

Master Gardener News

Amador County

MAY 2006



Your Co-Pres' Speak

In the Mother continued to activities that did hold back for a well- Expo. Larry Jones felt the April rains. The roads to his property were in poor condition and we had to cancel the April meeting at his home. We will reschedule the meeting at his house some time in 2007, weather permitting.



month of April Nature limit the outdoor could be done. She the rain to allow attended spring Expo. Larry Jones felt the full effects of the April rains. The roads to his property were in poor condition and we had to cancel the April meeting at his home. We will reschedule the meeting at his house some time in 2007, weather permitting.

The June meeting will be at the regular meeting time at the Ag office. At the April meeting it was mentioned that the June meeting would be at Jackie Tarchala's home, however she needs to reschedule. The August meeting has also been changed. The date will be Wednesday August 16th; it will be an evening meeting at Penny Smith's in Plymouth.

At the April meeting certificates were awarded to those who had completed the Master Gardener Volunteer Training program in 2005/06. It was a great class with many of its members already highly involved in the Amador County MG programs. I have tried to attend as many of the public education programs and field trips as possible. They are great learning experiences and they increase our individual knowledge so that we can better serve the community.

Thanks to all who participated in the April activities, especially the spring Expo. The public education programs were well attended with good audience participation. There was a great selection of plant types; there was aggressive buying by the public with only some minor crown control problems (!) A special thanks to the people who provide the communications for the MGs – the monthly newsletter and its many contributors, the great publicity to the public, the notice of meetings and other important happenings, and the MG web sites.

A reminder that the calendar committee has a photo contest ending May 5th for a color photo for the front of the 2007 calendar. See the April newsletter for details.

Good Gardening, Marie & Jerry

MAY CALENDAR

May 5, Friday – **Duarte Nursery field trip.**

May 13, Saturday – **“Tomatoes” and “Soils for Containers”**, 10 am-noon at Ag office.

May 16, Tuesday – **MG Monthly Meeting**, 1:00 pm at the Ag office.. **Speaker Dixie Norkoli, Herbalist.** Board meeting at noon.

May 17, Wednesday – **Morningsun Herb Farm field trip**, 8:00 am. Details inside.

May 23, Tuesday – **“Building & Planting Window Boxes”**, 6:30 -8 pm at the Ag office.

Secretary's Notes

APRIL 18, 2006

Jerry Trottier began the meeting at 1:05 PM. He explained that the evening meeting at Larry Jones' home had been canceled due to weather related issues. Jerry then asked Larry to introduce his wife Martha, sister Rosemary and her husband who were visiting

Bob Allen volunteered as the speaker. Bob's topic was "Asparagus for the Home Garden". Bob is the perfect person to present the information about growing asparagus because he is something of an expert after spending five years supervising a commercial asparagus growing operation in southwestern Ontario. Bob said that asparagus has been a popular crop for home gardens for thousands of years. It is a long-lived perennial that can survive up to twenty years if raised under the proper conditions. Asparagus is a deep-rooted crop and requires beds that are a minimum of two feet in depth. It cannot tolerate "wet feet" and so would do best in Foothill gardens in raised beds filled with well-drained sandy loam soil (pH 6.0 - 7.0). Add lots of manure/compost to the raised beds and plant the asparagus crowns. There are older varieties of asparagus available such as Mary/Martha Washington and the newer varieties such as UC 500 and UC 157. All male hybrids are also available. The best sources for asparagus crowns are nurseries/garden centers.

Once you are ready to plant the crowns you should put in a minimum of 25 crowns and plant them 1 foot apart. Planting crowns closer than this will result in thin spears. The larger crowns are better. You should dig a six to eight inch trench, apply two to three pounds of 0-20-0 super phosphate or its organic equivalent to the soil in the bottom of the planting hole, and then cover the fertilizer with an inch of soil. Place the crowns in the trench and spread out the roots. Cover with two inches of soil and pack down slightly. Water well after planting and as spears emerge and grow you should gradually fill in

the trench. Don't bury the ferns and ensure that the plants have plenty of water.

Don't harvest the spears in the first growing season. During the second season you can harvest the spears for the first two weeks. In the third season the harvest can be extended for three weeks and during the fourth and successive season you can harvest for six weeks. When you harvest you should cut or snap the spears at ground level.

In the fall when the ferns turn brown they should be cut and removed. Control of perennial weeds in the beds is of primary importance. Add one to two pounds of 5-10-10 fertilizer to each row or the equivalent in organic fertilizers after harvest and in the spring prior to the buds emergence.

Diseases in asparagus crops are not normally a problem in California. Keep watch for asparagus beetles as they can create problems and should be controlled.

Bob concluded his presentation with a brief question and answer session. He said that you could apply mulch to asparagus crops to retain water and discourage the growth of weeds. Bob also called asparagus an "underground orchard". He said that when asparagus plants are established they don't require very much water but a grower would also not want the plants to wilt.

Jerry Trottier thanked Bob for his informative presentation. Jerry then made sure that the clipboards with the sign-up sheets for all the various activities were circulating through the group.

Bob Allen spoke briefly about the field trips to Duarte Nurseries and Morningstar Nurseries. He said that Duarte Nurseries is one of the largest producers of grape rootstock. The Morningstar Nurseries was rescheduled due to the inclement weather and will take place on May 17th. You must contact Bob if you wish to participate in these outings.

Emily Beals discussed the upcoming Plant Clinics. The clinics will be held on the first Saturday of each month at the Ridge Road Nursery. There will also be two clinics scheduled at the new Lowe's Garden Center and one more clinic will be held at Wal Mart. Anybody who would like to participate should contact Emily directly to sign-up.

Marie Loretta spoke about the May Computer Training Classes. Jim Harrington will be teaching a Basic Computer Skills class on May 9th. There will be training in Power Point on May 19th and Janice Johnson will conduct a course about the Publisher software. If you are interested any of the classes you will need to sign up in advance.

Jerry Trottier then began the presentation of certificates to the 2005 Master Gardener Trainees who had completed the basic program requirements. Those individuals included: Dave Andrews, Emily Beals, Valerie Bonkowski, Cathy Cunha, Judy Marks, John Otto, Jakki Schatz, Ann Schieding, Leora Smith, Penny Smith, Patty Stalder, and Jerry Trottier. Jerry invited everyone to the Ice Cream Social to celebrate the new Master Gardener status of these hard working individuals.

The June meeting tentatively scheduled to be held at Penny Smith's in Plymouth has been rescheduled to Wednesday, August 16th. It will be an evening meeting on a Wednesday so some of our gainfully employed Master Gardeners will be able to remain participants in the program. Final details will be forthcoming on these meetings so check your newsletter carefully in the next few months.

Marie Loretta stated that the Grapevine Budding demonstration at Penny Smith's ranch was very informative. She also said that the Master Gardener table and Container Gardening demonstrations at the Amador Flower Farm's "Spring Fling" event went smoothly.

Marie Loretta also attended the Rose Society meeting where Baldo Villegas was the guest speaker. She termed his presentation "fantastic" and said that he discussed rose

"pests" and the least toxic ways to address plant damage. He referred often to IPM and gave very practical information in an interesting format.

Marie spoke about the very successful Spring Expo experience. There was a crowd control issue and an elderly woman did trip in the parking area (she was shaken but appeared to have survived intact). Bernice concurred with Marie's assessment of the Expo and added that it was a learning experience. Things that will probably be done differently are: 1) a firm opening time - no exceptions; 2) all plants clearly labeled; and 3) more of the big plant category signs to direct the public. Bernice reminded everybody to begin thinking of the Fall Expo and to start small plants now. She will be the Plant Czar again for the next Expo. If you have any questions, contact Bernice directly.

After doing phone surveys of MGs who live below the 2500' elevation point or above she compiled a Vegetable Planting Guide that she used as a handout for her classes on spring and Summer Vegetable Gardening in the Foothills. This guide will be included in the MG calendars but she had handouts for all who wanted their own copy. Marie also passed around copies of Cathy Koos Breazeal's "winning and losing" vegetables grown at her 3980' elevation.

The Plymouth school garden has one more workday before the end of the school year. If you'd like to help in this project, just contact Chris Taylor directly.

Larry Jones did a short "Show and Tell" presentation that he had planned for the April MG meeting at his home. He has been experimenting with a product called "Dip & Grow" as a rooting aid in growing plants from cuttings. He followed the dilution rate outlined on the directions on the product. Larry used a mixture of 3/1 peat moss to vermiculite as a planting medium and placed the cuttings on a heating pad. He maintained a constant humidity. His experiments were with cuttings of fig, pear, roses, and grapes. His results were that some of the cuttings rooted and others didn't. He hasn't reached

any final conclusions yet about the efficacy of the "Dip and Grow" product but further results will be forthcoming.

Larry also passed along some tips about plant tags. He found that aluminum beer and soda cans that are cut up make dandy tags. You can write on them with permanent markers and attach them to plants with wires scavenged from discarded phone lines. He also has a small canvas tote that came from Brookstone that he finds holds a multitude of gardening "must haves" in a very handy way.

Dennis Miller said the IPM presentation on ants inspired him to look at local outlets for products that were recommended as possible control measures. He found Borax and three other products recommended to control Argentine ants at Wal Mart.

Please remember to contact Lucy Martin with information about any special projects you may have undertaken. Lucy wants to make sure that your individual contributions to the program are acknowledged but she needs to be provided with timely updates so she can keep her records current.

Jerry Trottier adjourned the meeting at 3:05.

Submitted by Donna England

ROBIN IVANHOFF'S CHOCOLATE CHERRY TRUFFLE CAKE

Filling 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
2/3 cup sweetened condensed milk
(from 14-oz can)
¼ tsp almond extract

Cake 1 box (18.25 oz) chocolate fudge cake mix, with pudding in the mix
1 cup water
½ cup vegetable oil
½ tsp. almond extract
4 eggs
1 box (4-serving size) instant chocolate pudding/pie filling mix
1 jar (10 oz) maraschino cherries, drained on paper towel & chopped (¾ c) (optional)

Glaze Remaining sweetened condensed milk (from 14-oz can)

¾ cup semisweet chocolate chips
2 Tlbs. corn syrup (Karo)
1 tsp. milk, if needed

Garnish, if desired

8 oz vanilla-flavored candy coating, placed on top of cake.

Maraschino cherries, drained on paper towels.

1. Heat oven to 300°F. Grease & lightly flour a bundt pan or angelfood cake pan.
2. In medium microwavable bowl, mix filling ingredients. Microwave on high for 25-35 seconds, stirring until melted and smooth and set aside.
3. In large bowl with electric mixer, beat cake mix, oil, water, ½ tsp almond extract, eggs, and pudding mix on low speed, about 1 minute, scraping constantly. Fold in chopped cherries (optional). Spoon batter into cake pan, spread evenly. Carefully spoon filling in (on top) over batter, try not to touch the sides of the pan.
4. Bake 45-50 minutes, or until toothpick inserted 1" from inside edge of pan comes out clean, top of cake feels firm to touch, and cake pulls away slightly from side of pan. Cool 15 minutes.
5. Place heatproof serving plate over pan, turn plate and pan over. Remove cake from pan. Cool cake completely, about 1 hour.
6. In 1-qt saucepan, heat glaze ingredients (except 1 t milk) over med-low heat, stir occasionally, until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Stir in up to 1 tsp milk if necessary, for correct glazing consistency (you want it a bit runny). Pour glaze over cake, allow it to drizzle down the sides. Store loosely covered in the refrigerator.

Announcements

FIELD TRIP

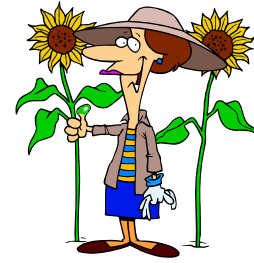
A field trip to Morningsun Herb Farm in Vacaville and Jepson Prairie Preserve south of Dixon is scheduled for Thursday, May 17th. We will meet at Ag office at 8:00AM to car pool. We visited this place a few years ago and they had a diverse variety of native plants & herbs. See their website www.morningsunherbfarm.com. We will also visit on the way home the Jepson Prairie Preserve south of Dixon CA. It should be a perfect Vernal Pool area at this time of year. Bring a lunch, as there are picnic areas at Morningsun Herb Farm. If you are planning to go please sign up with Bob Allen either by email at rmallen@volcano.net or phone 296-7442.

Bob Allen

FARMERS MARKET PRESS RELEASE

The Amador Farmers Market is getting ready for its 2006 season, and is looking for new vendors to grow our vendor and customer base for both the Sutter Creek and Pine Grove markets. Produce is especially appreciated, but all potential vendors will be considered. The Market will run this year in Sutter Creek on Saturdays from 8 am to 11 am beginning June 10, and in Pine Grove on Wednesdays from 3:30 pm to 6 pm beginning June 14. Both markets run through October. Selling at the Farmers Market is a great way to make some money, see your friends and neighbors, and really feel part of your community. It is also an opportunity to show off your gardening prowess and hone your marketing skills along with a group of other hardworking, committed individuals. Join us for a fun 2006 season! For more information, please call market manager Michelle Grondin at (209) 419-2503.

WHATS BLOOMING NOW?



Alyssum saxatile (perennial)
Anemone coronaria (Poppy Flowered Anemone)
Armeria (Sea Thrift)
Baby Blue Eyes
Bearded Iris
Brodiaea
Bush Lupine
California Poppies
Camellia japonica
Cerastium (Snow in Summer)
Clematis armandii (white & rose)
Crabapple
Dogwood
Daffodils 'Hooped Petticoats' and 'Rip Van Winkle'
Euphorbia
Erysimum 'Bowles Mauve'
Erysimum orange
Flowering Almond
Iris, Pacific Coast
Larkspur
Lavender
Lilac
Lupine
Meadow Foam
Pansies (yes, still)
Phlox subulata (groundcover phlox)
Rosa 'Lady Bank's'
Redbud
Rosemary (Still)
Tulips
Verbena groundcovers
Wild Carrot
Wild Mustard
Wild Onion

Jackie Tarchala

CALIFORNIA OAK WOODLANDS,

In December I attended a meeting on oak preservation that was sponsored by the Upper Mokelumne Watershed Council. The speakers were so interesting and so passionate that at the end of the evening when I filled out the questionnaire, I checked "yes" in the box asking if I wanted to help with a seminar in March!

After many hours of brainstorming, our group of volunteers organized an all day seminar that was held March 2nd at the Jackson Civic Center and was titled "Oak Conservation Benefits Everyone". We were pleasantly surprised at the turnout; over 50 people attended the event, which ran from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

There were 10 speakers who covered such topics as "California Oak Woodlands: Values, Threats and Opportunities", "Oaks and the Local Landscape". Several speakers talked about the new law that has recently gone into effect, SB 1344, and if, indeed, it will help to protect oak woodlands. Our own Scott Oneto was the moderator in the morning and in the afternoon session spoke about "Oak Conservation and Agriculture Research".

When I originally attended the meeting in December I was mainly concerned about developers in our area that, in some instances, have come in and clear-cut the land. I have now learned that developers are just one of the many threats to our oak woodlands and that there is much that needs to be done to protect these natural habitats.

A few of the goals of the group, presently being called Friends of the Oaks, are to suggest that guidelines be adopted by our county and city planners to protect oak woodlands and that, ultimately, an oak protection ordinance be passed. We also hope to continue to educate landowners, ranchers, vintners, and the general public in what they can do, themselves, to protect oaks.

So, keep watch for future events from the Friends of the Oaks and if you are interested

in participating, we could certainly use the help, as there is much that needs to be done on this most important issue.

Cathie Cunha

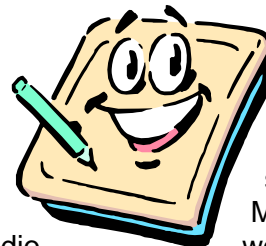
AMADOR COUNTY FAIR

We are going to have two opportunities for MG demos at the County Fair at 1pm Saturday July 29 and Sunday July 30. Signup sheets will be available at the May meeting for all times that we will be staffing the MG booth. If you would like to do a demo, please sign up for the Saturday or Sunday afternoon shift and let me know what your demo will be so I can get the information to the fair publicity person.

We also have to get going on our fair garden. Workers are welcome to weed, plant and weed some more. This year the theme is "Go Hog Wild" so we will blitz them with color. I saved a photo from the Bee Garden Section showing a garden bright with red zinnias, gold coreopsis and lavender blue verbena bonariensis. If anyone has any of those plants to donate (or lend as we can dig them up at the end of the fair) let me know. Thanks to Lou Ohls the area between our garden and the next garden is no longer a weed patch, but has been planted with agapanthus.

Bernice Honeychurch

MG MINUTE



Anyone submit a the MG Hometown Radio

welcomed. I will be recording these spots most Mondays, and would appreciate help from other MGs on timely topics. Scripts should be around 150 words. Thanks.

wishing to script for Minute on would be

Robin Ivanoff

PUBLIC EDUCATIONS CLASSES

GROW TOMATOES!

Saturday, May 13, 10 AM to 12 noon, at the Ag/UCCE Office, 12200 Airport Road, Martell.

The class will focus on successful techniques for growing tasty tomatoes in the soil and climate conditions found in upcountry Amador County. This is a don't-miss opportunity to learn practical tips to improve the quality and quantity of your tomato crop. Also, there will be valuable instruction given on how to build healthy and productive container soils.

MAKE AND PLANT YOUR OWN WINDOW BOXES

Tuesday evening, May 23, from 6:30 to 8:00 PM at the Ag/UCCE office, 12200 Airport Road in Martell.

Participants will learn how to fabricate a window box from scratch using cedar fence boards. They will also learn how to use pre-made reservoir containers inside the window box, which allows the containers to be interchanged for seasonal color. The reservoirs provide enough water to keep the contents damp, permitting twice weekly watering even during the hottest periods of summer. Options for drip irrigation will also be discussed. In addition, guidance will be given in deciding what to plant in window boxes. Handouts of plant lists with suggestions for good plant combinations will be available.

These classes are free and open to the public. For further information about this class or any other topic, please call the Master Gardener office at 223-6838, Tuesday through Friday, 10 AM to noon, or email the office mgamador@ucdavis.edu

Patti Stalder

PLANTS TO PROPAGATE

The following native plants will be featured in our 2007 Master Gardener Calendar. We would like to have these plants and plants from the same families available for our Fall Expo Plant Sale. So get out there now (before it gets too hot) and take cuttings.

January – Oregon Grape
February – Western Redbud
March – Deer Brush (or other Ceanothus)
April – Pacific Dogwood
May – Hartweg's Iris
June – Beard Tongue (or other Penstemon)
July – Sage
August - Yarrow
September – Wild Strawberry & Calif. Rose
October – California Fuschia
November – Purple Needle Grass
December – Black Oak

SPEAKER FOR MAY

Our speaker for May is Dixie Norkoli. As a child she was raised with herbs in the Spanish and Native American traditions and has continued studying and learning throughout her life. She is a 4th generation herbalist, seriously studying and practicing for the past 35 years and teaching for over 18 years.

She has had extensive training in Stress Reduction Techniques (HeartMath), Gardening (Master Gardener), Western, Ayurvedic, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Aromatherapy, Flower Essences and is a Reiki Master Teacher.

"I continue my studies as an herbalist, healer, gardener and teacher. I find that some of my students are my greatest teachers, and for this gift I am forever grateful. Emphasizing the importance of integrating the many aspects of each person's life into a unified and harmonious whole and striving to inspire the student's own self-empowerment is a great and humbling honor and is both wonderful and challenging.

CONTACT SHEETS - PROBLEMS AND RESOLUTIONS by Lucy Martin

March 21 – April 18

Problem: White flies on tomato plants. Need information on controlling whiteflies and companion planting to avoid whiteflies.

Resolution: Mailed Pest Note #7401 to her. Suggested application of worm castings around plant and dig 2-4 inches. She says she plans on planting her tomatoes in containers and keeping them on her deck away from site of last years infestation.

Problem: Has a cactus 1½ ft and 5” diameter. The plant is getting dark brown from the roots up. Hasn’t changed watering or moved it.

Resolution: ... stem rot is possible....Collectatrichum Stem Rot (fungus) or Ecwira Soft Rot (bacterial). This last one is fast spreading and will kill the plant. Both diseases are caused by too much water or humidity. Client claims he did not over water. Had, however sprayed cactus with water to remove white mildew growing on the plant. He has taken cuttings and repotting in new soil.

Problem: Has to know what kind of trees are on their property. They need a letter with the name of the trees by the 29th.

Resolution: Individual called last week at my home needing official letter from a state licensed arborist ... to declare tree identity. Referred to Scott and she contacted him. He explained that she needed a state licensed arborist to provide the official document she needs.

Problem: Wisteria Gall – Sutter Creek Hill Area.

Resolution: ...has cut gall out. Had contacted MGs earlier last year and one recommendation was to use Gallex (paint on gall). However, it is not available locally and where it is found is very expensive. Wisteria is still growing.

Problem: Would like to know what growing zone Jackson is in.

Resolution: I believe she is referring to Sunset number. Left message – Jackson is in Zone 9 – Sunset Western Garden Book.

Problem: Please identify bugs in house/barn log house from county. Concerned it was from logwood.

Resolution: Common plant bug. Will do no damage in house or outside. No control needed.

Problem: Small bug/beetle showing up since December, (also last year). Seem to be more this year and are in the house. Provided sample. Has tried ant type pesticides without success.

Resolution: Think it is a “Grass Bug” or “Plant Bug” but need specific information. Steve Collins has samples he believes are similar. Made copy of “Plant bugs” info (see attached to *contact sheet*) and mailed.

Problem: Cymbidium Orchids won’t bloom 8-10 years old – potted in bark.

Resolution: Fertilizer methods for orchid – also paw-paw – no fruit --- needs a partner.

Problem: Said she needs soil testing.

Resolution: Called left message – No facility for testing in Amador County. Recommended A&L Labs – Modesto – 209-529-4080 ... Peaceful Valley Farm Supply, Grass Valley – 800-784-1722.

Problem: Gophers – how to get rid of them/fruit tree pruning (how – when).

Resolution: Sent Pest Notes

Problem: Wants information on pruning 5’ camellia. The plant has gotten over-sized and he would like to keep it under control.

Resolution: Mailed Pg 242-243 – Camellias and their care and pruning from Sunset.

Problem: Would like high ledge that grows fast for a west location beside a mobile home. Deer proof preferred.

Resolution: Mailed her list of shrubs/hedges that she can choose from that meet her needs for location and deer resistance.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION CORNER

April 2006 By: Lucy Martin

Thank you:

Marie Loretta, Valerie Bonkowski and Donna England for Container Gardening demonstration at the Amador Flower Farm.

Penny Smith for hosting the Grape Grafting class for MGs. And to all who attended.

Jerry Trottier and Larry Jones for their class on Ants at the 25th. evening meeting

Larry Jones for his gardening talk and demo on propagation during the April meeting.

Bob Allen for his presentation on asparagus during the April meeting.

Cathy Koos Breazeal for her "Organic Gardening 101" class for the public.

Jackie Tarchala for her "Everything You Wanted to Know About Herbs ..." class for the public. And for her presentation on Geraniums to the Sierra Madre Garden Club.

To ALL who worked so hard in many capacities to make the Spring Expo another grand success.

Bernice Honeychurch who volunteered to repot plants into one-gallon container for the spring expo – very generous.

I apologize if I omitted mentioning anyone who contributed extra time. ***If you make an extra contribution of your time and knowledge to or in behalf of Master Gardeners please let me know so that it can be acknowledged. This article will appear monthly.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Gardeners, I think, dream bigger dreams than Emperors – Mary Cantwell

Jackie Tarchala

BAKED TRIPLE VEGGIE DIP

By Diane Ferrell

1 can (1 lb.3 oz.) asparagus spears, drained, chopped
1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained
1 can (8-1/2 oz.) artichoke hearts, drained, chopped
1 container (8 oz.) PHILADELPHIA Chive & Onion Cream Cheese Spread\
½ cup KRAFT Real Mayonnaise
1-1/2 cups KRAFT 100% Grated Parmesan Cheese, divided

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix all ingredients, reserving ¼ cup Parmesan cheese. Spoon into 2-quart baking dish. Sprinkle with reserved cheese. Bake 35 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve hot with TRISCUIT Thin Crisps and cut up vegetables.

JOHN OTTO'S HALIBUT DIP or ENTRÉE

2 lb. Halibut, cooked and flaked
2 or 3 – 4 oz. Cans green chiles, depending on your taste preference
2 cups mayonnaise
8 oz. Softened cream cheese (cut into small cubes)
1 teaspoon + or minced garlic (powdered also works)
1 cup grated cheddar cheese
1 cup grated Monterey Jack cheese

KEEPING OUT OF THE THORNS

To protect hands from pointy thorns, hold roses with a clothespin when cutting them for bouquets.

The clothespin allows you to keep the rose steady without getting your hands pricked. Just gently grasp the stem with a spring-design clothespin and clip it at the desired height. This also comes in handy when pruning or deadheading roses or other thorny bushes.

Yard Calendar - May

PLANT SEED:

Below 2500': Soil should be warm enough to sow seed for summer plants (cosmos, marigolds, sunflowers, zinnias). Give zinnias lots of water. Portulaca is good for dry areas.
Above 2500': Check soil temperatures first. Plant seeds in all raised beds. Start in greenhouse or coldframe. Find out the date of the last frost in your area!

SET OUT PLANTS:

Below 2000': Plant perennials, annuals, shrubs. Plant drought tolerant species in time to get roots established before dry weather hits.
Gladiolas, dahlias and begonias can still be planted.

FERTILIZE: Rains leach the nutrients out of the soil!

Feed flowering annuals regularly with a complete fertilizer. Fertilize acid lovers.
Feed summer blooming perennials and all container plants.
Fertilize roses following bloom period. Continue to feed at least once a month.
Feed tall bearded Iris after bloom with low N.
Feed lawns once a month with 21-0-0.
Use iron chelate if acid lovers have yellow leaves.

SPRAY/OTHER GARDEN CONTROL (Dress Properly):

See **Veggie/Orchard** calendar.

GARDEN MAINTENANCE:

Check drip irrigation for emitter leaks. Clean and flush system & filters.
As soil warms, **mulch 1 to 3"** to suppress weeds and conserve moisture. Keep away from trunk.
Pinch back chrysanthemums to 12 ". Others can benefit too: fuschias, carnations, dahlias, mums
Deadhead fading flowers and bulbs. Do not cut off the bulb leaves until they turn brown.
Weed, Weed, Weed (hoe or pull).
Disbud peonies now for bigger blooms.
To encourage branching on shrubs and newly planted flowers, pinch back growing tips.
Tip prune evergreens to encourage compact growth.
Prune spring flowering shrubs after bloom, if needed. On lilacs, remove spent flower clusters just above points where leaf buds are forming.
Remove suckers from bushes/trees.
Water small to medium shrubs when the top 3-6" of soil is dry, large shrubs and trees when the top 6-12" is dry. Unthirsty plants (cotoneaster, rockrose) can go longer.
Rebuild water basins around shrubs & trees. Deep water each.
When rose blooms are spent, prune stems just above a leaf with 5 or more leaflets. If cut long stem roses, leave the same amount of stem. Use a systemic insecticide too.
If you have some white fuzzy stuff on plants in shady areas, it's powdery mildew.
Stake and tie delphiniums.
Don't let rhododendrons go to seed-remove pods after flowers finish being careful not to harm new growth below.
Poison Oak-do not burn plants or roots! You can manually pull it out but you must get all horizontal roots too. Dress appropriately-wear plastic gloves with washable cotton gloves over top. Wipe down boots with alcohol. Launder all clothes. Chemical control is good later this month when leaves fully develop. Tests at U of CA showed herbicides with triclopyr or glyphosate as most effective. Complete control usually requires several applications as new growth appears.