

**U.C. COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION/  
COUNTY OF VENTURA  
FARM ADVISOR  
669 COUNTY  
SQUARE DR., #100  
VENTURA, CA 93003**



# UC Cooperative Extension Report

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In this issue, we include a great deal of information about gardening

## Victory Gardens for Modern Americans from the Acting County Director Rose Hayden-Smith

Americans have always turned to gardening in challenging times. The Victory Gardens of World War I and World War II - and the garden efforts of the Great Depression - helped Americans successfully negotiate hard times. These gardens helped the family budget; improved dietary practices; reduced the food mile and saved fuel; enabled America to export more food to our allies; beautified communities; enabled every American to contribute to a national effort; and helped bridge social, ethnic, class and cultural differences during a time when cooperation was widely needed.

Gardens were an expression of solidarity, of patriotism, and shared sacrifice. They were found everywhere...schools, homes, and throughout public spaces in communities all over the nation. No gardening effort was too small. Every effort counted. Americans did their bit. And it mattered.

Consider this: In WWI, the Federal Bureau of Education nationalized a school garden program and funded it with War Department monies. Millions of students gardened at school, at home, and in their communities. A national Lib-

erty Garden (later Victory Garden) program was initiated that called upon all Americans to garden for the nation, and the world. In part because of the success of home gardeners (and careful food preservation), the U.S. was able to increase exports to our starving European Allies.

During 1943, an estimated 3/5ths of Americans participated in some sort of gardening activity, including Eleanor Roosevelt, who planted a Victory Garden on the White House Lawn, and Vice President Henry Wallace, who gardened with his son at the VP's residence.

Nearly 40% of the fresh fruits and vegetables consumed statewide during 1943 were grown in school, home and community gardens. In addition to providing much-needed food, gardening helped Americans accept the nation's plurality, providing a positive experience that transcended race, class and socioeconomic divisions.

They provided a way for all Americans to provide a service to the nation. Gardens were not



a diversion...through gardening efforts, Americans made significant contributions to the war effort.

Our nation has many needs right now. Families need help with their personal economies. Entire communities are food-insecure. We have a tenuous connection with the land, and a poor understanding of our food system.

Obesity is an epidemic. Environmental concerns - and declining oil supplies - dictate a need to recreate more sustainable and local food systems. And Americans have proven that they are hungry for change, eager to re-engage with their neighbors, their communities, their nation.

(continued on page three)

## We're the University of California Cooperative Extension...

We are proud to partner with the County of Ventura in tackling complex economic, environmental and social issues throughout the county.

We actively collaborate with farmers, fishermen, professional educators and service providers, community leaders and non-profit organizations to support a healthy and sustainable community in Ventura County.

**“There can be no other occupation like gardening in which, if you were to creep up behind someone in their work, you would find them smiling.”**  
**Mirabel Osler**

## A New Season for the Master Gardeners

### A Growing Enterprise

The Ventura County Master Gardeners are kicking off the season with a full schedule of workshops and classes.

On a rainy February 8th, the “Mastering Your Home Garden” workshop featured a day of informative gardening education that included presentations by UCCE advisor Ben Faber and horticulture experts, garden and farmhouse tours, a plant sale, breakfast

and lunch at the UC Hansen Agricultural Center in Santa Paula.

Pleased with the response from Master Gardeners, Leah Haynes, the program coordinator observed, “In spite of the weather conditions, the home gardeners were excited and enthusiastic.”

Future events include volunteering at the Home and Garden Show at the Fairgrounds

on March 20, 21 and 22, a trip to the Huntington Library and Gardens on April 29, and a “Summer in the Garden” workshop held on May 16.

The Master Gardener program attracts home gardeners from all over the county and encompasses a variety of occupations that include physicians, educators, nurses, secretaries, and corporate executives.

## Junior Master Gardeners Dig In

### Fun and Farm

The Junior Master Gardener (JMG) Program is a wonderful program for youth that ignites a passion for learning and service through a unique garden education.

This international youth gardening program engages youth in fun, hands-on activities that promote an interest in gardening, an appreciation for the

environment, and healthy eating habits. Community service is encouraged throughout the program, through group and individual activities.

Members of JMG programs have worked in school and home gardens, served as mentors to younger youth in the program, and written articles for publications, including

“Fields to Fridge—What’s Growing in Ventura County.” This publication has been distributed throughout the county to Ventura Star newspaper subscribers, Ventura County Fair attendees, teachers and students at public and private schools in the county. It is also featured on the UCCE website at [http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/youth\\_menu/](http://ceventura.ucdavis.edu/youth_menu/).

This year a new JMG group at Cabrillo Middle School is creating a tabloid and a website which will include what they have learned about local food systems, the history of victory gardens, and gardening basics for youths and adults.

Additional information about the Junior Master Gardener Program is available on the national JMG website at <http://jmgkids.us>.



**Science teachers monitor water quality at sites around Ormond Beach.**

## UCCE Advisor Leads Ormond Beach RESTOR Education Project

### Watershed Education

From September 2008 to May 2009 Dr. Monique Myers, our coastal community development advisor, will lead a project at Ormond Beach designed to provide research data and educate teachers and children from Ventura County schools through participation in a marine science research project.

Fifteen sixth through eighth grade science teachers and their classes will learn about their local watershed and the Ormond Beach wetland restoration project (RESTOR) and participate in hands-on water quality monitoring. The students, whose backgrounds are underrepresented in marine science fields, learn how to monitor the water quality of

their local watershed through a day of interactive field work and scientific data collection.

Following the field trip, students will participate in a watershed essay contest. One winner from each class and their teacher will go on a research cruise to monitor water quality and visit Anacapa Island.

To encourage long-term use of their training, teachers and students will interact with scientists from local non-profit watershed monitoring groups and be provided with long-term access to water quality monitoring equipment.

According to Dr. Myers, “The RESTOR Project educates

Ventura County students about watersheds and involves teachers in wetland research. This is terrific, but the really exciting part is that the project is based on a huge local wetland restoration project. Someday we are going to have the largest wetland in southern California here in Ventura County. I hope our local teachers and students feel they were a part of making that happen.”

Dr. Myers holds a doctorate in environmental science and engineering from UCLA. She operates through the University of California’s Sea Grant extension in applying marine science expertise, research and education to our county.

## Tips from a Nutritionist...

### February is **American Heart Month**

**Susana Bruzzone-Miller, R.D.**

Cardiovascular diseases, including stroke, are our nation's No.1 killer. Be kind to your heart all year long by making simple food and lifestyle changes.

Take a positive and realistic approach to eating—focus on enjoying food instead of avoiding it. Choose fresh nutrient-rich whole foods first. They contain more vitamins and minerals and are more economical. Here are some heart healthy tips to try this month:

- **Choose brightly colored vegetables and fruits and 100% fruit juices.** Strive to fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit. Visit a farmers market—get inspired by the variety of locally grown fresh produce available year-round.
- **Try whole-grains.** High in fiber, these foods may help lower blood cholesterol. They also help to keep you full which may help you manage your weight. Consider heart friendly options such as oatmeal for breakfast, 100% whole bread on a sandwich at lunch, and brown rice at dinner.
- **Eat fish at least twice a week.** Recent research shows that eating oily fish containing omega-3 fatty acids (for example, salmon and trout) may help lower your risk of coronary artery disease.
- **Make a switch to lowfat.** Try lowfat (1%) or fat free milk and milk products.
- **Move your body.** Just taking a brisk 30 minute walk at least five days per week can lower your risk of heart disease and help with weight control.

Source: American Heart Association [americanheart.org](http://americanheart.org)

### Modern Victory Gardens (from page one)

UCCE is taking concrete steps to encourage and support gardening efforts locally. We hope that you'll join us for a **free** vegetable gardening workshop on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009, at the UC Hansen Agricultural Center, located at the Faulkner Farm in Santa Paula, from 9 a.m. to Noon. Reservations are required, and may be made by contacting Susana Bruzzone Miller at 805.662.6948 or [sbmiller@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sbmiller@sbcglobal.net).

Home vegetable gardening is good for the environment, good for your

health, and good for your budget. In this workshop, you'll learn the nuts and bolts of creating a vegetable garden in your home from Certified Master Gardeners. Participants will learn to build a raised bed, seasonal plant selection, soil and irrigation and much more.

Make reservations early, as participation is limited. This workshop will repeat later this spring.

You can also get gardening information from our UCCE Master Gardener website at <http://groups.ucanr.org/VCMG/>

[index.cfm](#) The UCCE Master Gardeners have a Home Garden Workshop scheduled on Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

You may also visit the UCCE Victory Grower website at <http://groups.ucanr.org/victorygrower/index.cfm> for other valuable information about the history of school, home and community gardens; this site also provides practical links.



### It's Official: Strawberry Growers Set Record

California strawberry growers established a new production record last year, harvesting more than 1.7 billion pounds, according to the California Strawberry Commission. That's more than 77 million pounds over what they produced in 2007. Growers have indicated they plan to increase strawberry acreage this season. However, whether they achieve another record harvest depends on factors including water availability and weather. California leads the nation in strawberry production and farmers now harvest fruit year-round.

Our strawberry and vegetable advisor, Dr Oleg Daugovish, noted that we have increased acreage and production but new problems have arisen. Pathogens that were once considered minor are emerging as major causes of plant collapse after conversion to 1,3D+chloropicrin (1,3D\_Pic), a popular and economical soil fumigant. Among the fungi isolated are: *Macrophomina*, *Fusarium* and *Cylindrocarpon*.

Dr. Daugovish and his group are currently testing different control methods for these pathogens and are learning how different strawberry varieties tolerate their presence. They hope to have some results and additional information in April.

## Senior Citizen Gardening Program Expands



### Master Gardener Makes a Difference

Simi Valley Master Gardener graduate, Vicki Howard, developed a senior citizen gardening program for her community that is expanding to include Oxnard.

In 2006, Vicki Howard contacted several Master Gardeners about teaching gardening skills to seniors in response to

a request by the Simi Valley Parks and Recreation department. The program was launched and met with overwhelming interest. It has grown to include four series of seasonal gardening classes.

In June Leah Haynes, UCCE Master Gardener coordinator, approached City of Oxnard representatives about implementing a similar program for

Oxnard. The program was approved by the Board of Directors and should begin in April 2009.

The program will feature guest speakers and expert advisor overview of presentations. Class subjects include container gardening, integrated pest management, rose care and California native plants.

## The Beetles are Coming!

### Pesty Problems

Dr. Ben Faber, our citrus and avocado advisor, met with USDA representatives, Florida and Georgia officials and University of Florida researchers in February to discuss the danger the Redbay Ambrosia Beetle poses to the Florida avocado industry.

Each species of Ambrosia Beetle has a symbiotic relationship with a specific fungus. While some beetles attack avocado trees, it is the Redbay variety that through the fungus it carries on its body can cause death to an entire tree.

The Redbay Ambrosia Beetle is also unusual that it strikes at healthy trees as opposed to the majority of these beetles that attack

trees that are already dying or dead. It is the fungus that causes the laurel wilt that kills the tree.

Florida agricultural officials are concerned because the beetles are most attracted to a particular family of plants that proliferate in Florida. The Florida avocado crop consists of about 6,600 bearing acres and is valued at over 14 million dollars a season.

Research is being conducted in many areas including testing the susceptibility of various types of avocado trees to the fungus that causes laurel wilt. The laurel wilt has not responded to any registered fungicides to slow the infestation and control is complicated by a variety of factors.

This kind of infestation could be devastating to the California avocado industry, particularly in

the San Diego area which produces over 60 percent of the state's avocados and to Ventura County avocado producers.

Dr. Faber's goal is to assess the extent of the problem and put pressure on USDA officials to quarantine the movement of plants and fire wood in order to prevent the spread to other states.



**Redbay Ambrosia Beetle**

## Quagga Mussels

With the arrival of non-native quagga (*Dreissena bugensis*) and zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*) in California, local reservoirs, lakes and streams are even more vulnerable to the introduction of these invaders. These invasive mussels are typically spread via boating activities and shared water systems such as the Colorado River Aqueduct.

Quagga and zebra mussels can be particularly harmful because once established they dog pipes that distribute water — much like a clogged artery hindering the supply of blood. Problems with water delivery not only impact our home and workplace, but also food systems (farms) that rely on irrigation water

from local reservoirs. Further, these invaders alter ecosystems in several ways, including filtering out food that supports productive fisheries.

How can you help protect local water sources? Early detection monitoring! Although these mussels are known to occur in just a few of California's lakes and reservoirs, continual monitoring is needed to determine whether they have spread elsewhere.

Information about the need for early detection monitoring and guidance for developing a monitoring program is provided in the "Early Detection Monitoring Manual for Quagga and Zebra Mussels." This manual not only provides background informa-

tion about invasive mussels, it also describes sampling considerations, survey methods and decontamination techniques that citizens can implement locally. Your help in determining the extent of spread of these invasive species through early detection monitoring will be vital for minimizing the occurrence of additional infestations and for the application of effective treatment methods.

The manual can be ordered at <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/items/SG027.aspx>, with discounts for 5 or more copies available from California Sea Grant, [pubadmin@seamail.ucsd.edu](mailto:pubadmin@seamail.ucsd.edu), 858.534.4446. (See publications on page 5.)

## Published Research

UCCE Ventura County academic, research and program staff publishes the results of the wide-range of research that UCCE conducts, so that it may benefit others and increase the body of knowledge available on topics vital to the sustainability of agriculture. This is an area in which Ventura County staff excels. Below are some recent publications produced by members of our staff.

- Downer, A.J. 2009. Mulch Effects on Trees. Proceedings of the California Plant and Soil Conference. Fresno Ca. pp 33-35.
- Oleg Daugovich, Doug Gubler, Hai Su. Pre-plant Fungicide Dips of Strawberry Transplants to Control Anthracnose Caused by Colletotrichum acutatum in California. 2009. Accepted to HortTechnology journal.
- Julie Newman, Salvatore Mangiafico, Donald Merhaut, Ben Faber, Jay Gan, Laosheng Wu. Survey of Nutrients and Pesticides in Runoff from Production Nurseries and Citrus and Avocado Orchards, 2009. Accepted HortTechnology journal.
- Carolynn S. Culver, Sabrina L. Drill, Monique R. Myers, Valerie T. Borel. 2009. Early Detection Monitoring Manual for Quagga and Zebra Mussels. Sea Grant publication T-069.



The Big Barn at the Hansen Agricultural Center

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead*


  
**FREE VEGETABLE GARDENING WORKSHOP**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 21 / 9:00–NOON**  
**AT THE UC HANSEN AGRICULTURAL CENTER**

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**Our mission is to serve the people of California through the creation, development and application of knowledge in agricultural, natural and human resources.**



## **We Are...**

**Acting County Director:**

**Rose Hayden-Smith**

**County Advisors:**

**Carrie Culver**

**Oleg Daugovish**

**Jim Downer**

**Ben Faber**

**Monique Myers**

**Julie Newman**

**Research Staff:**

**Sal Mangiafico**

**Maren Mochizuki**

**Emmanuel Gonzalez**

**Cross County Advisors:**

**Carl Bell**

**Sabrina Drill**

**Program Representatives:**

**Susana Bruzzone-Miller\***

**Susan Gloeckler**

**Leah Haynes\***

**IT Technician:**

**Steve Griffin**

**Support Staff:**

**Tisha Fisher**

**Cris Johnson**

**Chris Webb**

*\*UC Hansen Agricultural Center*

