lb or so, sweet Italian sausage (usually pork, but lamb or turkey work, too)
- 1 quart marinara-type sauce (homemade or Prego, or whatever brand or flavor you like)
- 1 large can of tomatoes, whole (break them up some), sliced or crushed
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2-5 cloves of garlic, chopped
- 1-2 red, yellow or green bell peppers, chopped
- 1/2 lb sliced mushrooms and/or olives optional
- 1/2 cup fresh basil, or more if you like
- 3 bay leaves
- 1/2 - 1 tsp anise or fennel seed (crush a little)
- 1/2 - 1 cup red wine
- 1 box chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed out
- 1 box lasagna noodles
- 1 lb ricotta cheese
- grated nutmeg
- 2 eggs
- 1 lb mozzarella or jack cheese, shredded
- 1/2 lb parmesan cheese, shredded

Directions on then next page!



Directions

1. Lightly brown the meat, just enough to release the fat, and drain off fat.
2. Saute onions, garlic, anise or fennel seed, mushrooms and peppers in same pan as you finish cooking the meat.
3. Add marinara sauce, basil, bay leaves, wine and spinach.
4. Simmer 20-30 min to blend flavors and thicken some.
5. Mix the ricotta cheese with eggs, add a little nutmeg (yes, really!).
6. Spray bottom of a large deep casserole with cooking spray.
7. Put a light layer of the canned tomatoes in the bottom of your casserole (tall sides on the casserole dish work best).
8. Layer dry noodles, meat sauce, ricotta, and cheeses, breaking noodles to fit your pan.
9. Repeat once or twice, depending on size of casserole and how much sauce you made. If you think you are running out of sauce, add some of the crushed tomatoes. If you are going to have lots of sauce, shred more cheese and make a second dish to freeze for later.
10. Press down on the noodles as you layer to make a dense filling do not put cheese on top layer. I usually spoon some of the canned tomatoes along the sides.
11. Cover with a layer of parchment that you have sprayed with cooking spray.
12. Cover with casserole lid (or foil if there is no lid) and place on a sheet pan to catch drips.
13. Bake at 350 for 45 min to an hour or so, check noodles for tenderness adding more canned tomatoes around the sides, if needed.
14. Bake another 15-30 min until noodles are done and liquid is absorbed.
15. Uncover and top with last of the cheese, heat just enough to melt.
16. Let sit 30 min or so to firm up for ease of serving.

NOTES: If your family likes things spicy, substitute spicy sausage or add red pepper flakes.

You can substitute a middle layer of noodles with a layer of sliced butternut squash or zucchini.

Precook the squash in a single layer on a cookie sheet for about 15 minutes.

Submitted by Penny Walgenbach

Edible Plant of the Month

Cover Crops

On Thursday, I attend a cover crop field meeting for agriculture. Of course, I thought how can we do this in our garden. I have read articles on cover cropping in the garden and thought that's a lot of work! Cover cropping is not for everyone but it might be right for you. The main point here is add organic amendments to your soil. It can be a cover crop or it could be compost.

Cover crops are legumes (pea family) or grasses planted to improve garden soil. Most are planted in fall and "dug" into the soil in spring. As they decay, cover crops add valuable organic matter, making the soil easier to work and helping it retain moisture. They also reduce erosion, choke out weeds, and provide early spring flowers to supply nectar and pollen for beneficial insects.

How do they Work?

Cover crops add important NITROGEN to your soil. You will find you need to fertilize less.

Legumes such as fava beans, peas clovers and vetch add nitrogen to the soil, due to their association with Rhizobium bacteria that live symbiotically on their roots. These organisms draw nitrogen from the air and "fix" (concentrate) it in root nodules. When the legumes decompose, the nitrogen is released into the soil. Grasses such as barley, rye and oats don't contribute extra nitrogen to the soil, but they do produce plenty of organic matter. Gardeners often combine legumes and grasses to reap the benefits of both.

How to Use Them

Plant cover crops in the fall, after the rains begin in mild-winter climates. To produce the maximum amount of nitrogen from fava beans and other legumes, let them grow until after they start blooming in spring. Let grasses grow until several weeks before you want to plant other crops. Cut or mow your cover crops, by hand or with a heavy-duty mower. Either till or dig the entire mass of stems, foliage and roots into the soil, or if that is too difficult, add the cut stems and leaves to your compost pile and dig just the roots into the soil. Wait 2 to 4 weeks for the cover crop to decompose before planting spring or summer vegetables.

Is it too late this year to plant a cover crop? Maybe, it depends on the weather but you may want to take a small space and plant some fava beans and give it a try.






Submitted by Gerry Hernandez

Article from *Sunset Western Garden Book of Edibles*

Gardening Guide

UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County

Zones 8 and 9

	December	January	February
P L A N T I N G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant Bare-root roses, Bulbs, Camellias, Cyclamen, Hellebore, Living Christmas trees, Bare-root fruit and landscape trees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant rhubarb, strawberries, and cane berries. Plant seeds for broccoli, cabbage, parsley, turnips, peas, radishes, lettuce, and spinach. This is the time to plant bare root roses, trees, artichoke crowns, grapevines, and other vines. You can still plant pansies, violas, snapdragons, and fairy primroses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant in vegetable garden by direct seeding: radishes, beets, chard, and peas. Start tomato, pepper and eggplant seeds indoors. Flowers to transplant or direct seed: snapdragon, candytuft, larkspur, coral bells, and stock. Plant bulbs for summer bloom: dahlias, begonias, gladiolus, lilies, etc. Plant potatoes.
M A I N T E N A N C E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust your irrigation. Protect citrus and other sensitive plants. Apply dormant spray. Add mulch to beds. Divide perennials. Throw out fallen rose leaves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roses, fruit trees and other perennials can be pruned this month. Do not prune spring flowering shrubs until after they bloom. Prune berry canes that bore fruit last year to the ground. Prune grapevines back, leaving 2 to 3 buds per side shoot. Later in the month you can divide Shasta daisies, daylilies, chrysanthemums, and other perennials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish pruning roses. Prune summer blooming shrubs now. Apply dormant copper spray to peach and nectarine trees no later than bud swell. Fertilize mature trees and shrubs after spring growth starts. Fertilize spring blooming and fall-planted perennials. Mulch 3 inches deep around plants (without touching stems) to conserve soil moisture.
P R E V E N T I O N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is not prevention but SHOP. Plants and seeds make awesome holiday, hostess and mystery gifts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spray horticultural oil on pruned fruit trees to control scale, mites and aphids. Thorough coverage will kill over-wintering eggs. Later in the month, spray neem oil on roses to control mildew, rust, and black spot. Do not apply oils unless there will be 24 hours of dry weather following application. Be sure to clean up debris (leaves and twigs) around roses and fruit trees to help prevent disease. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be sure to remove and discard (do not compost) fallen camellia blossoms to reduce petal blight. Watch for aphids on spring blooming bulbs; remove with a strong spray of water. As the weather warms prepare to battle slugs and snails with traps or pet-friendly baits. 

Seasonal IPM Checklist

The list below reflects possible landscape activities to do during the selected month(s) in your region. You can use the checklist as a guide for IPM activities in your own landscape or provide it to your clients.

December

- Abiotic Disorders - Prevent or manage damage, such as that caused by aeration deficit, frost, hail, herbicides, wind, and too much or little water.
- [Asian citrus psyllid](#) - Look for it and if found where not known to occur report it and other new or [exotic pests](#) to your local county agricultural commissioner.
- [Citrus](#) - Monitor for damage and pests such as brown rot, root rots, and snails.
- [Clean up](#) mummies and old fruit and nuts in and under trees to avoid harboring pests. [Remove fallen leaves](#) from beneath deciduous fruit trees and roses.
- [Compost](#) - Add leaves dropped during fall. Turn and keep it moist. Cover during rainy weather if needed to avoid sogginess.
- Continue [rainy-season prevention of diseases](#), [earwigs](#), [snails and slugs](#), and [weeds](#).
- [Frost](#) - Protect sensitive plants from cold injury when freezing or frost are predicted.
- Implement [disease and insect control](#) for apple, pear, stone fruits, nut trees, and deciduous landscape trees and shrubs such as roses.
- [Irrigation](#) - Adjust watering schedules according to the weather and plants' changing need for water. Reduce irrigation frequency or turn off systems if rainfall is adequate. Irrigate deeply but infrequently if the winter is dry.
- [Mistletoe](#) - Prune off infected branches.
- [Olive knot](#) and [oleander gall, or knot](#) - Avoid pruning olive and oleander during wet weather if stem galls are a problem.
- [Pine](#) bark beetles, pitch moths, western gall rust, and wood borers - If pines need branch removal, prune during October through January.
- [Plant](#) bare root deciduous trees, shrubs, and vines e.g., caneberries, fruit and nuts, grapes, and roses. Plant seedlings of cedar, fir, pine, and spruce. Select species and cultivars well-adapted to the local site.
- [Prune](#) deciduous trees and shrubs that need pruning e.g., apple, crape myrtle, pear, rose, spirea, and stone fruits. Make cuts properly to encourage good form and structure. Remove dead, diseased, and borer-infested wood. Except certain pests and host plants warrant summer pruning e.g., shothole borer, apricot, and cherry.
- [Root rot](#) - Favored by excessive water and poor drainage. Avoid overirrigation and waterlogged soil.
- [Stone fruit diseases](#) - Monitor for leaf curl or shot hole of apricot, nectarine, peach, and plum.

Meet your Master Gardeners!



In today's fast paced, social media way of life, fake news has become normal.
This includes fake gardening advice.
UC Master Gardeners use cutting edge, research-based information to help you garden better.
We are practical, connected and trusted.
Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us!

Tomorrow's activities are created by today's dreamers—you can make sure that the UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County is still working to help future generations through your support.

[Click here to support us.](#)

Science Word of the Month

Organic—1. Composed of or derived from plant or animal material. 2. A compound that contains carbon.

If you attended one of your workshops, you will receive an email from mgevaluation@ucanr.edu. Your input gives us the tools we need to grow and improve our program. *Thank you!*

PRACTICAL | CONNECTED | TRUSTED

Safety Note #3

LADDER SAFETY



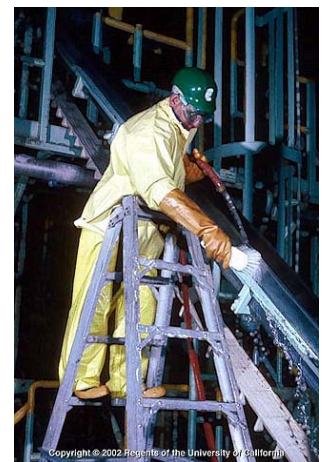
In excess of 30,000 people are injured each year in ladder-related accidents. The leading cause of ladder-related accidents is improper use of ladders. Title 8, Section 3276 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) requires that all employees shall be trained prior to using a ladder. **Video E-072 Ladder Safety is available from the ANR Environmental Health and Safety Library at <http://safety.ucanr.org>.**

Ladder Selection:

Portable ladders are generally designed for one-person use to meet the requirements of the person, the task, and the environment. Ladders are assigned a duty rating that indicates the maximum load (combined weight of user and materials) the ladder may carry. Ladders should be selected according to the anticipated maximum load as follows: Type III light-duty ladders are duty rated for 200 pounds; Type II medium-duty ladders are duty rated for 225 pounds; and Type I heavy-duty ladders are duty rated for 250 pounds. Aluminum ladders are not suitable for work that may involve contact with electrical currents.

Ladder Precautions:

- Always inspect ladder for defects (e.g., damaged rungs, steps, braces) before using. In particular, wood ladders can crack and splinter over time and should be inspected frequently.
- Ladders shall be free of oil, grease, or slippery materials.
- Any ladder with defects must be removed from use by attaching a red tag that states "DO NOT USE." Complete red tag with appropriate information.
- Always set ladder on a solid, level surface.
- Stepladders should be fully opened with spreaders locked.
- Extension ladders should be placed at a four-to-one ratio (i.e., ladder base should be one foot out for every four feet of height to the support point).
- Always assure all locks on extension ladders are properly engaged.
- Never place a ladder in front of a door that is not locked, blocked, or guarded.
- If an extension ladder is to be used to climb on a roof, there should be 3 feet (or 3 rungs) extending beyond the edge of the roof.
- Always mount ladders from the center and climb/descend the ladder using both hands.
- Never step on the top two rungs or top step of any ladder or platform of a stepladder.
- Never "walk" a stepladder while standing on it.
- Never place a ladder against a window pane or sash.
- Never use ladders during strong winds or storms.
- Never stand on a rung or step and face away from the ladder.
- Never carry equipment or materials which prevent the safe use of the ladder.



Garden Club of Colusa County activities

- No Garden Club meeting in December.

Did a friend send you this newsletter?

- You can get your own newsletter sent directly to your inbox by [clicking here](#).



Additional Links

- Integrated Pest Management ipm.ucanr.edu
- UC Davis Arboretum arboretum.ucdavis.edu
- Invasive Plants www.cal-ipc.org
- Plant Right www.plantright.org
- Save Our Water saveourwater.com
- California Garden Web cagardenweb.ucanr.edu
- McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens turtlebay.org
- UCANR Colusa County cecolusa.ucanr.edu
- UC Master Gardener Program (statewide) mg.ucanr.edu
- California Backyard Orchard homeorchard.ucanr.edu
- ANR publications anrcatalog.ucanr.edu

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Inquiries regarding the University's equal employment opportunity policies may be directed to: John I. Sims, Affirmative Action Compliance Officer and Title IX Officer, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2801 Second Street, Davis, CA 95618, (530) 750-1397. Email: jsims@ucanr.edu. Website: http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative_Action/.

This policy statement supersedes the UC ANR Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action Policy Statement for University of California Publications Regarding Program Practices dated July 2013.



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November 12, 2018

Dear Friends of Cooperative Extension,

Colusa County residents face many challenges. Families and businesses need reliable information to solve their problems and improve their lives.

The University of California Cooperative Extension in Colusa County is working to address the needs of Colusa County residents like you. We produce and deliver science-based information through 4-H, Master Gardeners, Nutrition Education, and our agricultural programs in agronomic and vegetable crops, rice, vegetables, and orchards. We touch the lives of many residents in our community.

For example:

- With the help of 80 adult volunteers, 4-H promoted healthy living, citizenship, and science literacy to 420 youth in the Colusa County 4-H Club Program. 4-H also provided in-school science and gardening education to 260 youth in Colusa County schools.
- The Nutrition Education program trained 38 teachers at Williams Upper and Lower Elementary School to teach physical education since the loss of their PE program.
- Our ag programs monitored the levels of southern blight in tomatoes, weedy rice, and continued research efforts to improve production of almonds and walnuts.
- The Master Gardeners of Colusa County organized 22 educational events to deliver sustainable gardening and water efficient landscape information.

I'm writing today to ask for a gift to support our work benefiting the residents of Colusa County. Your donation will allow us to reach more people and have a larger impact in our community. Your gift will be used only to support educational and research activities in Colusa County.

Thank you for your generosity,

Luis Espino, UCCE County Director



Yes, I want to invest in my community!

Enclosed is my gift: \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other: _____

Where do you want to make an impact? 100 percent of your gift will support the area you designate.

- UCCE Colusa General Fund
- 4-H Youth Development Program
- Master Gardener Program
- Other _____

Make checks payable to: UC Regents
To make a gift online, please visit: donate.ucanr.edu

My gift is in honor memory of: _____

Please send gift acknowledgment to:
Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Thank you for your tax-deductible gift to UCCE Colusa County