



## A Garden Runs Through It

March 2025

*Whether it's a vegetable garden, houseplants or a landscape...*

### In This Issue

- Plant of the Month - Cassia Didymobotrya
- Activities at the Donna Critchfield Demonstration Garden
- Gardener's Corner - Do You Love Asparagus?
- Ramblings from a Master Gardener's Kitchen
- Recipe of the Month - Chicken and Asparagus
- Gardener's Literature - Tree and Shrub Gardening for Northern California
- Safety Notes - Safe Ladder Use
- February Events
- Garden Guide

### Constant Contact

We will now only send out the newsletter through constant contact, so please make sure that you have subscribed! You should have received an email from UC Cooperative Extension - Colusa County asking you to "Resubscribe me!" Please make sure you click the link so that you continue getting our newsletter in the new platform.



Find us on Facebook



Follow us on Instagram



Listen to our Podcast

## Upcoming Events

### Centennial Sprint

#### When?

Saturday, April 5, 2025  
Check in starts at 8:30 am  
Run/walk starts at 9:00 am

#### Where?

Colusa Sacramento River State Recreation Area  
1 10th Street, Colusa, CA 95932  
Colusa, CA 95932

#### What?

The UC Cooperative Extension Office of Colusa County is celebrating 100 years of service to our community! Join us to walk/run and visit with our program booths to learn more about Master Gardeners, CalFresh, 4-H, Pomology, and Rice Systems. There will also be a 100-yard dash race with medals for the kids to earn!

[Click here to Register](#)



Registration: \$30 per person  
Registration includes a shirt and entrance fee to participate  
Registration closes on March 31

100 yard dash  
for the kids to  
earn a medal!

Register on our website  
cecolusa.ucanr.edu

Questions?  
530-458-0570



## Family Fair 2025

### When?

Saturday, April 12th, 2025  
10 am - 2 pm

### Where?

Colusa County Fairgrounds  
1303 10th Street  
Colusa, CA

### What?

CCOE Children's Services is hosting a family fair with games and activities for the whole family! Bring your children to the booth to propagate a succulent to take home and ask us any garden questions you may have.

## Plant of the Month Cassia Didymobotrya



### Cassia Didymobotrya

This month I thought it would be fun to look for something different with a bright yellow flower that could really jazz up a dull corner of your garden. The plant commonly known as popcorn cassia is a legume (family Fabaceae) from tropical central and eastern Africa that is common in disturbed areas, but it is also grown as an ornamental plant world-wide. The other part of the common name comes from the scent of the foliage when rubbed – often described as that of buttered popcorn, although the fragrance is quite subtle. Although this tropical plant is only hardy in zones 9-11, because of its rapid growth and habit of flowering when small it is easily used as a seasonal annual in cool climates.

[Click here to learn more](#)

Submitted by Cynthia White

## Activities at the Donna Critchfield Demonstration Garden

499 Marqurite Street in Williams





### **Learning and Expanding**

Our February workshops took place outside of the garden, but we look forward to planning more learning opportunities in the spring. We have started the process of adding some additions to the garden including a storage shed, and we are partnering with a local Boy Scout Troop to add a Little Free Library for garden guests to enjoy!

### **Seeding and Planting**

The winter garden is slowly preparing for our transition into spring! At the end of February, we met at the Demonstration Garden to discuss and plan new additions and expansions for the spring garden. At the end of February we planted seed potatoes in grow bags.

### **Growing and Harvesting**

Many vegetables that we planted in the fall have been harvested! Most of the cauliflower and broccoli plants have been harvested and removed to make space for what is to come in the spring. We have continued to harvest radishes, beets, kale, celery, spinach, lettuce and cilantro. We donated these vegetables to the cafeteria at the Colusa County Office of Education Community School. Some cauliflower and broccoli were donated to the Ministerial Association's Food Distribution as well. Onions, beets, carrots, lettuce, celery, spinach and cilantro continue to grow in the garden, and we look forward to harvesting as winter comes to a close.



Do You Love Asparagus?

If you love asparagus, consider growing your own. One of the few perennial vegetables, asparagus will produce for 15-20 years or more Like a fruit tree, there is no harvest right away—yes, it's a commitment, not a zucchini. Asparagus can be grown from seeds which are slow to germinate and will add an additional year before you are able to harvest. The more common way is to plant crowns which are available in local nurseries and are 2-3 years old. The variety Martha Washington is an old standard and has both male and female plants. Newer all-male hybrids are available and reportedly are 3 times more productive than Martha Washington. I have planted purple asparagus along with the green which is a nice change. Asparagus spears should not be harvested the first season the crowns are set, and only harvested lightly the second year. It's hard to wait, but when plants are in their third season, they can be harvested for up to 6-10 weeks per year. Once established, spears can (and should be) harvested Planting time for asparagus crowns in our area is January and February. The plants need space and good drainage and are good candidates for raised beds or mounds. They like full sun, but tolerate some afternoon shade. Grilled, roasted, raw, or steamed, asparagus is the perfect spring vegetable- plant at least a dozen crowns for two people.

Submitted by Bonnie Rose

Ramblings from a Master Gardener's Kitchen

Nutrition Facts	
5 servings per container	
Serving size	1/3 box (100g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	450
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 15g	20%
Saturated Fat 8g	41%
TransFat 1g	
Cholesterol 30mg	11%
Sodium 310mg	13%
Total Carbohydrate 77g	28%
Dietary Fiber 1g	5%
Total Sugars 61g	
Includes 40g Added Sugars	79%
Protein 2g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	8%
Calcium 151mg	10%
Iron 12mg	70%
Potassium 115mg	2%
* The % Daily Values (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving contributes to a daily diet. 2000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Chapter 8

My previous writings for the Master Gardener Newsletter have focused primarily on how to save money in your kitchen. I have pretty much run out of ideas to share, at least for now anyway. So, here are some of what I will call "ramblings". I may have touched on some of these topics before, but, if so, I think they are worth thinking about again, or in more detail.

Thinking about healthy eating...

There are all sorts of labeling terms out there, most of which are not governed or regulated at all and/or may be regulated differently if the product is not of US origin. Guaranteed to be confusing and planned to be that way, at least to some extent. Other than the required ingredient and nutrition labels, most package labeling boils down to nothing but marketing strategies, developed to boost sales, based on surveys of potential customers for the product in question.

When I am buying things in the grocery store, other than my first question - "Can I make this myself for less?", my next questions are "What is this made with?" and "Where does it or the ingredients come from?" How do I answer these questions? I READ THE LABELS

What? and where does it or the ingredients come from? How do I answer these questions? I READ THE LABELS.

[Link to the complete article](#)

Submitted by Penny Walgenbach

\*While you're reading your food labels, it's important to keep expiration dates in mind. Here is an article from the NY Times titled, ["The Food Expiration Dates You Should Actually Follow"](#)

## Recipe of the Month

### Chicken and Asparagus



#### Chicken and Asparagus

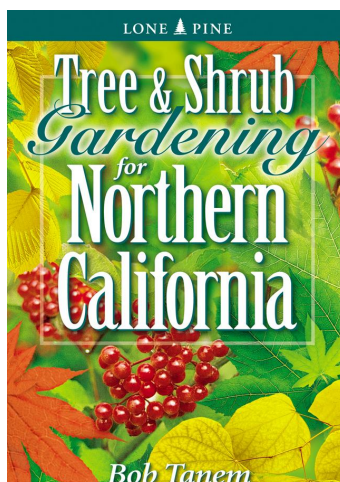
Have you ever wondered how it is that the meats in your broccoli beef or cashew chicken at the local Chinese place are always so lush and tender? The reason is a technique I ran across called velveting. Thinly sliced meat is marinated in a little cornstarch, water, oil, baking soda, sugar, soy and egg white. The egg white keeps everything stuck together, the cornstarch thickens the coating and later the sauce, the baking soda acts as a tenderizing agent and voila! I don't know the science behind it all, but take my word for it - it WORKS!! And, what is even better - it works with chicken, beef and pork, all equally well. Wahoo!! However, don't be tempted to use the egg yolk, that simply does NOT work. The yolk firms up and makes a total mess. Save the yolk and any extra white for an omlette or for your pet.

[Click here for the full recipe](#)

Recipe submitted by Penny Walgenbach

## Gardener's Literature

*Tree & Shrub Gardening for Northern California* by Bob Tanem and Don Williamson





Tree and Shrub Gardening for Northern California by Bob Tanem and Don Williamson

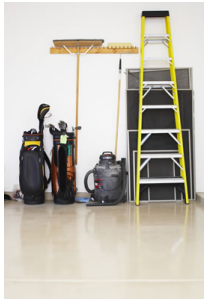
This little soft-cover book is a gem for those of you who want the best information about caring and planting of shrubs and trees in Northern California. It is a wonderful and rare thing to find a publication like this one geared specifically at our area so chock full of practical information.

[Click here to read the full article.](#)

Submitted by Cynthia White

## Thinking Safe and Green

### Master Gardener Program



#### Safe Ladder Use

In excess of 30,000 people are injured each year in ladder-related accidents. The leading cause of ladder-related accidents is improper use of ladders.

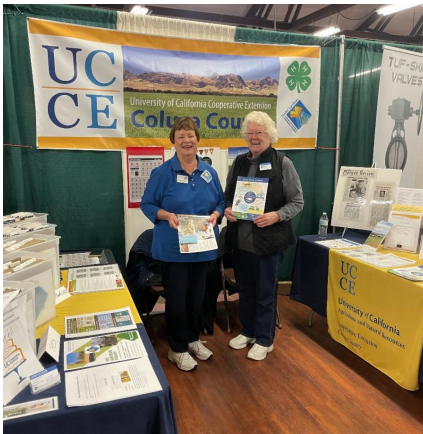
This article comes in a timely manner, while people are busy pruning trees and harvesting citrus high up in the trees.

[#8 Safe Ladder Use](#)

## February Events

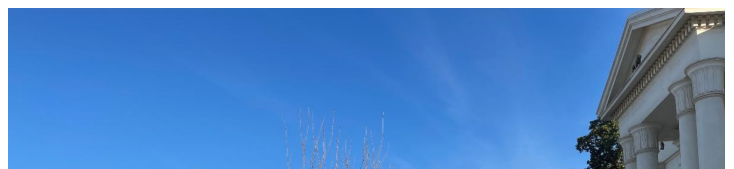
### Colusa Farm Show February 4-6

Thank you to everyone who stopped by our booth at the Farm Show to ask questions and discuss gardening with us! We made lots of connections and enjoyed interacting with all of you. We continue to receive calls and emails with questions and look forward to hearing from more of you!



### Landscape Tree Maintenance Workshop February 26

Last week we hosted a Landscape Tree Maintenance Workshop at the Colusa County Courthouse. We were thrilled to have [Igor Lacan](#), UC Urban Forestry Advisor from the UCCE Cooperative Extension of the San Francisco Bay Area, join us to educate maintenance workers from Colusa County, the City of Colusa, City of Williams, Colusa County Office of Education and other community members about the importance of training young trees, and best practices for how to maintain landscape trees in our community. We all benefitted from learning and practicing the 5 steps to train young trees to have good structure, a strong central leader, and strong branches with good spacing. We look forward to seeing how they implement the skills that they have learned throughout the county!





## Gardening Guide

### UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County Zones 8 and 9

	March	April	May
<b>Planting</b>	<p>Mid-March is a good time to plant potatoes. You can plant canna, gladiolus, and crocosmia for summer blooms.</p> <p>Early in the month you can still plant bare-root trees and shrubs if the garden center still has any.</p> <p>Don't be tempted by the plants in the garden centers unless you have a way to warm up the soil. It is still early for tomatoes, eggplant, and peppers (although you could try late in the month if it is still warm.) Nights should be above 55°.</p>	<p>In the shade you can still plant pansies, violas, and primroses.</p> <p>Most perennials can be planted in April, look for water-wise options.</p> <p>Once the nights are above 55 degrees, you can plant tomatoes, eggplant, and peppers, chard, radishes, beets, and cilantro (cilantro will bolt when it gets hot)</p>	<p>Direct seed in the garden cucumbers, melons, summer squash, beans, corn, and annual herbs.</p> <p>Plant sunflowers, zinnias, cosmos, marigolds, and aster in the flower garden.</p>
<b>Maintenance</b>	<p>Check your irrigation system and do necessary maintenance.</p> <p>Fertilize roses, annuals flowers, and berries with slow-release fertilizer when spring growth begins.</p> <p>Fertilize citrus and deciduous fruit trees.</p> <p>Prune and fertilize spring-flowering shrubs and trees after they finish blooming.</p> <p>Fertilize the lawn with a slow-release fertilizer.</p>	<p>Fertilize your trees and shrubs once this spring.</p> <p>Fertilize the bulbs after the bloom is finished with bone meal.</p> <p>Applying mulch to your flower and vegetable beds is very important. The mulch keeps the soil cool, retains water and enriches the soil.</p> <p>Spring is go time for gardeners. Keep the weeds from taking over and have fun!!</p>	<p>Fertilize summer blooming flowers early in the month.</p> <p>Apply (or re-apply as needed) organic mulch to all beds to keep the soil cool and enrich the soil. Be sure to leave space around the base of the plants.</p> <p>Trim the dead flowers but not the leaves from spring bulbs. The leaves restore the bulb; so wait to remove them until they turn yellow.</p> <p>Fertilize the bulbs after the bloom is finished with bone meal.</p>
<b>Prevention</b>	<p>Watch for aphids on new growth on the roses; spray with a strong spray of water to remove them or use insecticidal soap or horticultural oil spray.</p> <p>Prepare garden beds by incorporating compost before planting spring vegetables.</p> <p>Keep on the weed patrol; pull them while they are small.</p> <p>Use iron phosphate bait for slugs and snails or go on a night hunt and kill them up when you find them.</p>	<p>Watch azaleas and camellias for yellowing between the veins in the leaves. If the leaf is yellowish, apply chelated iron to the plants.</p> <p>Trim the dead flowers but not the leaves from spring bulbs. The leaves restore the bulb; so, wait to remove them until they turn yellow.</p>	<p>Later in the month prune spring flowering shrubs to shape, removing old and dead wood. The plants flower on the growth that happens during the summer; do not prune in the fall or winter or you will have no flowers on the shrub.</p> <p>Continue the battle against slugs and snails. Deadhead (cut off spent flowers) to get continuing bloom on annuals and perennials.</p> <p>Thin peaches, plums, and nectarines so there is 6" between fruits.</p>

### Science Word of the Month

**Companion planting:** refers to the strategic cultivation of different plant species near each other in gardening and agriculture. The goal is to enhance growth, repel pests, and improve overall plant health by taking advantage of beneficial interactions between certain plants when grown in close proximity.

### Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us!



In today's fast paced, social media way of life, fake news has become normal. This includes fake gardening advice.



UC Master Gardeners use cutting edge, research-based information to help you garden better. We are practical, connected and trusted.



**Karyna Barrera**  
*Community Outreach Coordinator*  
*Master Gardener Coordinator*

UC Cooperative Extension of Colusa County  
P.O. Box 180  
100 Sunrise Blvd., Suite E  
Colusa, CA 95932  
530-458-0570  
[cecolusa.ucanr.edu](http://cecolusa.ucanr.edu)

**Did a friend send you this newsletter?**  
You can get your own newsletter sent directly to your inbox, just click to subscribe.



Read UC ANR's non-discrimination Statement [here](#).

UC Cooperative Extension - Colusa County | 100 Sunrise Blvd., Ste. E | Colusa, CA 95932  
US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!