



Sandoval Extension Master Gardener Newsletter

<http://sandovalmastergardeners.org/>



Sandoval County

New Mexico State University • Cooperative Extension Service • U.S. Department of Agriculture

October 2021

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SEMG Newsletter
Submissions
Deadline: 25th each mo.

Please submit news,
articles, events and
photographs to:
[newsletter@sandoval
mastergardeners.org](mailto:newsletter@sandovalmastergardeners.org)

Editor:
Kate Shadock

From Barbara Boyd, Advisory Council Chair



Photo: Pixaby

October is an important time in the garden. We are gleaning the last of the harvest and preparing our gardens for winter and the spring to come. It is important to save organic matter in our gardens to ensure a healthy harvest next year. Please see article in this newsletter about composting.

October is a busy month for SEMG!

Intern graduation and the Annual Meeting are opportunities for celebration, and both require hours of preparation work in the background. Thanks to all those who are making these pivotal events a success.

INTERN GRADUATION: SAVE THE DATE Intern Graduation on Friday, October 29 at 3:00 via Zoom.

ANNUAL MEETING: SAVE THE DATE for our annual meeting. We are meeting on Saturday, October 30 at 3:00 via Zoom.

GET INVOLVED: I encourage our members to stay active in SEMG. You can do this through volunteering for committees, submitting projects for consideration as an official SEMG project, and reviewing current SEMG projects to volunteer. Please “watch this space” and the website for want ads and job descriptions that we seek to fill. It is our members who make Sandoval Master Gardeners a benefit to the entire county!

~ Barbara

HOW TO BECOME A MASTER GARDENER

John Thompson, SEMG 2018, Education Committee Chair

Applications are now being accepted for 2022 Intern Class

The NMSU Extension Education Committee is putting the final touches on the format for the 2022 Master Gardener Intern Training Program. The Education Committee has designed a statewide standard curriculum and schedule that builds on the success of the virtual classroom format used last year that restricted in-person classes because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The curriculum will be applied statewide and consist of 15 weeks of core topics presented by specialists as online videos and supplemented with online references and reading materials. The specialists will also support a weekly virtual Q&A session that can be accessed by interns statewide. Interns can submit questions to specialists to be answered at the live online Q&A session. The goal of the Education Committee is to have all core classes reside within the NMSU On Demand platform for consistency in format, accessibility, and quality control.

The core curriculum will include training on:

- 1) Orientation to Master Gardener Program
- 2) Climate & Weather, strategies for NM gardening, NM hydrology
- 3) Soils: physical and biological properties; soil health
- 4) Botany, tree physiology
- 5) Tree selection and care
- 6) Ornamentals (annuals, perennials, and shrubs emphasizing natives and xeric)
- 7) Entomology
- 8) Pollinators and Beneficial Insects
- 9) Growing Vegetables

- 10) Growing Fruit
- 11) Integrated Weed Management
- 12) Plant Pathology
- 13) Watering & irrigation, permaculture, and microclimates
- 14) Plant ID
- 15) MG Outreach: diagnostics and public service



Photo: Pixabay

The new format gives NMSU Extension the ability to reach every county with Master Gardener training. Each county can tailor its intern training by the addition of elective classes and hands-on workshops. Topics for hands-on workshops include plant diagnostics, plant identification, weed identification, insect identification, tree pruning, and seed saving (ornamentals, vegetables, and native plants).

SEMG intends to extend its intern training with electives that can be accessed as online videos and with hands-on workshops. Veteran master gardeners may also access the electives or workshops for continuing education credits (CEUs).

Classes will start January 17, 2022. SEMG will schedule an orientation for interns prior to the start of classes. The 2022 Intern Application form will be available on the sandovalmastergardeners.org website, soon.

OVER THE GARDEN WALL

Excerpted from The Albuquerque Journal [Article](#) 26 September 2021

Chimayó chile a symbol of Southwest

'It is synonymous with who we are as New Mexicans,' says Gov. Lujan Grisham

Along the rugged foothills of the Sangre de Cristo mountains is a crescent-shaped valley, named Chimayó, after the nearby "T'si Mayo" hill of the Tewa tribe. It is an arts and farming community of 2,600 that straddles the line separating Rio Arriba and Santa Fe counties. Chimayó has become a symbol of the ancient culture of the Southwest, and of the reverence for cultivating the land.

Crescencio "Chencho" Ochoa, a farmer in Chimayó, devotes his time to working the New Mexico soil, growing what is perhaps New Mexico's most iconic contribution to the world: the tantalizing flavors of red and green chile peppers.

"To every soul, God gives something. For the artists, God gives some the gift to sing, some to dance. God also gives gifts to the different soils of different places," he said. "The soil of Colombia has the gift to grow coffee. For the soil of Chimayó, God gave the gift to grow chile."

The chile pepper, the most enduring fruit — not vegetable — of New Mexico land, likely made its way through Aztec trade routes into this land, where later-arriving conquistadors hastened its trade. Last year 2.4 billion pounds of it were sold around the world.

While New Mexico is the top chile-producing state in the nation, USDA figures show that chile is not the top product in the state's \$3.4 billion agricultural market. Chile is ranked a lowly sixth, below milk, cattle, pecans, hay and onions.

"When we grow it, when we harvest it, when we roast it, when we start to peel it, whole families will come together, much in the way you might recognize with tamale making with the holidays, where it's a huge family production," said Lujan Grisham. "That's how New Mexico families embrace chile."

New Mexico chile is as varied as the people in the state. Farmers and experts say that different soils, temperatures, elevations, watering and growing techniques all produce different flavor profiles for chile.

Although opinions abound on which chile region represents the true New Mexico flavor, most observers agree that the state's chile identity is primarily defined by two chile-growing regions: the Chimayó fields in the north of the state, and the Hatch Valley in the south.



Authentic Chimayó chile is orange, smaller than standard chile peppers and noticeably wrinkled with a ridge near the stem, he said. It has a citrusy, smoky flavor and a little rush of heat — "just enough to give you a little bit of sweat on your brow," he said — and with a savory aftertaste.

If someone wants the real thing, he recommended finding a farm connection, and schmoozing your way into the inner circle. The entire Chimayó Valley probably grows 30 to 40 acres of chile, and only about a third of that is grown to be put on the market, he said.

Ochoa is the largest chile grower in Chimayó, but he said the chile from this region represents a tiny drop in New Mexico's chile market. This year, for example, he grew two acres of chile — down from his usual four or five acres — and sells it at nearby farmer's markets.

Noel Trujillo, said he believes the Chimayó chile is a chile truer to the original plant grown throughout the centuries in New Mexico. Academics agree, citing a concept known as “landrace” — a term for plants that evolve into a specific chile “race” after 100 years of repeated seed selection and growth in a geographical area.

“The seed from landrace chiles was passed on from generation to generation, bringing forward genetic traits that allowed for adaptation to the unique growing conditions in northern New Mexico,” said Dr. Stephanie Walker, extension vegetable specialist at New Mexico State University, in an NMSU academic article titled [“The Landrace Chiles of Northern New Mexico” in 2016](#). “‘Chimayó,’ the chile pepper landrace from the small village of Chimayó, is the most well known of the New Mexico landraces,” she says in the article.

Researchers found that northern New Mexico chile is not related to the Hatch Valley chile grown commercially in the southern part of the state. Chimayó’s closest relative is the chile grown in Mexico, adding credence to the legend that northern New Mexico chile was brought in by the ancient trade routes of MesoAmerica, including the Mexica — known popularly as Aztecs.

Chile in the north of New Mexico is also distinct because it is more directly tied to the original chile grown by the Indigenous and early Spanish settlers, chile experts say. They add that the evolution of chile in the north has been natural, different from the southern chile in Hatch that has undergone engineering to create a specific size, thickness and flavor profiles.

“While these New Mexico commercial cultivars are the main type grown in the southern part of the state, in northern New Mexico many Native American Pueblo and Hispanic communities have long grown ‘native chile,’ also known as New Mexico landraces,” Walker said in her article.

Gloria Trujillo agreed that the northern New Mexico is more natural, less altered and generally more unpredictable, sort of a free-range chile.

“We don’t have mild, or medium, or hot. It is what it is,” she said. “If it happens to be hotter one year than the next, then that’s the way it is.”

What’s the Difference Between Chili and Chile?

*Chili (plural chilies or chilis) is the standard American English name for the hot pepper as well as the spicy stew, condiment, and spice in which it is a prominent ingredient. On the other hand, in British English, chilli (plural chillies or chillis) is typically used. **The spelling chile is of Spanish origin and is common in southwestern areas of the U.S. where that language is frequently used.***

Another unique application of chile is in its designation for the powdered form of dried chili peppers. [Gastronomes](#) will tell you that [chili powder](#) (with an “i”) usually implies that the powder consists of ground-up dried chili peppers mixed with a blend of other spices, whereas chile powder (with an “e”) is reserved for a pure powder of dried chili peppers only.

Thank you, Merriam-Webster!

Composting In The Desert is Challenging – Not Impossible!

NMSU has phenomenal resources. To access that wealth of knowledge, use [Quick Links](#). A search for information about composting popped up several documents and flyers, to guide the home gardener through the process. Closer to home is the [Bernalillo County Master Gardener group](#) who also have information posted to the [Quick Links](#) page.

As we clean out our garden beds this time of year most of us have an abundance of material to compost that can be worked back in the soil next spring. We discussed **Composting in Winter** on page 7 of the [February 2021 issue](#) of this newsletter.

Abundant sunshine, intense ultra-violet radiation levels, low humidity, frequent winds and limited precipitation combine to make both gardening and composting difficult in the desert. Controlling evaporation to keep the composting material damp is the biggest challenge in the desert and requires a unique approach.

BINS: Unlike most of the country, composting in NM needs bins that **do not** allow as much airflow. Bins made of wire or widely spaced boards need to be lined with plastic to keep the material moist. Commercial bins need to have some of the holes taped over. The top of the bin needs to be lightly covered with plastic or non-porous material such as cardboard or old rugs.

MATERIALS: Smaller size organic material composts faster. Mowing over leaves before adding that carbon layer will help them decompose quicker than a thick mat of leaves. Soak any dry organic materials in water to approximate 50% moisture. Mix in any nitrogenous materials and begin a 6" layer of this organic fill. Layer material to compost 6-8 inches thick and separate layers with a 6" bulking layer made up of pinecones, corn cobs, sticks that allow airflow.



WATER: Moisture level needs to be maintained at 50% level to continue evaporation and decomposition. Access to water to keep the pile damp is essential.

REFERENCES:

<http://docs.nmcomposters.org/composting-in-the-desert-2018.pdf>

<https://bernalilloextension.nmsu.edu/mastercomposter/desert-composting.html>

Garden2Table Corner – October 2021

By Cassandra D'Antonio (SEMG 2012), Chair of the Garden2Table Committee

Oh, Glorious October. *“October, baptize me with leaves! Swallow me in corduroy and nurse me with split pea soup. October, tuck tiny candy bars in my pockets and carve my smile into a thousand pumpkins. O Autumn. O teakettle! O grace!”* once wrote Rainbow Rowell about my favorite month. The early days of autumn are also when we slowly transition from the fresh, bright, crispy, light, and refreshing produce of summer to the toothier, creamier, fuller, savory, and comforting vegetables of fall and winter. I am thinking of winter squashes and stem and root vegetables, but not yet. In this month's column, I am featuring one of my favorite dishes, **ratatouille**, because I consider it to be the perfect summer to autumn transition dish.

Argh! First, I thought it was time to discuss something I avoided in my summer columns—**carbohydrates**—because starchy winter veggies can be loaded with them (and who wants to discuss carbs during growing and harvest season). Of course, how we prepare our winter veggies also adds to the carbohydrate/calorie conundrum because we tend to add fats and sugar when preparing mashed potatoes, sweet potato casseroles and roasted acorn squash. It's kind of like ordering a healthy salad and then dousing it with a creamy, high calorie dressing. This makes us feel like we are eating healthy, when in fact we may as well be eating a green chile cheeseburger.

Not all carbohydrates are created equal. When it comes to fruits and vegetables, you can't talk about carbohydrates without discussing fiber, because fiber is a carbohydrate that is not digested, so it does not raise blood sugar, which is great news! And most of us can benefit from increasing the fiber in our diets because it prevents constipation and can help lower cholesterol. There are two types of fiber—insoluble fiber and soluble fiber. **Insoluble fiber** does not dissolve in water, but it holds water and pushes waste through the intestinal tracts. Whole wheat products, many vegetables, and the skins of fruits and root vegetables contain insoluble fiber. **Soluble fiber** dissolves in water and binds to fatty substances promoting their excretion as waste, helping lower blood cholesterol levels. Soluble fiber is found in dried beans and peas, oats, barley, and many fruits and vegetables, such as apples, oranges, and carrots. Starchy vegetables, such as corn, potatoes, and winter squash have important nutrients and fiber, but are also high in carbohydrates. That is why it is important to balance them with low carb foods, watch portion sizes, and eat fruits and vegetables with the edible skin on. Below is a list for comparison of commonly prepared non-starchy and starchy vegetables (Source: *Kitchen Creations* by NMSU, NMDOH, Diabetes Prevention & Control Program).

Comparison of Non-Starchy Vegetables Per ½ cup, Cooked

VEGETABLE	CALORIES	CARBS (grams)	FIBER (grams)
Asparagus	22	3	1
Broccoli	22	4	2
Brussels Sprouts	30	7	2
Cabbage	17	3	2
Carrots	35	8	3
Cauliflower	14	3	2
Eggplant	14	3	1
Green Beans	22	5	2
Green Chile	18	5	1
Mushrooms	21	4	2
Red Chile	40	4	2
Spinach	20	3	2
Summer Squash	18	4	1
Tomatoes	32	7	1
Zucchini	14	4	1

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Comparison of Starchy Vegetables Per ½ cup, Cooked

VEGETABLE	CALORIES	CARBS (grams)	FIBER (grams)
Corn	65	16	2
Peas	62	11	4
Potato (mashed)	111	18	5
Potato (baked)	89	20	2
Potato (boiled)	70	15	2
Sweet Potato	90	21	3
Winter Squash	49	11	3

Ratatouille. With that important discussion out of the way, I now get to write about one of my favorite dishes. The one special dish I always enjoy preparing in October because it not only uses many of the last vegetables of the summer season, but it is also quite filling and comforting. It is also very versatile because it can be prepared using ingredients you have on hand, can be cooked using various methods, and can be served hot, cold, or at room temperature as an appetizer, side dish, or main dish.

Ratatouille is a classic 18th Century French dish originating from the Provençal region of Nice. “Rata” means “chunky stew” and “touiller” is a French verb meaning to toss or stir up. Typically made with onions, zucchini, eggplant, tomatoes, and fresh herbs, it is a peasant stew created by poor farmers that needed to use up the fresh late summer vegetables that had ripened all at once and were ready to eat. However, some contemporary recipes also call for summer squash, bell peppers, mushrooms, garlic, and even potatoes. There are many ways to prepare this dish: sauté all the veggies together at once until they are cooked down; cook the zucchini and eggplant separately and then combine them with the onion, tomatoes, and bell peppers for the final stewing; or cooking the veggies in layers.

This month’s featured recipe tailors the cooking method to the needs of each vegetable—overcooking some of the vegetables, barely cooking others, and letting the oven do the work. Because its main ingredients contain more than 90 percent water, you will have better results by browning some of the veggies in the oven. (Vegetables brown only when most of the moisture has evaporated, and an oven offers dry, ambient heat, allowing for evaporation and subsequent browning to happen quickly.) This method will remedy the water problem so that the result isn’t a soggy, mushy, flavorless mess of a dish.

If my recipe doesn’t get your vote, try experimenting with the following most popular ratatouille recipes on the internet. Because this is such a simple dish, no matter which recipe you use, the important thing to remember is to buy the freshest vegetables available and remember it’s always better the next day.

- [Allrecipes](#)
- [Saveur](#)
- [Tasty](#)
- [The Daily Meal](#)
- [New York Times Cooking](#)

Over the next few columns, we will be delving into winter squashes, potatoes, and root veggies, but I am not rushing—going to savor “Bittersweet October. The mellow, messy, leaf-kicking, perfect pause between the opposing miseries of summer and winter.” – *Carol Bishop Hipps*

(Sources for Ratatouille article: Wikipedia.org, ErinNudi.com, and Cook’s Illustrated)

WALKAWAY RATATOUILLE

This dish is best prepared using ripe, in-season tomatoes, but you can substitute a 28-ounce can of whole peeled tomatoes, drained and chopped coarse. This ratatouille dish can be served on its own with crusty bread, topped with an egg, or over pasta or rice. It can also be served as an accompaniment to meat or fish. Serve warm, at room temperature, or chilled. (Source: Annie Petito for Cook's Illustrated)

Serves 6 to 8

Ingredients

- ½ cup plus 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 large onions, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 8 large garlic cloves, smashed and peeled
- 1 ¾ tsp. table salt, divided
- ¼ tsp. pepper, divided
- 1 ½ tsp. herbs de Provence
- ¼ tsp. red pepper flakes

- 1 bay leaf
- 1 ½ lbs. eggplant, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 lbs. plum tomatoes, peeled, cored, and chopped coarse
- 2 small zucchinis, halved lengthwise and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 yellow bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 Tbsp. fresh basil, chopped and divided
- 1 Tbsp. fresh parsley, minced
- 1 Tbsp. sherry vinegar



Source: C. D'Antonio

Instructions:

- 1.** Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Heat 1/3 cup oil in Dutch oven over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add onions, garlic, 1 tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are translucent and starting to soften, about 10 minutes. Add herbs de Provence, pepper flakes, and bay leaf and cook, stirring frequently for 1 minute. Stir in eggplant and tomatoes. Sprinkle with ½ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper and stir to combine. Transfer pot to oven and cook, uncovered, until vegetables are very tender and spotty brown, 40 to 45 minutes.
- 2.** Remove pot from oven and, using potato masher or heavy wooden spoon, smash and stir eggplant mixture until broken down into sauce-like consistency. Stir in zucchini, bell peppers, remaining ¼ tsp. salt, and remaining ¼ tsp. pepper and return pot to oven. Cook, uncovered, until zucchini and bell peppers are just tender, 20 to 25 minutes.
- 3.** Remove pot from oven, cover, and let stand until zucchini is translucent and easily pierced with tip of paring knife, 10 to 15 minutes. Using wooden spoon, scrape any browned bits from sides of pot and stir back into ratatouille. Discard bay leaf. Stir in 1 Tbsp. basil, parsley, and vinegar. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to large platter or bowl, drizzle with remaining 1 Tbsp. oil, sprinkle with remaining 1 Tbsp. basil, and serve.

Southwest Plant of the Month

Japanese wisteria

Wisteria floribunda



General Information

Plant Form Vine

Plant Size 10' x 8'

Plant Type Deciduous

Water Usage Medium

Sunlight Sun, Partial Shade

Colors Blue, Pink, Purple, White

Physical Description: Spring flowering vine available in many colors including blue, purple, lavender, white, and pink.

Care and Maintenance: Needs well drained soil. Can be susceptible to iron chlorosis.

Gardener's Notes: Not as showy as Chinese wisteria. Blooms best in full sun.

Source: <https://desertblooms.nmsu.edu/plantadvisor/>

October Garden Checklist

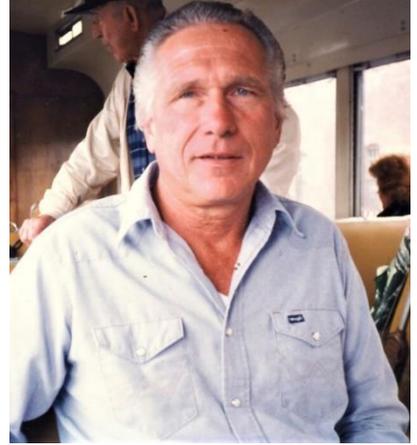
1. Update your gardening notebook – what plants did well, what varieties will you pass on next spring
2. Order seed and perennial catalogs: note when to order for proper planting time
3. Start a compost bin to have 'black gold' to till back into your garden next spring
4. Plant garlic bulbs for harvest next year
5. Sow cover crops – annual rye, crimson clover, garden pea, vetch, alfalfa, or buckwheat

Source: *Month-By-Month Gardening: Arizona, Nevada, and New Mexico; Jacqueline a. Soule*

Tom Wilson has passed away

<https://www.danielsfuneral.com/obituary/Thomas-L-Wilson>

Tom Wilson, our master gardener since 2014 passed away at the age of 80. He volunteered with master gardeners years before becoming one himself at the urging of his wife and son Charlotte and James, both master gardeners who have also passed. The Wilson's mentored under Sandoval CES Extension's director Rudy Benavidez, kept up the DeLavy Historical House grounds and spent many many hours helping at the Extension office, also volunteering at the WaterWise garden, Seed2Need and various other gardens in Rio Rancho and Corrales. They were also a fixture at the St. Vincent de Paul charity outreach and St. Anthony's kitchen in Bernalillo. Tom and family will be greatly missed by the office staff and friends. We will cherish their stories shared with us. We're sure Tom is riding the greatest of steam engines!



Many Hands Make Light Work

HELP WANTED #1

As the weather gets cooler, and you'd rather be inside – We have a deal for you!

Say, you want to get out of the house, and in the cold...

Well, I have an inside job available, if you'll take it.

The Sandoval County Admin Building has some indoor plants in sore need of watering.

If you are interested, please contact Eydie Francis at eydie.francis@gmail.com.

I will be able to give you details. It takes about 2 hours to water all 3 floors.

We will be following state protocol for COVID-19 precautions.

HELP WANTED #2

There's a new volunteer opportunity in town!

If you have a technical background, enjoy tinkering with electronics, or simply love poking around apps and software to bend them to your will, consider lending a hand to the newly created **Meeting and Audio/Visual Services Team**.

Sound like fun? Contact Paget Rose @ pagetr@ameritech.net or Gilbert Galvan @ gilbertgalvan@yahoo.com to learn more.

HELP WANTED #3 – Outreach Opportunity

Master Gardener Veterans to sign up for

ONE - week **email helpline** shifts

in .

Teams of 2; Sign up with a buddy.

Sign up on our website.

REWARD

One week shift = 10 outreach hours

ALL MEMBERS and GRADUATES – the 2021/2022 time sheets are available on the member side of our website.

<http://sandovalmastergardeners.org/semg-members/members-only-information/>

Under TIME KEEPING

