UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources
UC Master Gardener Program

Winter Issue, 2025

UC Master Gardeners of Sutter-Yuba Counties Newsletter

Location:

UCCE Sutter-Yuba
142A Garden Hwy.
Yuba City CA 95991
Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Master Gardener Office Hours:
Tuesday: 9 a.m. to Noon
Thursday: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Contact:
530-822-7515
sutteryuba@ucanr.edu

Website:
https://ucanr.edu/syucmg

Facebook:
https://facebook.com/

Donate:
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The Learning Garden

As we move into 2025, we're excited to report that The Learning Garden is undergoing a renaissance and will not only be increasing in size, but gaining a greenhouse! If you've driven passed the Yuba-Sutter Fairgrounds on Franklin Road, you may have noticed that the oleanders are being removed, the old fencing removed, and beautiful new fencing is being installed. In The Learning Garden itself, we have removed the debris along the fence line and are readying the beds for new plantings. Some of the beds also needed a bit of shoring up. In the added space, we'll add new beds and the greenhouse. We're now ready to begin the monthly workshops on the third Saturday of each month. You'll find the flyer for January, February and March below. We look forward to seeing you again at The Learning Garden!

Rose Pruning

If you haven't already started, now is a great time to conduct winter rose pruning. The optimal time to do so in our zone is December 15 through February 15; basically, when you see the new leaf nodes growing on the rose canes, it's time to begin pruning.

For established hybrid teas, grandifloras, and floribundas, annual pruning is recommended to remove any dead, dying or diseased canes, as well as those that are crossing into the interior of the rose bush and canes that may be rubbing against other canes. Recommendation is to leave 3-5 healthy canes, with a vase-shaped configuration.

Please also be sure to clean up any fallen leaves or rose blooms in order to prevent any over-wintering of disease or pests.

For additional information on rose pruning, you are welcome to attend our rose-pruning workshop at the Historic Marysville City Cemetery on January 11.

Additional information can also be found at the UC IPM page, https://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7465.html or Roses: Cultural Practices and Weed Control --UC IPM

Office Hours

The Sutter-Yuba Master Gardeners have office hours every week, when we are available to help with any home gardening questions you may have.

- Tuesday morning, 9-a.m. to noon.
- Thursday afternoon, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Samples help with identification and diagnosis, and the office hours are a great time to bring the samples and questions to our group.

If you can't make it into the office, please send us an email outlining your question or concerns. If you can also provide a picture, that helps with diagnosis, as well. Our email address is sutteryuba@ucanr.edu and our telephone is (530) 822-7515.

Fruit Trees and Grape Vines

Submitted by UC Master Gardener Joel Phelps

The heat of summer is past, and we are looking forward to the cooler autumn and winter temperatures. Hopefully your fruit and grape harvest has been successful, and you are awaiting citrus maturity. Key gardening activities decline with the end of the growing season, but several operations still require consideration. Remember to maintain moisture levels for maturing citrus and avoid pruning when rain is imminent. Compost can be used as a source of fertilizer.

Citrus

Soil moisture acts as a heat sink for any serious cold weather threats. The ground under fruit trees should also be cleared of windfall fruit to reduce the potential for brown rot infections of fruit remaining on the tree. Prune out crossing, broken, or shaded branches from tree interiors during the winter dormant season.

Pome Fruits – Apple and Pears

Continue to maintain soil moisture pending fall rains and fertilize following harvest. Clean up fallen fruit and leaves to reduce apple scab and codling moth levels.

Peaches and Nectarines

Fertilize and irrigate after harvest and remove mummy fruit. Apply the first spray to control Peach Leaf Curl around December 1 and plan a second application just before bud break. Prune out about 50% of last year's growth to thin the crop during the dormant season. This will promote new fruiting wood for future harvests. Please refer to the California Backyard Gardener for fungicides that are suggested for use on peaches. [ANR PEST NOTES Peach Leaf Curl Publication 7426]

Apricots

Prune trees before forecasted rainy periods to prevent Eutypa fungus infections. Remove about 20% of current year growth along with old and diseased branches. Spray trees with fixed copper during or after leaf fall to control shot hole fungus.

Cherries

Continue to irrigate prior to fall rains. Prune about 10% of prior year growth to maintain light penetration.

Plums and Prunes

Fertilize and irrigate after harvest. Spray trees with fixed copper during or after leaf fall before winter rains. Remove about 20% of current year growth along with old and diseased branches during the dormant winter season.

Grapes

Remove mummies of old fruit remaining on vines. Control weeds around vine bases and apply organic mulch. Wait until buds are showing in the spring before pruning to reduce Eutypa infections. Plan to remove 75–90% of previous year growth to maintain vines. Reduce canes to spurs with 1-3 buds depending upon cane size. Generally, 30–50 buds are left per mature vine.

More specific directions are available at the following sources:

Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us! - The California Garden Web (ucanr.edu)

Calendars - The California Backyard Orchard (ucanr.edu)

Home Page - UC Statewide IPM Program (ucanr.edu)

Identify and manage pests in homes, gardens, landscapes and lawns - UC Statewide IPM Program (ucanr.edu)

Growing Citrus in the Yuba Foothills

Submitted by UC Master Gardener Lesley Harvell

Growing citrus trees in the foothills, dos and don'ts as well as the right varieties to grow and best practices for fall and winter gardening. The Yuba Foothills are USDA climate zones 9a, 9b, and 8a or Sunset zones 9 and 7.

Citrus are subtropical in origin, thus the cold temperatures which occur occasionally in the foothills can pose significant risk of frost or freeze damage. Tolerance to cold temperatures varies among the citrus species. Generally, kumquat (18°F) is hardier than Satsuma mandarin (20°F) > Meyer lemon (22°F) > oranges: navel, blood, etc. (24°F) > grapefruit (26°F)> true lemons (Eureka, Lisbon) (28°F)>lime (30°F). Mandarin is among the most cold tolerant commercial citrus. The upper elevation limit for commercial citrus orchard is 1,200 feet.

The best sites for citrus are ridgetops or south-southwest facing upper slopes, with good cold air drainage. Objects that can hinder cold air drainage are vegetated fence lines, brush, blackberries, or hills.

Growing citrus may also be possible at higher elevations where frost risk is moderated by a large body of water, pavement, or warm up winds from a canyon. It is, however, extremely risky for commercial production.

Citrus require full sun for flowering and fruit production. A citrus orchard should be sheltered as much as possible from strong winds.

For home-use trees, planting next to south-facing cement or stone walls or a patio can mitigate frost/freeze risk. The stone or cement absorbs heat during the day, and reradiates it back at night, protecting the trees. In marginal zones, containerized trees in wine barrels or tubs can be moved next to south facing walls, or indoors for protection in cold weather. If you are considering planting citrus in the foothills but are unsure of the suitability of your property, it is best to collect temperature data for your site for at least a year.

The best time to plant citrus is in spring, after the danger of frost has passed but before it gets hot.
Citrus are shallow-rooted trees. Feeder roots are in the top two feet of soil, with most activity occurring in the top 12 inches. Citrus do not require deep soils, but they do need well-drained soils. They will grow well on most foothill soils, as long as they are on slopes or soils that drain well. Clay soils have smaller pore spaces and absorb more water than granitic soils, so the danger of waterlogging is greater. Citrus do not tolerate waterlogged roots for very long. They are very susceptible to Phytophthora root disease when they are over-irrigated. Do not plant citrus in lawns or in areas that are saturated by winter rain. Plant in raised beds or mounds if waterlogging is a risk. Most foothill soils have low native fertility and organic matter. Foothill soils are either clay or decomposed granite and quite acidic (pH <7). At lower elevations, there are more neutral soils. Citrus grow well in slightly acidic soils, but very acidic soils (below pH 5.5) may need to be amended with lime to raise the pH. High organic matter content in these soils mitigates impacts of low pH. Cover crops and annual additions of organic matter allow the production of high-quality citrus despite a low pH.

Citrus trees are not very nutrient demanding, but production of a high-quality crop requires adequate amounts of essential nutrients. Most foothill growers need to add nitrogen and zinc annually. Manganese deficiencies are fairly common, and boron may also be deficient. Potassium is important in fruit development and may need to be supplemented. In some acid foothill soils, phosphorus may be unavailable. However, many of our agricultural soils have excess phosphorus, so do not apply phosphorus without a soil test.

Note: This is the material used by UC Master Gardener Jan Kendel when she presented at the Foothills Food and Water Festival in Oregon House.

Learning Garden Workshop – October 19, 2024

UC Master Gardeners of Sutter-Yuba Counties held a winter workshop on October, 19, 2024 at the Learning Garden. Master Gardener, Jan Kendel discussed the value of cover crops and the importance of rotating crops, as well as winterizing the garden. The info on cover crops came from the Audubon Society website https://www.audubon.org with a search for 'cover crops'. The Audubon website is easier to use than USDA website although both organizations funded the study.

Cover Crops:

1. Fava beans roots grow down in the soil and break it up making it great for your soil. The downside is you need to pull them out when you are ready to plant, they don't 'green crop' which is when you can just turn them under for nutrients and plant.
2. Fetch is a green crop and it adds nutrients to the soil when turned under to plant crops. It also attracts pollinators during the winter.
3. Jan overseeds her lawn with annual ryegrass and adds some seed into her growing beds which can be green cropped as well.
4. Although Mustard is a good cover crop and pollinator, it's downside is allelopathy which is a chemical produced by mustard which will inhibit weed growth and also can affect softer crops like lettuce so it depends on what you are planting afterwards.

Note: There are other good cover crops that can become 'weedy' (like clover) and the information from the Audubon Society makes note of those.

Cover crop seeds can be bought at local farm supply stores.

Rotation of Crops:

1. It is very important to rotate crops to avoid the nutrients being depleted from the soil and also to discourage pests from cycling through seasons.
2. A four year rotation plan helps keep track of where to plant your tomatoes or root veggies etc. for the current season compared to prior growing seasons.

Winterizing the garden**:**

1. **L**aying good composted, pasteurized manure with a thick layer of compost on top is a great way to over winter your garden.
2. Horse and cow manure can add various weed seeds, so buying a good brand of pasteurized manure is best. Chicken manure must be composted for two years before adding to the garden, it composts very hot and can burn your plants. Alpaca and Llama manure is good because they process much of the seeds that they eat.
3. Dig up spring and summer bulbs and refrigerate them in a brown paper bag for a month. Keep them in paper bags only, not plastic. Daffodils can be left in the ground for a few years as they are hardy.
4. Painting trunks and limbs of trees with a 1:1 ratio of white latex paint mixed with water can protect from frost, also protecting from sunburn if there are some hot days after the leaves fall.
5. Hydration – most important for the plants and trees is to make sure to water well before a frost to protect the newer growth. What you do to overwinter will affect the growth and fruit the following year.
6. Fertilize plants and trees with lower nitrogen fertilizer 5-10-10. Do not use ammonium sulphate or weed control on your lawn to winterize.
7. Sheets of fabric (recommended) or plastic put over citrus should not touch any part of the trees or leaves. Most citrus can tolerate down to 28 degrees. Older citrus trees tolerate a freeze better.

Article written by: Wendy Wilson, UC Master Gardeners of Sutter-Yuba Counties
Source: https://ca.audubon.org/sites/default/files/ca_covercrops_nrcs.pdf

Advice to grow by … Ask us!

If you have a plant or gardening question, contact us or us or drop by the office with a sample. Check our website or Facebook for workshop announcements.

Free UC IPM (Integrated Pest Management) Webinars for 2025

These are a series of webinars that are free and open to the public. Advance registration is required in order to receive the webinar logon details. These webinars are hosted by UC experts and are held the third Thursday of every month to help learn about pest identification, prevention, and management around the home, garden, and landscape.

January 16, 2025 - *Protecting Pollinators & Wildlife with New Laws in CA*
New laws in California have recently been passed to address negative pesticide effects on pollinators and wildlife. Come learn about these new laws and what it means for several common home and garden pests, including insects and rodents. **Register here**

February 20, 2025 - *Spotted, Dotted, and Spongy: Have You Seen These Invasive Pests?*
California's landscapes face growing threats from invasive pests, but informed action can make a real difference. This webinar offers insights into key invasive species, their distribution and impacts, quarantine measures, emerging threats, and resources to empower you in preventing and reporting these threats effectively. Help California stay ahead of the invasion curve and tune in! **Register here**

March 20, 2025 - *What Are You Wearing? Basic PPE for Pesticide Safety*
Personal protective equipment (PPE) is an essential way you can protect yourself when handling pesticides. In this webinar, pesticide safety education expert Jasmin Ramierz-Strain will explain the basic PPE you should always wear when using pesticides and where you can find PPE requirements for the pesticide product you are using. **Register here**

April 17, 2025 - *Myth or Fact?: Debunking Pest Myths*
We've all heard that opossums eat their weight in ticks, bed bugs are microscopic, and some processed foods contain an allowable number of insect parts. This webinar will cover which "facts" are true and which ones are just popular myths. **Register here**

Copy and paste URL to learn more and register: https://ucanr.edu/sites/ucipm-community-webinars/

Our Mission:

"To extend research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices to the residents of California and be guided by our core values and strategic initiatives."

- UC Master Gardener Program Mission Statement