



Sandoval Extension Master Gardener Newsletter

<http://sandovalmastergardeners.org/>



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

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NMSU and the U.S.
Department of
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**SEMG Newsletter
Submissions
Deadline: 25th each
mo.**

Please submit news,
articles, events and
photographs to:
newsletter@sandovalmastergardeners.org

Editor:
Kate Shadock

Meg Buerkle Hunn, Advisory Council Chair

Three - Two - One

I have a favorite writer I read weekly. Every once in a while, rather than a full essay, she offers a three-two-one. Three thoughts, two quotes, one question. I'm borrowing from her today.

3 Thoughts:

- I. Our weather station has already registered more than two inches of rain this year! Last year, it wasn't until June that we hit an inch (at least in our tiny part of paradise). I am not sure exactly how or why, but this gives me hope.
- II. I helped children plant seeds at the Storybook Garden this month. It's fun to see things through the eyes of children - seeds come in so many shapes and sizes. These tiny packets of life are all so distinctively different. It's such a wonder!
- III. Taking advantage of the wet soil, I planted many bare root berries this month between our fruit trees (including gooseberry and serviceberry, which I have never seen or tasted!). Bare root plants are just that, no soil clings to their roots; the plants look more like twigs than anything else. It made me think of us - often the best way to start something new is without clinging to the past.

2 Quotes:

- I. "People often ask me what one thing I would recommend to restore the relationship between land and people. My answer is almost always, 'Plant a garden.' It's good for the health of the earth and it's good for the health of people. A garden is a nursery for nurturing connection, the soil for cultivation of practical reverence. And its power goes far beyond the garden gate – once you develop a relationship with a little patch of earth, it becomes a seed itself. Something essential happens in a vegetable garden. It's a place where if you can't say 'I love you' out loud, you can say it in seeds. And the land will reciprocate, in beans." Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*, p 126.

- II. “Liam may not have been a gardener, but he knew that he could help. So he returned to the railway the very next day and got to work. The flowers nearly drowned and he had a few pruning problems, but the plants waited patiently while Liam found better ways of gardening.” Peter Brown, *The Curious Garden* (a delightful picture book for the young and young at heart!)

1 Question:

What are you nurturing - in your garden, in your being, in your community?

Over spring break, I got to go to Saguaro National Park in Tucson, Arizona. We can't grow saguaros around here, but I sure love the way they seem to have personality - especially this one!

~ Meg



April Garden Checklist

1. Know the [date of your last spring frost](#) before planting
2. [Harden off seedlings](#) and young plants before plantings
3. Use 70% Isopropyl Alcohol spray to [disinfect pruners](#) between rose bushes
4. FINALLY – time to [prune your roses](#)
5. Start [warm weather vegetable seeds](#)

Source: HGTV Garden – April Tasks

Down & Dirty with Rachel-Sandoval County Extension Agent

“Humanity” is the best way I can describe Ramadan, which began this year on the evening of March 22nd. I experienced my first Ramadan in 2018 in Morocco. Never before or since have I experienced an event that unifies everyone for such a long duration. People’s schedules meld: cafés are closed until sunset, streets are empty in the afternoons, and people break the fast with similar meals at sunset and then go to the mosque or take to the streets as towns and cities come alive. Many cafés offer dates and *harira* (soup) for free to whomever comes to break the fast. When I played soccer with a group of men during Ramadan, they joked with each other as opposed to arguing as they had before Ramadan. Simply put, the level of collective spirit, goodwill, and humanity soars during Ramadan.



While I find this to be unique to Ramadan, it shares something else with many other endeavors. Patience and discipline are needed to reap the rewards, whether that be enhanced spirituality or community or something else. Athletes and musicians must train for hours when no one is looking to excel at their sport or instrument. Students study hard to master the material, learn how to think, and eventually land good jobs. And for gardeners, the spring ushers in a time of patience and discipline as we prepare our gardens and sow seeds, waiting for them to, seemingly by magic, pop up out of the ground. The effort we put in now will yield benefits weeks and months from now when we harvest crisp greens, juicy tomatoes, and sizzling chiles.

As the days get longer, the mainly bare garden calls for our attention and dedication. Adding a new layer of compost, fixing drip irrigation lines, and pulling early weeds will bring outsized gains later. The first sprouts of greens and peas are appearing in my garden. Until these become big enough to survive on drip irrigation, I must lovingly hand water them. It takes even more faith to keep the pots that look like they are filled with nothing but soil watered, with the knowledge that the seeds I sowed will one day develop into mature plants that produce seeds of their own. Good watering is especially crucial during plants’ early life. Even if some of us don’t drink during the day during the month of Ramadan, as we said in Morocco, *aghra makaysumush*—plants don’t fast.

Coming alive. Rissani, Morocco after Iftar (the breaking of the fast) in 2018. Photo: R. Zweig

To read more about my Ramadan experience, see [“Oh the Humanity!”](https://diamondsofmorocco.wordpress.com) on my blog diamondsofmorocco.wordpress.com.

Last month’s puzzler: A son was performing a common household task. He asked his dad, “Is 50 enough?” “No”, his dad replied, “I don’t think so”. The son said, “What about 125?” His dad said, “No, I don’t think that’s enough either. I’d try 90.” It worked. What was the task? (*Adapted from Car Talk.*)

Answer: Microwaving.

This month’s puzzler: What four numbers have a sum that is equal to their product? In other words, $a+b+c+d = a*b*c*d$.

Public Training Opportunities Safe Gardening

1. Ready, Set, Grow

- Apr. 19 "Approaches to Addressing Troublesome Wildlife in Your Garden: Deer and Pocket Gophers" with Dr. Sam Smallidge, NMSU Extension Wildlife Specialist
- May 17 Tomato Topics - Title/Presenter TBD
- Jun. 21 "Squash Bugs, Other Hemipteran Insects, and How to Distinguish the Pests from Beneficials" with Dr. Joanie King, NMSU Extension Entomology Specialist

To register for a class go to: <https://desertblooms.nmsu.edu/grow.html>

Gardening With The Masters – New Time & New Place

Upcoming, in-person, classes , held at Loma Colorado Library the 4th Monday of the month. Class runs from 6:45 pm to 7:45 pm as the library closes at 8pm. These classes are not recorded. We encourage you to join us in person so your individual questions get answered.

April 24, 2023 – Beneficial Insects – Miranda Kirsten, Integrated Pest Management – NMSU

May 22, 2023 – Gardening For The Birds – Sharon Walsh SEMG

Pre-recorded Classes

Courtesy of COVID we adapted some of our in-person classes to Zoom, recorded them and they are available at <https://sandovalmastergardeners.org/gardening-classes/gardening-with-the-masters-online/>

Safe Gardening

Avid gardeners tout the benefits of gardening, which are many. It's easy to forget gardening also can be hazardous, at least until the gardener is in a doctor's office with an injury or condition that needs professional support. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), emergency rooms treat more than 400,000 outdoor garden tool-related accidents each year. With proper safety techniques, you can stay away from the hospital and avoid becoming a statistic. We will run a series of Safe Gardening information through the season.

Protect Your Hands

WEAR GLOVES WHEN WORKING OUTSIDE

Wearing the proper gloves will not only reduce blistering but will also protect your skin from fertilizers, pesticides, bacteria and fungus that live in the soil. When exposed to soil, even the smallest cut runs the risk of developing into a major hand infection. Leather gloves offer protection from thorny objects and poison ivy, snake, rodent and insect bites, and other skin irritants in the garden. Gloves also prevent sun damage and fingernail damage.

AVOID PROLONGED REPETITIVE MOTIONS

Unless you are used to the activity, repetitive motions such as digging, raking, trimming hedges, pruning bushes or planting bulbs may cause skin, tendon or nerve irritation. Make sure your gardening activities are varied and tasks are rotated every 15 minutes with a brief rest in-between so that the same muscles are not used over and over again.

USE TOOLS, NOT YOUR HANDS

Use a hand shovel or rake rather than your hand for digging. Sharp objects and debris buried in the soil may cut you. If possible, remove objects from the work area before beginning the task to avoid causing damage to you or your tools.

USE THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE RIGHT JOB

Avoid accidents by using tools for their intended purposes. Other important tool tips:

- When purchasing pruners, loppers or shears, look for brands featuring a safety lock.
- Avoid products with form-fitting handles. These tools only fit one size of hand perfectly. If your hand is too large or too small, it will put more stress on your hand.
- Always follow the manufacturers' instructions for the tool.
- Keep sharp tools away from children at all times.
- Always unplug electrical tools and disconnect spark plug wires on gasoline-powered tools when not in use.

CHECK YOUR POSTURE

"Posture" refers not only to your whole body position but also to the angle of your wrist while using hand tools. Grip strength is at its maximum when the wrist is in a relaxed or neutral position. Studies have shown that people lose up to 25% of their grip strength when their wrist is bent.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF INJURY

- ❖ If you cut your finger or hand, bleeding from minor cuts will often stop by applying direct pressure to the cut with a clean cloth. **Visit the emergency room if:**
 - Continuous pressure does not stop the bleeding after 15 minutes.
 - You notice persistent numbness or tingling in the fingertip or have trouble moving the finger.
 - You are unsure of your tetanus immunization status.
 - You are unable to thoroughly clean the wound by rinsing with a mild soap and plenty of clean water.

Remember to safely enjoy the health benefits of gardening by using your hands and tools wisely.

<https://www.assh.org/handcare/safety/gardening>

FREE SEEDS!

Did you know there are at least two sources for free seeds?

Photos by Meg. Buerkel Hunn

Check out the **Sandoval Seed Swap and Share**, housed in the lobby of the Sandoval County Office Building at 1500 Idalia Rd, Bernalillo. This card catalog is stuffed full of all types of seeds - and can be accessed M-F during normal business hours. (While you're there, check out the gorgeous houseplants, also, a SEMG project looking for volunteers!)



Corrales Community Seed Library - housed in the Corrales Library, allows patrons to 'check out' seeds for home planting. While you're there, check out the SEMG Pollinator and Storybook Gardens! For more info:

<https://www.corraleslibrary.org/library/page/corrales-community-seed-library>

HELP WANTED #1

Education Committee – Videographer/Film Editor

For the 2022/2023 SEMG business year we will be filming guest lectures on advanced training topics. To record these sessions we are seeking members with experience and/or interest in videography and film editing. For more information please **contact John Thompson**, via his contact information in the member directory.

HELP WANTED #2

We still have need of volunteers to cover the **Helpline**. This is online, from the comfort of your own home. Each week of coverage earns 10 hours of Outreach credit. For more **information contact Penny Lindgren or Sandra Liakus** via their email or phone numbers in the member roster.

HELP WANTED #3 Co-Chair Needed

Project is Sandoval County Administrative Building Plant Watering/Maintenance

Backup for watering schedule

Assistance analyzing plant problems.

Help resolve plant issues in the building.

Annual repotting coordination

Contact Michelle Wittie, via the member directory if you are interested.

HELP WANTED #4 Co-Chair Needed

SANDOVAL SEED SHARE PROJECT

Seek seed donations from large companies.

Analyze seeds for viability in Sandoval County.

Assist in packaging and distributing seeds.

Contact Michelle Wittie via the member directory if you are interested.

