



University of Nevada
Cooperative Extension

Master Gardeners

of Northeast Clark County

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Website of Interest:

www.nal.usda.gov/research/USDApubs/aghan/dbk.htm

The United States Department of Agriculture publishes a series of free agriculture handbooks that date from the 1950's to about 2006.

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Desert Favorite

By Master Gardener Andrea Meckley

As would be expected of a plant well known for a long time, *Tecoma stans* has many common names: Yellow Bells, Esperanza (the Spanish name), Yellow-elder, Trumpet Flower, as well as a host of Indian names. Yellow Bells is an attractive plant used as a small or medium shrub that can reach 3'- 6' in height and 3'- 4' in width. It has sharply-toothed, medium green leaves and bears large (2"-3" long), showy, bright sun yellow trumpet-shaped flowers, spring through fall. As I write this article in mid-December, the one in my yard is still full of leaves and blooms. This deciduous, drought-tolerant plant grows well in full sun and well-draining soil. Little to no maintenance is required. Prune in January or February if needed to keep shrub to desired size. Yellow Bells is closely related to desert-willow, catalpa, cross-vine, trumpet-creeper and other members of the Bignoniaceae family. An odd but pleasing fragrance from the flowers attracts bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. In the wild this plant will be found growing on rocky slopes near San Antonio, Texas, north into New Mexico and Arizona, east to Florida and south into Central and South America. Yellow Bells is desirable fodder when it grows in fields grazed by livestock. Honey bees are attracted to it, but unlike most flowering plants, the honey produced from Yellow Bells nectar/pollen is poisonous. Used for a variety of medicines in the past, the Native Americans used the wood of this plant to make bows, and in Mexico a beer was prepared from its roots. Yellow bells is loved by butterflies and hummingbirds, but probably shouldn't be eaten by humans or pets. *(Continued on page 2)*



Do not fertilize or prune trees or bushes in December or January.

Spring 2013 MG Training Program

When: March 11 through April 26
MWF 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.

Where: University of Nevada Cooperative Extension,
1897 N Moapa Valley Blvd, Logandale, NV 89021

Cost: \$150.00 - Includes all materials and snacks

Sign-up: Contact Denise Stoesser at 397-2604

www.unce.unr.edu/programs/sites/mastergardener/southern/

Desert Favorite - Continued from page 1

This plant is listed as poisonous on some lists and as non-poisonous on others. Conflicting information regarding the toxicity is confusing. Local nurseries have had different varieties of *Tecoma stans* available the last few years including 'Orange Jubilee' (shown) which is an orange cultivar, and 'Sunrise,' a variety that has yellow blooms veined with copper threads. *Tecoma stans* is a good candidate for a full sun landscape looking for a hardy shrub with color most of the year.



January Reminders

1. Purchase spring seeds
2. Cover pipes to keep from freezing.
3. Start tomatoes inside if you haven't already done so.
4. Fertilize and prune grapes.
5. Plant bare-root trees
6. Clear debris from garden.
7. Solarize empty plots.
8. Fertilize cool season turf.
9. Check houseplants for pests.
10. Prune fruit and nut trees.
11. Start a new compost pile.
12. Start green bean seeds indoors.
13. Fertilize houseplants.
14. Deep water trees and shrubs.
15. Check sprinkler system for breaks and adjust timers.
16. Prepare soil for early spring season vegetables.
17. Fertilize fruit and nut trees.
18. Sprout seeds in a jar for fresh greens every day.
19. Cover tender plants to keep from freezing.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:

- Mesquite Heritage Garden
- Fair Garden Planting
- Newsletter article or pictures
- Veggies by the Season Classes

Companion Planting

While white garlic and onions repel a plethora of pests and make excellent neighbors for most garden plants, the growth of beans and peas is stunted in their presence. Potatoes and beans grow poorly in the company of sunflowers, and although cabbage and cauliflower are closely related, they don't like each other at all.

One of the keys to successful companion planting is observation. Record your plant combinations and the results from year to year, and share this information with other Master Gardeners. Companionship is just as important for gardeners as it is for gardens.

***You know you're a
Master Gardener
if you take every single
person who enters your
house on a garden tour!***

January Planting

Arugula
Asparagus
Beets
Bok Choy
Cabbage
Carrot
Celery

Cilantro
Chard
Collard greens
Endive
Fennel
Kale
Kohlrabi

Lettuce
Mustard
Onions
Parsley
Parsnip
Rutabagas
Spinach

Minimum soil temperature must be consistent for all required days to germination

Winter Container Gardening

During the cold months of January and February when the setting is bleak and the sky is gray, winter containers can cheer up the soul and provide a colorful punch to the landscape. Many gardeners give up on their potted creations in the fall, but that can be a horrible waste because winter is when color and interest are most vital.

Creating a winter design is not difficult. The general rule for container-plant survival through the winter is to use plants hardy to at least two zones colder than your USDA Hardiness Zone. In this case, a frost proof pot with a drainage hole is important. Fiberglass, lead, iron, heavy plastic, and stone are the best weather-resistant containers to use.

Assemble your designs early enough that the plants have time to acclimate to their new pots before a cold spell. Also, winter containers usually need to be checked only monthly for water to make sure they haven't dried out. When it comes to design, it is nice to use a mix of live plants, cut branches, colorful berries, and interesting evergreen foliage to dress up the pots for maximum seasonal appeal.

Think Perennials - While summer is a terrific time to go crazy with flowering annuals, fall is a wonderful season to try hardy perennials in your container gardens. Have fun experimenting with color combinations you didn't use in the summer. Purples and oranges, mixed with bright greens and deep reds can look stunning.

Cool Looking and Cold Loving Annuals - There are also lots of annuals that look great and will last well past the first frost. Some will even look fabulous and sculptural with a coating of snow. Try combining different heights and forms, or go simple and pot a single dramatic plant in a beautiful container.

Try some cold-loving annuals or perennials like: Ornamental cabbages and kales, annual grasses, sages, flaxes, pansies, creeping wire-vine, New Zealand flax, coral bells, sedum grasses, smoke bush, lambs ear, ivy, creeping jenny, hens and chicks.

Veggies by the Season

Veggies by the Season is a series of year round, month-by-month gardening classes designed to educate people on producing timely vegetables in their back yard gardens.

Winter

Jan. 9 - Season Extension
Jan. 23 - Tomatoes
Feb. 13 - Bare Root Trees
Feb. 27 - Pruning and Tool Care

Spring

March 13 - Starting seeds indoors
March 27 - Planning your garden
April 10 - Irrigation
April 24 - Transplanting and seed sowing
May 8 - Weeds and Pests
May 22 - Thinning etc.

\$5.00 each or \$25 for all

For more information call
Denise at 702-397-2604 x 4

How to Store Root Crops

Storing foods in a root cellar makes it possible to eat fresh vegetables from the home garden well into the winter months.

Storage temperature reference chart: <http://extension.missouri.edu/p/MP562>



Have your fall and winter garden of root crops mature as long as possible by planting as early as possible. Cold weather sweetens the roots and you'll be putting the freshest produce into a cool root cellar, garage, back porch unused sun porch, in a covered hole in the ground, or refrigeration unit. Leave your last planting in the ground until the roots are fully mature; they'll store better if they're protected by a thicker skin.

Whether you're going to eat most of your vegetables fresh, or you intend to freeze, can, or store them in a root cellar, a good rule of thumb is to harvest as close to the time you're going to eat or preserve them as possible. This gives you the best flavor and nutrition.

For a longer storage life, dig up the roots from your fall and winter garden after two or three days of unwatered dry weather. Your root crops will be dry, and by leaving them out for a few hours in the sun right after you pull them, you'll kill the root hairs, making the plant dormant, and the soil on the roots will dry and fall off easily.

Never wash roots before you store them. Just cut off the tops right out in the garden. Leave about an inch of stem for beets, so they don't "bleed" in cooking. For other root crops, cut the tops close. Wash the roots just before using them.

Only store the best roots. Any that are damaged by insects or harvesting you can eat fresh. Injuries are avenues of rotting that can spread to the other vegetables. If you should bruise any, eat them right away. Also, don't ever clip off the bottom end of the root before you put it in storage; this, too, can open the plant to rot.

Storage



Covered vegetables: Sawdust (left) - sand (center left) - peat moss (center right) – straw (right)

You don't need an elaborate root cellar to store vegetables, even for months at a time. You can easily extend the fresh life of root crops using whatever storage space you currently have. The length of storage time may vary according to your storage method, but with any of the methods described below, you can be sure of at least a couple months of fresh vegetables.

To stay crisp and fresh, root crops need cool, moist, dark surroundings. The ideal place would be about 34° F with high humidity. Most gardeners can only approximate these conditions. But whether you have a root cellar, a spot under the back porch, garage or an unused refrigeration unit for storage the most important element for long vegetable life is an even, cold temperature. Variations up or down of even five degrees can cause new growth to sprout or rotting. Here, insulation is the key.

If your storage area is cool but not insulated, a large, sturdy cardboard or wooden box with two to three inches of some insulating material (sawdust is best, and moist peat moss, hay or sand also works well) on the bottom and sides will do fine. Place a layer of roots on top of the sawdust, leaving two to three inches of space near the sides. Cover the roots lightly with sawdust--1/4 inch is fine - alternate layers of roots with sawdust, filling in all around the edges with sawdust as well. Add a final two to three inches of sawdust on top, and store this "root box" in a cool area.

If you have no cellar or unused refrigeration unit, you can still use the insulated box method. But you'll need a really large box lined on the bottom, sides and top with four to five inches of sawdust or peat moss. Pack the roots in the sawdust and store the box in a cool place--your garage, back porch or an unheated spare room. Whenever you need some vegetables, just take them out and repack the sawdust around the rest.

Roots can touch each other in storage; just don't pack them in tightly like canned sardines. Some moist air must be able to circulate.

When you visit your storage area to get vegetables, check for any roots that may not be keeping well and cull them. Don't worry if a few are starting to deteriorate--some individual vegetables just don't keep as well as others. The rest will be all right.

Your storage method can be as simple or complex as you like, but be realistic about what your family will eat between gardening seasons. Just as in garden planning, a small area that you visit regularly is better than a huge one in which food is wasted.

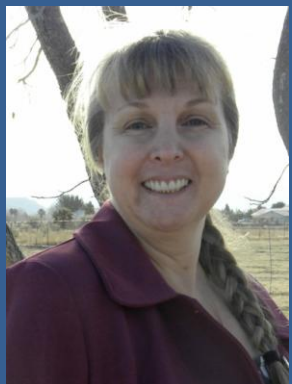
If you want to keep it simple, your refrigerator crisper drawer will keep roots fresh for several months, but you can only store a limited amount this way.



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What do I do with all these Turnips?

Roasted Turnips

Ingredients:

- 2 lbs. turnips
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt to taste

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Leave baby turnips whole; cut larger turnips into large-ish bite-size pieces. Put turnips into a baking pan. Drizzle with olive oil. Toss to coat thoroughly with the oil. Sprinkle with salt. Roast turnips until tender and browned, about 30 to 60 minutes.

Clapshot

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. baking potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 3/4 pound turnips, peeled and cubed
- 1/4 pound carrots, peeled and cubed
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons butter, cubed
- 3 tablespoons heavy cream

Preparation:

Place the potatoes, turnips, carrots, and salt in a Dutch oven, fill with water to cover the vegetables and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-high and boil the vegetables until tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Drain and mash the vegetables with a potato masher. Spoon the mashed vegetables into a serving dish, top with cubes of butter and drizzle with cream.

Puréed Turnip Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. white turnips, chopped
- 1 medium potato, peeled and chopped
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and crushed
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 qt. vegetable broth or stock
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

In a heavy-bottomed soup pot, heat the butter over a low-to-medium heat. Add the onion, garlic and turnips and cook for 2-3 minutes or until the onion is slightly translucent, stirring continuously. Add the wine and cook for another minute or two or until the wine seems to have reduced by about half. Add the stock and the potato. Increase the heat to medium-high and bring to a boil. Then lower the heat and simmer for 15 minutes or until the turnips and potatoes are soft enough that they can easily be pierced with a knife. Don't let them get mushy, though. Remove from heat and purée with a hand blender. Return puréed soup to a simmer again, adding more broth or stock to adjust the thickness if necessary.

Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot and topped with croutons.

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