GNO Gardening

LSU AgCenter
Research · Extension · Teaching

February 2018

"You Cannot Make a Garden with Silk Gloves"

Ancient humans learned a long time ago that they could cover their hands in animal skins and other materials to protect their skin from heat, cold, physical damage and other discomforts. We call these coverings gloves and today there are many different types of garden gloves available from general use to those designed for very specific tasks. It can be important to select the proper glove for your intended use; in fact it could save your life. While gardening provides many healthful benefits, there are many hazards that may seem innocuous but can cause minor irritation all the way to serious health concerns.

Student volunteers from the Academy of Our Lady in Marrero working in the New Orleans Botanical Gardens model their garden gloves.

Some of the potential hazards include:

Mother Earth - Soil serves as an ecosystem for diverse microbes that perform various roles that range from useful organisms to dangerous transmitters of diseases. Viruses, bacteria, fungi, protozoa, and parasitic worms can all potentially live in the soil and be transmitted to humans.

Cuts, scrapes, and punctures - While painful enough on their own, bacteria and other foreign material can be introduced into the wound leading to infections and other complications.

Biting and Stinging bugs - There are many 'unfriendlies' hiding in our gardens including: imported fire ants, mosquitos, fleas, ticks, bees, wasps, and caterpillars. Potential allergic reactions and disease vectors can increase the risk.

Chemical exposure - There are numerous chemical products used in our gardens including insecticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. The highest percentage of pesticide exposure occurs through the skin. Even products listed as organic can cause skin irritation. Furthermore, chemicals on the hands can easily be transmitted to the eyes, mouth, and other areas of the body.

Poisonous plants - Many plants in our gardens contain compounds that can cause rashes, hives, swelling and itching of the skin. Stinging nettles, poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac are some of the more well known culprits but there are many more that can cause adverse reactions. Some of the less know malefactors are caladiums, calla lilies, philodendron, oleander, daffodils, tulips, English ivy, marigolds, poinsettia, schefflera, and wandering jew.

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February Vegetable Planting Guide

Crop	Recommended Variety	Planting Depth	Spacing Inches	Days Until Harvest * from transplant date
Beets	Detroit Dark Red, Kestrel, Red Ace F1, Ruby Queen	¼ inch	2-4	55-60
Carrots	Danvers 128, Purple Haze, Thumbelina, Apache, Enterprise, Maverick, Sugar Snax 54	⅛ inch	1-2	70-75
Collards	Champions, Flash, Georgia Southern, Top Bunch, Vates	⅛ inch	6-12	75
Eggplants (seeds)	Dusky, Epic, Night Shadow, Black Beauty	⅛ inch	--	140
Irish Potatoes	Dark Red Norland, Red LaSoda, Kennebec, Yukon Gold,	4 inches	12	90-120
Kale	Siberian, Vates	½ inch	12-18	50
Kohlrabi	Early Purple Vienna, Early White, Vienna, Winner	⅛ inch	6	55-75
Lettuce	Esmeralda, New Red Fire F1, Nevada, Tall Guzmaine Elite	⅛ inch	4-12	45-80
Mustard Greens	Florida Broadleaf, Greenwave, Red Giant, Southern Giant Curled, Savannah, Tendergreen	⅛ inch	4-6	35-50
Pepper, Bell (Seeds)	Aristotle XR3, Jupiter, King Arthur, Paladin, Golden Summer, Purple Beauty, Tequila	⅛ inch	--	140-150
Pepper, Hot (Seeds)	Grande, Tula, Mariachi, Mitla, El Rey F1, Tobasco, Jalapeño M, Super Cayenne II	⅛ inch	--	140
Radishes	Cherriette, Champion, White Icicle, April Cross	⅛ inch	1	22-28
Shallots	Matador, Prism	1 inch	4-8	50
Snap Beans, Bush	Blue Lake 274, Bronco, Contender, Festina, Lynx, Provider, Roma II	½ inch	2-3	48-55
Snap Beans, Pole	Derby, Blue Lake, Kentucky Blue, McCaslin, Rattlesnake, Kentucky Wonder 191	½ inch	12	60-66
Spinach	Bloomsdale Long Standing, Melody, Tyee, Unipak 151	⅛ inch	3-6	35-45
Sweet Corn	Merit, Silver Queen, Honey 'n Pearl, Ambrosia	½ inch	10-12	69-92
Swiss Chard	None Given	¼ inch	6-8	45-55
Tomatoes (seeds)	Bella Rosa, Fletcher, Tribute, BHN 1021, Amelia, Dixie Red	⅛ inch	--	100-115
Turnip Greens	Alamo, All Top, Purple, Top White Globe, Seven Top, Southern Green, Top Star, Tokyo Cross	⅛ inch	2-6	40-50

"You Cannot Make a Garden with Silk Gloves" Part II

Basic canvas gloves. These are reinforced with plastic pips.

The palm and fingers of these gloves are coated with latex.

Leather gloves are excellent for working with tools.

Sun Exposure - In addition to the potential to cause cancerous skin lesions, sun exposure also leads to wrinkles in the skin, freckles, and age spots. Just about all gloves except those made from translucent material will provide protection from sun exposure.

Blisters - Observed as fluid filled pockets under the top layer of skin, blisters can be a common hazard of gardening. There are numerous causes for blisters but the most frequent encountered in our gardens are from friction and sunburn. Friction blisters are caused by the skin repeatedly rubbing against another object. This is typically associated with the use of tools such as rakes and shovels.

Now that we know what we are up against we can make the appropriate glove selection. If you visit your local hardware store or garden center you may be overwhelmed by the number of choices available. Work gloves alone come in a bewildering array of materials and stated purpose. Let's take a look at some of the available products to get a better understanding of when and where they would offer the best protection.

The most basic garden glove are usually made from cotton canvas material. Although they are thin and lightweight they can still provide protection from many of the hazards listed above. They provide total protection from sun exposure and can greatly reduce friction. Basic cotton gloves can help protect you from many soil borne pathogens but they should be cleaned between uses. They will protect the hands from most insects. However, wasps and bees may still be able to sting through the fabric and poisonous hairs and spines deposited on the cloves by some pests can still cause harm if you touch other areas of your body. This is similarly true with poisonous plants and chemicals in that you can still distribute harmful agents to other parts of your body through touch. Cloth gloves offer very little protection from cuts and punctures but can reduce abrasions. Some canvas gloves are covered with close spaced small plastic pips which add a little more protection and improve grip. Do not use cloth gloves to mix or apply chemicals or work in areas where chemical residues are still wet. Wash gloves between uses to reduce chronic exposure to pesticides and other contaminants.

Gloves with long cuffs can help protect the arms from thorns.

Another popular choice are fabric gloves that have been coated with rubberized material. The coating provides additional protection but are otherwise similar to untreated gloves. In many of these products the coating only covers the palm and front of

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"You Cannot Make a Garden with Silk Gloves" Part III

the fingers leaving the back less protected. This type of glove is particularly suited for digging in damp soil and dealing with poisonous plants as the coating will block the liquids from reaching your skin.

Gloves made from leather is another choice. Leather gloves provide excellent protection from abrasions, cuts, and punctures. They are also great for preventing blisters when using tools. They are best used in dry situations as liquids can penetrate the leather and expose you to contaminates every time the gloves are donned. For this reason, leather gloves and shoes should never be worn during pesticide applications. Leather gloves are also available with extra long cuffs which extend up the forearm to provide additional protection when pruning roses and other thorny plants.

Chemical resistant gloves should be worn when mixing, applying, and cleaning up after pesticide applications. Check the product label for specific recommendations.

Contrary to intuition, shirt sleeves and pants legs should be worn over chemical resistant gloves and boots. This will prevent pesticides from flowing into the gear.

Chemical resistant gloves are recommended to be worn when mixing and applying pesticides. The degree of chemical resistance required depends primarily on the formulation of the product as well as the method of application. While researching this article I found a very comprehensive and informative publication on the topic from the University of Nebraska. 'This NebGuide explains how to choose and properly use gloves when mixing, loading, or applying pesticides; how to maintain such gloves; and how these procedures can help reduce exposure to chemicals and protect human health.' In the publication they recommend the use of unlined, liquid-proof neoprene, butyl, or nitrile gloves. These materials provide good protection under most conditions, are durable, and are reasonably priced. For more information the full publication may be seen at: http://extensionpublications.unl.edu/assets/pdf/g1961.pdf.

When it comes to personal protective equipment the old adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is appropriate for garden gloves. The proper glove can help prevent injury and illness as well as keeping your hands clean, soft, and youthful looking.

~Chris Dunaway

Tip: After use, wash the outside of non-disposable chemical resistant gloves while still wearing them to make cleaning easier and to reduce exposure when removing them.

Plus, if you try to clean them after you take them off, you will need to wear another pair of chemical resistant gloves.

How to Identify and Control Tea Scale

Camellias are a beautiful part of our landscapes this time of year, providing cool weather blooms while all of the tropicals look brown and fried. While most camellia maintenance takes place after flowering, one pest is on the move and needs to be scouted for and kept under control now.

This *Camellia japonica* is covered with beautiful burgundy flowers and appears and healthy.

Tea scale is an insect that likes to feed and infest the underside of camellia, sasanqua, and Burford holly leaves. The scale insects are concealed underneath a cottony white material, the actual insects are small, brownish grey and scabby in appearance. They feed by sucking the plant juices and can cause a lot of damage, and even death if left untreated. There are armored and unarmored species of scale insects that attack camellias, *Fioriniae theae* being the one commonly referred to as tea scale. Female scale insects are able to reproduce every 1-2 weeks, increasing the population exponentially.

Mottled leaves indicate a problem.

Newly hatched scale insects are called crawlers and are able to move about the plant to colonize new sections. Crawlers can also move to new plants using the wind by flying a silk kite. Insecticides are much more effective when used to treat the crawlers, which typically emerge in the spring. In our area, they emerge in February or mid-January depending on the temperatures. Treating camellias and other tea scale infested plants with oil should be done in this time frame. Spray the entire plant, top to bottom, including the underside of the leaves with neem oil or horticultural oil. Systemic insecticide products also work well at this stage and control crawlers as well as adult scale insects. Contact insecticides can work but are much less effective than oil treatments or systemic insecticides.

Tiny scale insects can be seen hiding on the underside of the leaves.

Adults can also be smothered now by using a light horticultural oil. To treat, mix light horticultural oil with some warm water in a ratio of one part oil to one part warm water. Use a sponge or rag to wipe the oil onto the scale on the undersides of the leaves. Be sure to thoroughly coat the scale, really wetting and saturating the cottony material and the scabby insects themselves. Typically this treatment works with one pass, but you may need to reapply in a week. Dead scale insects turn a darker shade of brown or black and easily flake off of the underside of the leaf. Live scale insects are fairly moist, while ones that have died are dry to the touch.

There are several generations of tea scale crawlers each year, so monitor your plants weekly to catch any new outbreaks. Catching the issue early is the best way to avoid heavy infestations that can lead to

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Upcoming Events

2018 Spring Garden Show

Saturday, April 7, 9am to 5pm
Sunday, April 8, 10am to 4pm

Now accepting vendor registrations.

To register for a sales or educational booth at the show send us an e-mail to

GNOGardening@agcenter.lsu.edu

PLANT SALES

NEW ORLEANS CITY PARK
BOTANICAL GARDEN

March 10
Rose Sale–Pelican Greenhouse
9am - Noon

Spring Garden Show
April 7, 9am – 5pm
April 8, 10am - 4pm

May 12
Pelican Greenhouse
9am – Noon

June 9
Pelican Greenhouse
9am - Noon

July 14
Pelican Greenhouse
9am - Noon

August 11
Pelican Greenhouse
9am - Noon

September 8
Pelican Greenhouse
9am – Noon

Fall Garden Festival
October 6, 10am – 5pm
October 7, 10am - 4pm

The Pelican Greenhouse is located just off Henry Thomas (Golf) Drive, South of the I-610 overpass. Bring a wagon and arrive early.

For additional information, call 504/483-9464, visit our website at www.neworleanscitypark.com, or e-mail to plants@nocp.org

How to Identify and Control Tea Scale *(Continued)*

camellia death. Heavily infested shrubs should be monitored and treated as needed, and may require several years of control. Pruning out heavily infested branches or leaves can help. Increasing air circulation within the plant helps to open the insects up to natural predators such as lacewings, ladybugs, and spiders. Be sure to move or protect these natural allies when treating tea scale. ~Anna Timmerman

This magnified view of the leaf shows males, females, and nymphs. The white web like material is wax secreted by the adult males.

Photo by Chris Dunaway

The LSU AgCenter Hammond Research Station Hosts

The Annual Camelia Stroll

February 18 from 1-4 pm.

21549 Old Covington Hwy, Hammond, LA

This event is co-sponsored by the LSU AgCenter and the Tangipahoa Parish Master Gardener Association. Admission to the event is free and open to the public.

Visitors are invited to stroll through a collection of more than 800 camellias that was planted by Hody Wilson from the 1930s to early 1950s. Several Louisiana Master Gardeners in Tangipahoa Parish have been taking on the cleanup and maintenance of the camellia garden.

The Recirculating Farms Coalition, in cooperation with the USDA'S Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the New Orleans Chapter of the National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC), is hosting a new series of free workshops for current and future farmers interested in learning more about the FSA programs and services.

Sessions will cover FSA emergency assistance programs: what they are, how they may be used, and how to apply for them. Other information included will be more generally how to get started searching for the right FSA programs and how to register with FSA to receive various benefits.

Snacks and drinks provided!

DATES & DETAILS:

Workshop #1: Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program
Thursday, February 1st (6:00 - 7:30 pm)
Rosa F. Keller Public Library - 4300 S. Broad Avenue

Workshop #2: The Emergency Assistance Program for Livestock, Honeybees, & Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)
Thursday, February 22nd (6:00 - 7:30 pm)
Algiers Regional Library - 3014 Holiday Drive

Workshop #3: Comprehensive Review Class
Saturday, February 24th (10:30 AM - 1:00 PM)
ReFresh Project @ Whole Foods 300 N. Broad Street

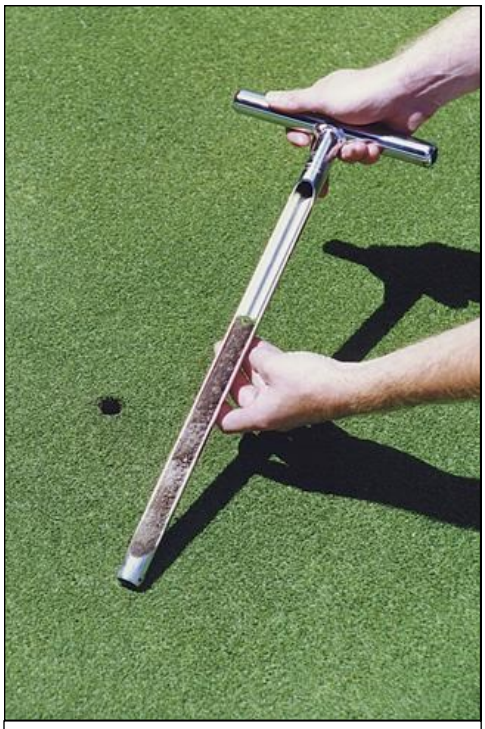
Soil Testing

The temperatures are rising, Mardi Gras is upon us, and Spring is not far away. We gardeners are checking out our seed catalogs, imagining what our gardens will look like in May, and longing for the longer warmer days ahead. Hopefully, we are also taking our soil samples and sending them in for analysis. Soil sampling is one of the easiest, quickest and most beneficial acts you can do for your garden. Pre-addressed soil sample boxes are free to pick up at your parish extension office and most garden centers.

Soil sample kits like the one in the photo are available at your local parish extension offices or at area garden centers. Kits contain enough supplies for 3 separate samples.

While sampling is quick and easy, doing it correctly is extremely important. The accuracy and benefits of the soil analysis is only as good as the sample submitted. There are several good YouTube videos that describe the procedure and each sample kit has instructions included. But briefly, each area of your landscape should represent a separate sample specimen (e.g. lawn, vegetable garden, perennial bed, citrus tree area). These are separate samples because each area needs the soil conditions to be appropriate for what is or will be growing there. Each of these individual samples to be submitted should be composed of multiple subsamples. For any area you are sampling for analysis, you should take a minimum of ten subsamples.

To take a subsample, dig a hole at least six inches deep with a spade or trowel. Now slice off a vertical edge of the hole about one inch thick and six inches long and place this in a clean bucket or plastic bag. Do not use a container that has previously been used to contain any type of fertilizer. Take the remainder of your subsamples in the same manner randomly over the area. You can also take samples with a soil sampling probe. These cost anywhere from $20-$120. If you take a large number of samples regularly, they are nice to have. Once all subsamples are collected, thoroughly combine the soil and fill one of the provide sample bags with the mixture. This is your soil sample to be analyzed. Label the bag clearly and in a way that is easily identifiable to you (e.g. South Lawn, Vegetable Garden, Back Patio Raised Bed, etc.) Avoid taking subsamples from any spots that are vastly different from the majority of the rest of the area. Examples of this type area might be: 1) where a plant has died or been removed and you had been regularly augmenting around it or the hole still contains potting mix, 2) a small isolated area that is noticeably sandier than the majority of the surrounding area, 3) area beneath an old compost bin.



Here a soil probe is used to take a sample.

Place all of your **clearly labelled** sample bags in the pre-addressed box provided. Enclose the completed "Soil Test Kit Request Form" along with payment. Properly completing the request form is extremely important. The recommendations provided to you by the Soil Analysis Lab are based on the soil test results and what is the intended use of the area. Recommendations for growing lawns are very different from

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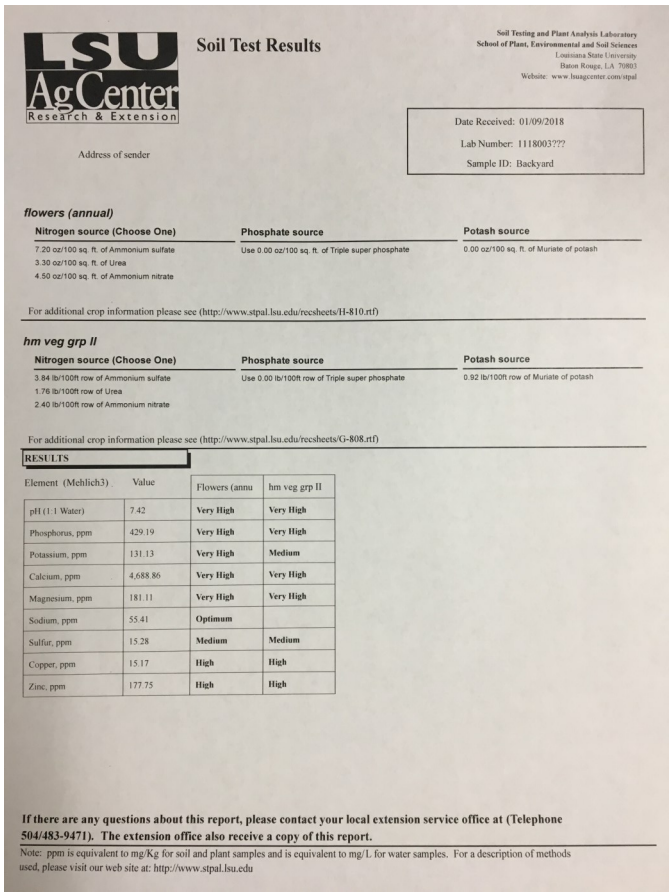
Soil Testing Part II

those for growing vegetables or azaleas. Likewise, there are different recommendations for different types of vegetables. Being thorough and specific when filling out the form will lead to more precise recommendations that lead to better gardening results. Fees include $6 mailing for each box and $10 for routine analysis for each sample in the box. The enclosed form also includes info on fees for any additional tests you may want performed. If you check any of these, be sure to enclose additional payment. More information can also be found at the "Soil Testing & Plant Analysis" page on the LSUAgCenter website. Now seal the box and mail it. In a couple of weeks your results will be mailed and emailed to you.

How often should soil samples be taken? In established lawns, orchards and perennial beds, sampling every three years should be sufficient unless plants are showing signs of some problem. For vegetable gardens and annual beds that have regular plant turnover, sampling should be done yearly or even between each crop if the crops have extremely different requirements.

When you receive the soil analysis results, some of you may be wondering what does it mean and what do I do with it? If you requested a standard analysis, your results should look something like this:



LSU AgCenter Research & Extension

Soil Test Results

Soil Testing and Plant Analysis Laboratory
School of Plant, Environmental and Soil Sciences
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Website: www.lsuagcenter.com/stpal

Address of sender

Date Received: 01/09/2018
Lab Number: 1118003???
Sample ID: Backyard

flowers (annual)

Nitrogen source (Choose One)	Phosphate source	Potash source
7.20 oz/100 sq. ft. of Ammonium sulfate 3.30 oz/100 sq. ft. of Urea 4.50 oz/100 sq. ft. of Ammonium nitrate	Use 0.00 oz/100 sq. ft. of Triple super phosphate	0.00 oz/100 sq. ft. of Muriate of potash

For additional crop information please see (http://www.stpal.lsu.edu/recsheets/H-810.rtf)

hm veg grp II

Nitrogen source (Choose One)	Phosphate source	Potash source
3.84 lb/100ft row of Ammonium sulfate 1.76 lb/100ft row of Urea 2.40 lb/100ft row of Ammonium nitrate	Use 0.00 lb/100ft row of Triple super phosphate	0.92 lb/100ft row of Muriate of potash

For additional crop information please see (http://www.stpal.lsu.edu/recsheets/G-808.rtf)

RESULTS

Element (Mehlich3)	Value	Flowers (annu	hm veg grp II
pH (1:1 Water)	7.42	Very High	Very High
Phosphorus, ppm	429.19	Very High	Very High
Potassium, ppm	131.13	Very High	Medium
Calcium, ppm	4,688.86	Very High	Very High
Magnesium, ppm	181.11	Very High	Very High
Sodium, ppm	55.41	Optimum	
Sulfur, ppm	15.28	Medium	Medium
Copper, ppm	15.17	High	High
Zinc, ppm	177.75	High	High

If there are any questions about this report, please contact your local extension service office at (Telephone 504/483-9471). The extension office also receive a copy of this report.

Note: ppm is equivalent to mg/Kg for soil and plant samples and is equivalent to mg/L for water samples. For a description of methods used, please visit our web site at: http://www.stpal.lsu.edu

The top right box tells you when the lab received your sample, the assigned lab sample number, and the sample ID you provided along with other information you included on the submission form. Below this will be your soil test results expressed in ppm (parts per million), soil pH, and interpretation of the results based on the crop you told them you want to grow.

It is not immediately evident so let's look at each of those classifications and what they mean. **Very Low** - Less than 50 % of the crop yield potential or esthetic value is expected without the addition of that nutrient. **Low** -Somewhere between 50–75 % of the crop yield potential or esthetic value is expected without the addition of that nutrient. **Medium** - From 75-95 % of the crop yield or esthetic value is expected without the addition of the nutrient. **High** - A yield increase from added nutrient or an increase in esthetic value is not expected. No need to fertilize with that nutrient! **Very High** - A yield increase or increase in esthetic value from adding that nutrient is not expected. The soil can supply much more than the entire crop requirement, and still contain a reserve of that nutrient for the next crop. No need to fertilize with that nutrient! So don't let an element concentration being "high" or "very high" alarm you. In most cases it is not detrimental to plant growth. Keep in mind what those interpretive terms mean.

Soil pH is a different situation. You want to follow recommendations to bring pH into **Optimum** range; **High, Very High, Low** and **Very Low** are all conditions that should be corrected. All plants have a pH range in which nutrient availability is optimal and at which their growth will be healthiest. This may vary from plant type to plant type. The results you receive don't tell you the optimal pH target range. However, recommendations are made to achieve a pH value within that range for the crop you listed on the submission form. Recommendations for the addition of sulfur or lime, depending on whether you want to decrease or increase the pH will be given.

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Soil Testing Part III

A good publication on soil pH can be found here:http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/other/soils/hgic1650.html. In the Greater New Orleans area, soil pH's usually run on the high side and require addition of sulfur.

There will also be recommendations for nitrogen (N), phosphate (P), and potash (K). The phosphate (P) and potash (K) recommendations are based on the soil test results and the requirements of the crop you wish to grow. The nitrogen (N) recommendation is based on the general nitrogen requirements of the crop you wish to grow and not on any soil analysis. So, why are there no nitrogen level numbers on your soil test results? While you can request (for additional fee) that your soil be tested for nitrogen content, the results are of very little value because plant-available soil nitrogen is very water-soluble (sometimes volatile) and the soil content can fluctuate depending on rain, irrigation and general climate conditions. The accepted procedure is to supply the nitrogen needs of your plants rather than rely on soil content to provide the nitrogen needed.

For phosphorous (P), the recommended additive is always triple super phosphate [$Ca(H_2PO_4)_2.H_2O$]. For potassium (K), the recommended additive is always muriate of potash (KCl). For nitrogen (N), you choose **1 of 3** recommended additives. You can use either ammonium sulfate [$(NH_4)_2SO_4$], urea [CH_4N_2O], or ammonium nitrate [NH_4NO_3]. – use one of the recommendations, not all three.

If the recommendation under one of any of these headings is 0, no additions are required, the soil contains sufficient amounts of this element. The recommendation is typically made as amount of amendment per 100 ft^2. It is also sometimes given as amount of amendment per 100 row ft. If given in this form, the rows are assumed to be 3 ft. wide which makes 100 row ft. equivalent to 300 ft^2. ~Dr. Joe Willis

Remember the LSU AgCenter adage, "Don't Guess. Soil Test!"

The World According to Grumpy

February 3rd at 11:00 am at the Pavilion of the Two Sisters

Steve will reveal age-old truths about good and bad plants and wise and stupid horticultural practices so that all who hear them may find enlightenment and happiness in their gardens without resorting to mind-altering substances.

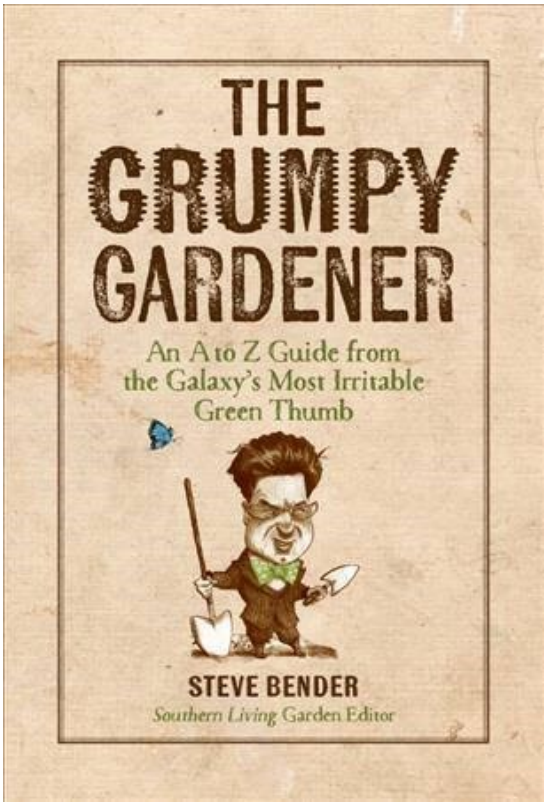
11am to 12:30pm: Lecture and Q&A
12:45 pm to 1:15pm: Book signing of Steve's new book "The Grumpy Gardener: An A to Z Guide from the Galaxy's most Irritable Green Thumb"

About the Author: A Lutherville, MD, native, Steve Bender was exiled to Alabama in 1983 for reasons that remain secret to this day. He loves fried okra and often selects dinner wine based on whether it goes well with fried okra. His mission is to make gardening uplifting, accessible, and inspirational to all.
Steve Bender is a Southern Living Garden editor.

Lecture is $20.00 and Steve's new book will be for sale at the event

To RSVP for this event: Susan Capley, New Orleans Botanical Garden Education Director, (504) 483-9473, scapley@nocp.org

Sponsored by: Longue Vue House & Gardens, New Orleans Botanical Garden, New Orleans City Park, New Orleans Botanical Garden Foundation



Home Tweet Home

Birdhouse Exhibit and Fundraiser

Birds Need Homes Too!

The New Orleans Botanical Garden would like to invite you to participate in our birdhouse exhibit, **Home *Tweet* Home.**

We are looking for creative, whimsical, and architectural birdhouses to display in the Garden. The exhibit will run April 4th through April 30th and will include a silent auction. Proceeds will benefit the New Orleans Botanical Garden future exhibits.

EVENT TIME TABLE

March 1st – March 16th: Birdhouse drop off will begin between 10am and 5pm daily in the Oscar J. Tolmas Visitor Center, entrance to the New Orleans Botanical Garden.

April 4th: Opening of Home *Tweet* Home. We have free admission on Wednesdays for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Every Wednesday during the month of April the New Orleans Botanical Garden extends its hours to celebrate "Evenings with Enrique". This free event is from 5pm - 8pm, located in The Helis Foundation Enrique Alférez Sculpture Garden.

April 4th – April 30th: Silent auction begins. The public can place bids in the Oscar J. Tolmas Visitor Center daily between 10am - 5pm, or during our "Evenings with Enrique."

Monday, April 30th, 5pm – 7pm: Join us for wine and cheese at the closing reception. The culmination will include exhibitors and the public. Winning bids can pick up their birdhouses at this time.

Entry forms are available online at
http://neworleanscitypark.com/botanical-garden/home-tweet-home1

For Further information call 504.483.9473 or email scapley@nocp.org

SPONSORED BY:

New Orleans Botanical Garden Foundation

New Orleans Botanical Garden
1 Palm Drive, New Orleans, LA 70124
5 Victory Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70124

City Park New Orleans
Watch us grow.

February Checklist/Garden Tips

Keep beds mulched to a depth of two to three inches to control cool season weeds in beds. Use leaves, pine straw or other available materials. Use your bagging lawn mower or shredder to chop up the leaves prior to putting down. This reduces the volume of the leaves, increases surface area to help the leaves break down and release nutrients, reduces matting and fungal growth, reduces movement by wind and makes for a cleaner look . Mulch helps prevent weed seeds from germinating and helps to retain moisture in the soil.

Use a lawn mower to shred fallen leaves. Collect them with the bag or let them decompose in place.

The bag will also collect grass clippings which are a nitrogen source to help the leaves break down.

Shredding can reduce the volume of space that large leaves occupy by a ratio of 16:1. this makes them easier to move, store, and requires fewer bags if you do decide to dispose of them.

Plant gladiolus corms this month through mid March. Plant groups of corms every two weeks during the planting season to extend the display of flowers.

Plant caladium tubers indoors this month for a head start. Start tubers in flats or pots of potting soil kept evenly moist in a warm, out of the way area. They should begin to sprout in a few weeks. As the leaves appear, move the containers to a sunny window or shady area outside (if days are in the 70s and nights in the 60s). Plant caladium tubers, pre-sprouted or not, into the garden in mid April.

Onions, shallots, garlic and leeks are susceptible to an insect called thrips which causes small white marks on the foliage called stippling. Heavy infestations can damage foliage to the point that the harvest is reduced. Control thrips with Malathion.

February is the month to fertilize hardy fruit trees such as apple, peach, nectarine, fig and fruit bushes such as blackberry and blueberry. Citrus are fertilized in late January or early February. Wait until March to fertilize tender fruit trees like banana, guava and avocado.

You may clip ground covers back now before new growth appears to remove unattractive foliage, rejuvenate the plants and control growth. Liriope, monkey grass, ferns (if browned back by freezes), wedelia, Japanese ardisia and Asiatic jasmine among others can be cut back with a lawn mower adjusted to its highest setting (make sure the blade is sharp), a string trimmer or even hedge clippers on small plantings. Selectively remove unattractive leaves on aspidistra (cast iron plant) and holly ferns by hand.

Pick snow peas in the vegetable garden frequently. Ideally the pods should be harvested when flat before the seeds begin to enlarge.

The foliage of spring flowering bulbs is up and growing. The foliage is very hardy and will not be bothered by freezes. The flowers are more tender, and open flowers should be cut if temperatures in the low twenties are predicted. Place cut flowers in vases indoors.

Need cool season color in a part shade area? The best choices are cyclamen, primroses, pansy, viola, nicotiana, foxglove and forget-me-not.

Plant rose bushes in well prepared beds with good drainage and plenty of sun. It is important for the graft union to be 2 inches above the soil of the bed. If you plant roses purchased in containers, this was taken care of by the nursery. Just plant the bush so the top of the root ball is level with the soil of the bed. In the case of bare root roses, you must see to this yourself during planting. Finish planting bare root roses by the end of February.

Notice the early spring flowering trees such as red maple, Japanese magnolia, Taiwan flowering cherry, redbud and others blooming now. It's not too late to plant a small flowering tree in the landscape should you decide you just have to have one.

Red maple *(Acer rubrum)* in front of a local home.

Female red maples have less showy flowers than male trees but produce deep red, winged seed pods known as samaras.

Red maples are dioecious meaning that they have separate male and female plants. Males produce flashy flowers with long stamens.

Finish harvesting any fruit still remaining on citrus trees. The fruit stores well on the tree, but ultimately the quality will begin to decline.

February is a good month to plant, prune and fertilize fruit trees. For information on growing fruit trees in our area click on the link for the LSU AgCenter publication Louisiana Home Orchard.

Hardy bedding plants can still be planted now for color through the spring. Choose pansy, sweet alyssum, viola, snapdragon, stock, dianthus, petunia, candytuft, lobelia and annual phlox. If you want to grow delphiniums, foxgloves or hollyhocks, it is especially important to purchase and plant transplants as soon as possible and plant in February for the best display in early summer. Hardy perennials are also best planted as they become available in nurseries.

Clean out your pond garden or aquatic garden this month, if you need to. It is advisable to do this if there is a thick layer of gunk on the bottom. It is best to get this done while the weather is cool, the plants are dormant and the fish are less active. Pond cleaning is the best time to divide and repot water and bog plants that are dormant or semi-dormant. Do not divide those in active growth such as Louisiana irises and calla lilies.

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