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MSU Extension - Bay County

515 Center Avenue, Suite 301
Bay City, Michigan 48708-5124
(989) 895-4026 Voice
(989) 895-4217 Fax
msue09@msu.edu

[www.baycounty-mi.gov/
MSUE/MasterGardener](http://www.baycounty-mi.gov/MSUE/MasterGardener)

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Jan Rise
Master Gardener Volunteer Program
Coordinator

Coordinator's Notes

As Michigan State University Extension moves into the 21st century we are faced with many challenges. Michigan State University Extension has been working since 2009 to restructure itself to meet the needs and challenges of providing programs that educate the residents of Michigan. The Master Gardener Volunteer program is also moving ahead to address these same issues. Educating the public on water quality, responsible use of fertilizers, and how to grow food for communities, and teach residents how to feed themselves from a garden.

If you would like more information on MSU Extension restructuring, please visit the MSU Portal at <http://www.msue.msu.edu/portal>.

You can also access the portal through the MSU Extension - Bay County Website at www.baycounty-mi.gov/MSUE

Attached to this newsletter is a copy of the 2010 Volunteer Projects listing. This form is also available on the MSU Extension - Bay County Website. Go to www.baycounty-mi.gov/MSUE and use the Master Gardener link.

Don't forget to sign up for the Garden Walk if you are interested.

Also, we will be working at the Linwood Rest Area in early May. If you can help out, it would be appreciated. Many hands make the work go faster.

Wishing everyone a great growing season with no weeds, no pests, and no problems in the garden. I hope to see you at different project work dates.

Jan Rise, Master Gardener
Volunteer Program Coordinator

Master Gardener Class

The 2010 Master Gardener class began on February 23 and will be completed on May 11. Fourteen fresh Master Garden volunteers-in-training attend class and are all excited to begin working on volunteer hours. Some of you may have already met or seen them at projects. Please be sure to introduce yourself and welcome them to the Master Gardener program.

We are so fortunate to have a class this winter. Fourteen counties cancelled classes due to a lack of participants. Thank you Bay Area Master Gardener Association for your assistance with Last Word advertising in The Bay City Times. This allowed us to sign up the last class members and make the class possible!

MSU Extension and the Master Gardener Volunteer Program

Now and again I get asked, “What does Extension do for the Master Gardener program?” Although it isn’t always visible, MSU Extension’s support of the Master Gardener program is vital to the program’s existence.

MSU Extension provides liability insurance coverage for Master Gardeners participating in the Master Gardener program on volunteer projects. This is one of the reasons the Bay County Master Gardener policy includes approval of all volunteer projects. Our goal is to keep everyone safe while volunteering along with being able to address questions and concerns when we receive inquiries about volunteer projects.

The Master Gardener program provides name badges, certificates, service pins, and a record keeping system second to none. The record keeping system allows every Master Gardener in Michigan to have hands-on control of their volunteer record. They can view their record at any time and enter hours as they are acquired. In the past, most volunteer hours were entered by an Extension office from paper records at the end of the year. Think about how easy it was to forget both education and volunteer hours under that system. It usually took three to four months to get everything recorded and verified. Now we can pull up

reports on hours, certification, projects, and class progress on any day and have the most up-to-date information.

Extension bulletins are available to Master Gardeners on vegetables, small fruits, tree fruits, or just pretty flowers from the MSU Extension Portal or the MSU Extension - Bay County Website.

A lot of new and exciting information is available just by going to <http://www.msue.msu.edu/portal>.

When you go to the MSU Extension Portal you can click on *Home and Garden* near the top of the page. This will open a whole world of information on growing vegetables, fruits, perennials, and many other areas of gardening. You can even watch a video on pruning your apple tree. Please take a moment to explore this Website and become familiar with the information available there.

For the Bay Area Master Gardener Association (BAMGA), the use of the Bay County Community Center is provided for meetings at no charge. MSU Extension - Bay County provides financial oversight for BAMGA, along with collecting and paying sales tax when needed and provides other support services like audio visual equipment for program speakers.

All of this support is provided at no charge. You only needed to take part in the volunteer training program class and keep your certification current. No additional

dues or fees are charged. In this economy and in this day and age, it’s a bargain.

What does the future hold for the Master Gardener Volunteer Program? As restructuring continues, you can read about the changes coming to MSU Extension and the Master Gardener program by logging onto the MSU Extension Portal.

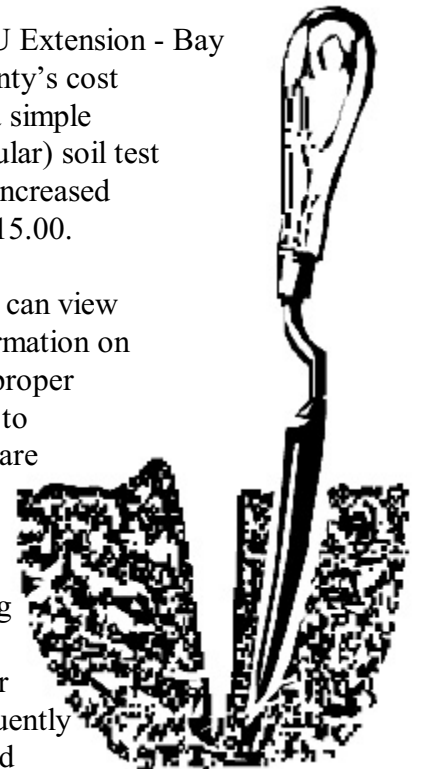
Soil Testing

MSU Extension - Bay County’s cost for a simple (regular) soil test has increased to \$15.00.

You can view information on the proper way to prepare a soil test along with other frequently asked questions

by going to the MSU Extension - Bay County’s Website at www.baycounty-mi.gov/MSUE and click on the Master Gardener program link.

You will find a link to the “Soil Testing Program” printable brochure.



CAT Alerts

Anyone interested in following any of the gardening areas covered by the seasonal Crop Advisory Team (CAT) Alert newsletters, can view them online by going to MSU's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) homepage at <http://www.ipm.msu.edu/aboutcat.htm>. The five areas reported on are field crops, fruit, greenhouse, landscape, and vegetables. *CAT Alerts* offer pest and crop management advice for current conditions. The information is written by MSU faculty and Extension educators.

These newsletters are just getting started for the 2010 season. There will be valuable and interesting information available several times a month, so you may want to check out your interest area often.

You can also view archived copies of these newsletters with historical information on pest problems, diseases and other growing information at this Website.

IPM's Website is another resource for information on managing pests for the following areas:

- Christmas trees
- Field crops
- Fruit
- Home and yard
- Nursery and landscaping
- Turf grass
- Vegetables

Pesticide Recommendations

Many older MSU Extension bulletins include pesticide recommendations that have not been updated and are still in use today.

Some may still be found on the MSU Extension - Bay County Website. We are now including the preceding alert (Fig. 1) on all older bulletins still in use.

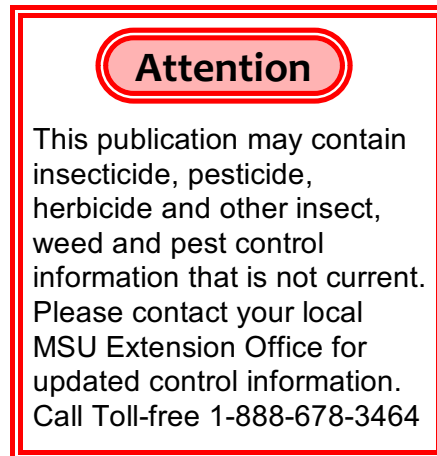


Fig. 1

Growing a Better Tomato

Ever wonder what those letters on the tomato plant tag mean? After years of poor growing conditions for tomatoes, everyone is looking for information on growing tomatoes. Most people ask how to grow a fat, juicy, delicious tomato. Here is a key to understand those letters and get a good start at growing healthy tomatoes.

Recommended Varieties

Hundreds of varieties of tomatoes are now available for the home gardener. They range widely in size, shape, color, plant type, disease resistance and season of maturity. Catalogs, garden centers and greenhouses offer a large selection of tomato varieties and choosing the best one or two varieties can be extremely difficult. Evaluate your needs, then choose the varieties best suited to your intended use and method of culture.

Tomato plants fall into one of two types that affect ultimate plant height and cultural requirements. Tomatoes are **determinate** if they eventually form a flower cluster at the terminal growing point, causing the plant to stop growing in height. Plants that never set terminal flower clusters, but only lateral ones and continue indefinitely to grow taller are called **indeterminate**. Older varieties are almost all indeterminate. These can be counted upon to produce abundant foliage and to ripen flavorful fruit. They may, however, be extremely late in maturing. The first determinate varieties developed had real problems with inadequate foliage cover and taste, but they ripened very early. Newer determinates produce better foliage, may grow taller and ripen fruit of similar quality to modern indeterminate varieties. They still tend to ripen their fruit over a shorter period of time, so successive planting may be desirable with determinates to

keep the harvest coming through the entire season. Determinate vines are easier to control and support during the growing season. Some of the extreme dwarf types are determinate as well as dwarf, producing some truly tiny mature plants.

Abbreviation Guide

A = Alternaria

F = Fusarium

N = nematodes

T = Tobacco mosaic virus

V = Verticillium

OP = Open Pollinated

AAS = All American Selection

These abbreviations represent common tomato viruses and diseases. When a plant name is followed by these letters, that variety is resistant to the diseases listed.

A few recommended varieties are:

- Medium - Early Red
- Champion (65 days, Indeterminate, resistance to VFN)
- Burpees Big Girl (78 days, crack resistant, indeterminate, resistant to VF)
- Supersonic (79 days, crack resistant, indeterminate, resistant to VF)
- Super-Large Red
- Supersteak (80 days, indeterminate, resistance to VFN)

- Beefmaster (81 days, indeterminate, resistant to VFN)
- Pink & Other Colors
- Brandywine (OP) (80 days, heirloom, indeterminate)

Here is a recipe you might like to try:



Fried Green Tomatoes

Fried green tomatoes are a southern tradition made famous by the movie of the same name. They are so popular in the south that gardeners plant extra slicing tomatoes to be harvested green for this recipe.

4 green tomatoes, cut in 1/4-inch slices
 1 cup flour
 1 egg beaten with cup skim milk
 1 cup yellow cornmeal
 1 teaspoon each salt and black pepper
 Canola oil for frying

1. Assemble ingredients. Spread flour on a sheet of waxed paper or on a plate. Put the egg wash in a

shallow dish.

2. Spread the cornmeal on a sheet of waxed paper or plate, add salt and pepper, and mix well.

3. Dredge the tomato slices in flour and shake off the excess.

4. Dip each slice in the egg wash and drain off excess, and then coat with the cornmeal, shaking off excess gently. Place on a tray and set aside.

5. Heat the oil in a large heavy (preferably cast iron) skillet over a medium flame. When hot, add the tomato slices. Do not overcrowd the skillet. Cook several minutes, until golden, then turn. Drain on paper towels and serve while still hot. Makes 5 servings.

There are many other varieties, colors, shapes and sizes of tomatoes that the home gardener can grow.

For a complete list, please contact Jan Rise, Master Gardener Volunteer Program coordinator, at the MSU Extension - Bay County office by calling (989) 895-4026.

Some of the information provided here was taken from *Tomatoes, Watch Your Garden Grow* by the University of Illinois Extension.

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2010 Volunteer Opportunities

You may need to contact MSU Extension - Bay County for detailed descriptions of volunteer opportunities. All Master Gardeners and trainees are welcome to participate.



MSU Extension Required Hours

Place	Opportunity	Contact
MSU Extension - Bay County Bay County Building 515 Center Avenue, Suite 301 Bay City, MI 48708-5124	Master Gardeners answer home horticulture questions and assist with assorted office projects pertaining to the Master Gardener program.	Jan Rise, Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator risej@baycounty.net MSU Extension: (989) 895-4026 Helpline: (989) 895-2031
MSU Gardens East Lansing, Michigan	Docent (tour guide) for any of the five campus gardens. Assist with plant sales, school programs or work in the gardens.	Ann Hancock MSU Gardens Volunteer Coordinator (517) 355-5191 hancock@msu.edu
Bay City Garden Walk Various locations throughout Bay County. This one-day project will be held on Thursday, June 17, 2010. Project hours are 10:30 - 7:00	Docent (tour guide) for any of the locations on the 2010 garden walk. Two shifts to be scheduled. You can also work a double shift or any portion.	Jan Rise, Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator risej@baycounty.net MSU Extension: (989) 895-4026 Helpline: (989) 895-2031
Master Gardener Volunteer Program Information Booth Various locations	Staff MSU Extension-sponsored information booth when needed. Not limited to, but such as: Bay County Libraries; Downtown Bay City Farmers Market BAMGA will be set up an information booth at YWCA Riverside Art Fair in June	Jan Rise, Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator risej@baycounty.net MSU Extension: (989) 895-4026 Helpline: (989) 895-2031 Contact: Marybeth Laisure, MG (989) 892-0940 for more information

<p>M-Dot Linwood I-75 Northbound Rest Area Location: between Linwood and Pinconning on Northbound I-75</p> <p>Planting date to be announced.</p>	<p>Maintain and plant gardens at this rest area. Answer questions and explain the gardens to Michigan residents that use this rest area.</p>	<p>Jan Rise, Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator risej@baycounty.net MSU Extension: (989) 895-4026 Helpline: (989) 895-2031</p>
<p>Bay County Library System Various locations: Central Library, downtown Bay City</p> <p>Dates and times to be announced.</p>	<p>Staff information booth at various times of the year at the different library locations. Answer consumer questions regarding horticulture issues.</p>	<p>Jan Rise, Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator MSU Extension (989) 895-4026 risej@baycounty.net</p>

MSU Extension Approved Hours – Personal Choice

Place	Opportunity	Contact
<p>Bay City Railtrail/Riverwalk Bay City Area</p> <p>May - November 2010</p>	<p>BCMGA has adopted the large pocket park at Livingston and Center. Maintain pocket park . Label plants for public. Diane asks you contact her for clean up dates for 2010</p>	<p>Diane Wolfe Advanced Master Gardener (989) 684-4187 email: luv2garden44@yahoo.com</p>
<p>Plant the Bay County Building The parking lot on Fifth Street side (back) and other Bay County building locations.</p> <p>Contact Judy or Marge for planting dates for 2010 (typically Thursday evening before Memorial Day)</p>	<p>Plant and maintain flower beds and large pots at the Bay County Building, Veteran's Memorial, and Bay County Health Department, Court Facility, and Law Enforcement Center.</p> <p>Label plants and produce a brochure explaining plants and/or design.</p>	<p>Judy Delestowicz Advanced Master Gardener (989) 895-4026 or e-mail at delestowiczj@baycounty.net Marge Marchlewicz Advanced Master Gardener (989) 895-4208 @ work, or e-mail Marchm@concentric.net</p>
<p>Riverwalk Beautification Across from Bay County Community Center, west side Bay City</p> <p>April through October 2010</p>	<p>Plant and maintain flower bed along the Riverwalk, within the Kantzler Arboretum, to showcase the Master Gardener Program to the public. Also, create a brochure to explain this garden's concept.</p>	<p>Gene Cianek Master Gardener (989) 686-3803</p>

<p>St. Joseph Church Rose Garden 1005 Third Street Bay City, MI 48708 April - November 2010</p>	<p>Mentor and assist with maintenance of church garden. Anyone welcome. Need not be a church member. Contact June Weiler for regular work dates and time.</p>	<p>June Weiler Advanced Master Gardener (989)894-2016</p>
<p>Marquette Railtrail Pocket Park near Marquette and Truman Parkway Bay City Spring - Fall 2010</p>	<p>Assist members of the Northwest Citizens District Council with maintaining this pocket park dedicated to one of it's former Council members.</p>	<p>Judy Brunner Advanced Master Gardener (989)686-4974 judybrunner@yahoo.com</p>
<p>Bay Regional Medical Center 3rd Floor Roof Top Garden Start date still pending</p>	<p>Completely rebuild garden area on 3rd floor roof top. Replace soil and plants including perennials, grasses, and annuals. Project will not begin until Bay Med's Buildings & Grounds Dept. rebuilds raised bed garden areas.</p>	<p>Mary Heinz Master Gardener (989) 686-4962 theinz1829@yahoo.com</p>
<p>Auburn Park Auburn, MI May thru October 2010 Work dates to be announced</p>	<p>There is a small memorial bed in the park. The city has several other beds that are in need of maintenance. This is a personal choice project for Jan Z. Call if interested in helping her.</p>	<p>Jan Zurvalec Master Gardener (989) 662-6549</p>
<p>Gardens at Riverside Senior Center Bay County Community Center JFK Drive, Bay City, MI 48706 May - October 2010</p>	<p>Develop and maintain gardens around the patio at the senior center and the signage at parking lot entrance . Work with senior citizen participants of the Riverside Senior Center. Label plants and develop brochure outlining gardens. Also to beautify this area for summer pedestrians who utilize the park area for special activities</p>	<p>Debbie Keyes, Advanced Master Gardener (989) 893-5834</p>
<p>Churches - Various May thru October 2010 Work dates to be announced</p>	<p>Mentor congregation members regarding horticulture practices used in church gardens and landscaping while maintaining and planting.</p>	<p>This is a "personal choice" project for individuals who assist with their church's garden.</p>

<p>Veterans Memorial Park Monuments/Veterans Park West side of Saginaw River between Midland Street and M-25, Bay City, MI Spring until Fall 2010. Includes: Veterans Memorial - Freedom Walk Spring Clean up scheduled for April 24, 2010</p>	<p>Maintain planting around the Veterans Memorial Monument. Weeding, pruning, possible planting and general clean-up of these two areas. (Project Freedom Walk & Viet Nam Memorial)</p>	<p>Judy Brunner Advanced Master Gardener (989) 686-4974 judybrunner@yahoo.com</p>
<p>Heritage House Farm Museum Pine Road in front of Garber High School, Essexville April thru November 2010</p>	<p>Maintain herb garden and planting beds. Assist members of the Heritage House Museum Society to continue the upkeep of this historical treasure of Hampton Twp. Museum is open to the public certain date of the year.</p>	<p>Jim Hill, Advanced Master Gardener (989) 892-6315</p>
<p>Good Samaritan Rescue Mission 713 Ninth Street, Bay City April thru fall 2010 Work dates to be announced</p>	<p>This shelter for men, women, and children has gardens located in the enclosed play yard. Families with children can enjoy the outdoor play area. These beds are a memorial to a teenage auto accident victim. General maintenance is needed throughout the summer.</p>	<p>Cathy Ososki Master Gardener (989) 667-4376 Dove4@chartermi.net</p>

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