



Through the Vine

A Quarterly Newsletter of the OSU Extension Fairfield County Master Gardeners

Fall 2024

Mission: To make a difference in the community in which you live through gardening education and knowledge.

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CONNIES CORNER

Dear Master Gardeners,



This entire summer, I felt like a broken record hoping and waiting for rain like all of you. On September 11, OSU Extension Employees were given the opportunity to listen to several of our colleagues and specialists discuss lawn and landscape drought issues via Zoom. Here are a few "take away" notes:

- Careful considerations for your water source . . . well water, city water . . . The cost, the danger of well going dry?
- Think about watering slowly and carefully, so it can percolate through the soil to the root zone especially as we send plants into the winter.
- Time of watering does not matter, just water!
- Trees planted in the last two to three years are most at risk.
- Needled trees and conifers will suffer most and some may not recover.
- Is there a particular plant you just don't like? Remove it to conserve water for the plants you do like?
- Do you have a sentimental plant in your garden? Focus on watering and caring for that plant.
- It is OK to give up on your annuals and maybe even your vegetable garden.

- Thinking about taking advantage of fall garden center sales . . . Think again!!! Planting will be difficult and soils may need to be amended. Watering those plants in will be critical and mulching with 1 ½ - 2" of mulch is imperative.
- Don't stress turf by mowing – Brown Turf is dormant; Gray or White turf is dead. Try to get water onto the most important parts of your lawn.
- TAKE AWAY message is this drought may have long term effects that could be impactful in our lawns and landscapes into next year and beyond.

Please understand this is not to be a message of "doom and gloom" but the reality of the situation we are in. We are looking at months/weeks with no rain. Take care of what you already have in your garden and think about those plants that are your favorites . . . give them a long, cool drink before the winter winds begin to blow!

And just in case you are wondering... absolutely YES!! I will be buying some fall pansies for some pots, they are my favorites and I will always find a way to water a pansy! Because as farmers and gardeners that is just what we do . . . believe in a better tomorrow!

Connie Smith,
Master Gardener Coordinator



MASTER GARDENER NEWS

Fall 2024 Photos

source: *Connie Smith, MG Coordinator*



Janice Lane Crabtree—New Master Gardener Volunteer teaching about Topiaries and Aging Clay Pots



Ag Center Zinnias in full bloom



Master Gardener Volunteers teaching about Honey Bees at Honeyfest



Birdhouse Gourds provided by Nancy Weidman



Master Gardener Volunteers' August meeting

MASTER GARDENER NEWS

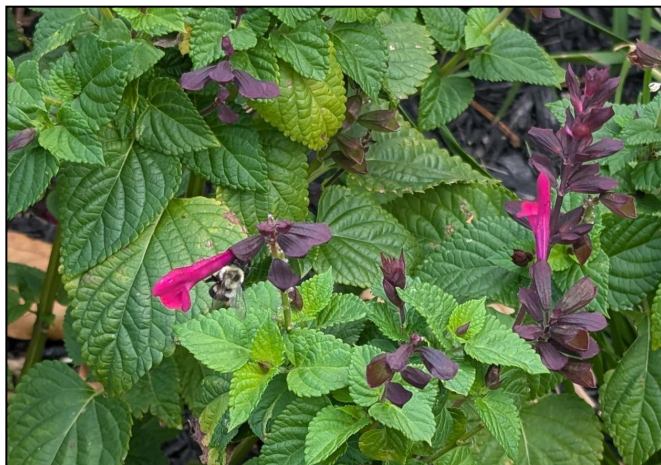
Fall Photos (cont'd from page 2)



Master Gardener Volunteers working at the Fairgrounds



Fireworks goldenrod lights up a corner at the Ag Center



Activity in the MGV Pollinator Gardens at the Fairgrounds



Pollinator Garden at Wagnall's Memorial Library

MASTER GARDENER NEWS

Fall Photos (cont'd from page 3)



Dana Raines teaching a soil class at Wagnall's Memorial Library



Helping Hands in the Garden Project spreading joy

Cover Crop Seeds Available for Vegetable Gardens

source: OSU Extension, Fairfield County



WINTER KILL COVER crop seed is available for Master Gardeners. We have purchased 5 lbs. of Winter Kill Cover crop seed from Walnut Creek Seeds for Master Gardeners to try in their vegetable gardens this fall.

Seeds included in the mix are

Cow pea, forage peas, Oats, Millet, Flax, Radish and Ethiopian Cabbage. Best Planting time is recommended for through mid-September. Planting rate is 200-300 sq. ft. per lb.

If you would like to try this in your veggie garden as your crops are removed, we have free seed available for you to try. Stop by the Ag Center and grab a free sample compliments of the Fairfield County Master Gardener program.

State MG Conference Registration is Now Open

source: Connie Smith, MG Coordinator



Please note, the 2024 State Master Gardener Conference is a virtual event this year, although there is a registration fee. We are planning to have a watch party on October 24 for the State MGV Awards

Ceremony at 6:00 p.m. at the Ag Center. Please RSVP your registrations to Connie at smith.3204@osu.edu. We will have pizza!

2024 Virtual MGV State Conference and Awards Presentation is now open. We have an exciting lineup of speakers and presentations for you. For more information and to get registered, go to: <https://mastergardener.osu.edu/StateConference24>.

MASTER GARDENER NEWS

Beneficial Insects 101: **Getting to Know Ohio's** **Butterflies, Bees and** **Other Good Garden Bugs**

source: OSU Extension, Fairfield County



Beneficial Insects 101 is offered in October. Each session meets from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

- October 2nd (Wednesday) - OSU Wooster, Secrest Arboretum Welcome Center
- October 7th (Monday) - OSU Mansfield campus, Ovalwood Hall
- October 23 (Wednesday) - OSU Extension, Franklin County (Waterman Farm)

Join us as we spend the day learning about the beneficial insects in our gardens and landscapes. We'll explore the biology and identification of some of Ohio's butterflies, moths, bees and other good garden bugs, including how they live, their habitat needs, and garden plants and maintenance practices to help them flourish. \$32 fee includes morning refreshments, lunch, Plant by Numbers garden guides and other handouts. Speakers: Ashley Kulhanek, Marne Titchenell and Denise Ellsworth

Register at:

https://web.cvent.com/event/4112105f-4a18-4fac-83f2-61bf0f818df6/summary?fbclid=IwY2xjawFSPQ9leHRuA2FibQlxMAABHTjjO7Z71_nfVh70M5aSONwOaGSvPHKA0eLw2z4LK53aAJ-rG8f5dSeoug_aem_arDnd6c-3z5E-emac_oEXQ

Helping Hands in the Garden Project Alert

source: OSU Extension, Fairfield County



A site visit has been planned for one more potential client in the Lithopolis area. Potentially we are looking at September 25 or 30 as a work day. The goal is to wait until this summer heat wave dissipates a bit.

Lunch & Learn Series Beginning

source: OSU Extension, Fairfield County

Lunch and Learn Horticulture webinar series begins in October. For more information and free registration, please visit: <http://go.osu.edu/mgylearn>.

Newsletter Deadlines

Do you have an article, garden musing, photo from an MGv project, calendar event or other idea you'd like to submit for the MGv newsletter? Articles and information are welcome at any time! Articles not used in the current newsletter will be saved for a later edition.

Newsletters are published quarterly with the following submission deadlines:

Spring Newsletter—submit by **February 1**

Summer Newsletter—submit by **May 1**

Autumn Newsletter—submit by **August 1**

Winter Newsletter—submit by **November 1**

SEASONAL

Roasted Pumpkin Seeds

by Barbara Kochick, Master Gardener 2013



Remove top of pumpkin and scoop out seeds and string. Rinse seeds in a colander and use your fingers to remove as much of the pulp as possible and pat dry with towels. Spread out and let dry for an hour. This allows them to be crisp and not steam in the oven. In a bowl mix the seeds with two tablespoons of olive oil and seasoning of your choice. We like Worcestershire sauce but soy sauce, paprika, cayenne, smoked paprika and even cinnamon are good choices. Spread seeds on a rimmed sheet pan. Bake at 325 degrees for about 20 minutes. Shake pan occasionally during this time. Bake time depends on the water content of the seeds so just keep checking. Sprinkle with salt if desired. Sprinkle on salads, garnish soups or just snack away!

Thinking about PLANTING GARLIC . . . Time to Order is Now!



by Carri Jagger, OSU Ag Educator, Morrow Cnty

If you have ever wanted to try your hand at growing garlic now is the time to think about planting it. Garlic should be planted between Halloween and Thanksgiving. Start with a good seed source from a reputable seed company.

Garlic is a relative of the onion, shallot and leek. Garlic and onion can be differentiated by their leaves — garlic leaves are flat while onion leaves are round and hollow. A head of garlic is composed of individual cloves enclosed in a papery bulb cover. Each clove is a small bulb; that bulb is a collection of unexpanded leaves.

Your soil should be a well-drained sandy loam with a pH between 6.0 and 7.0. Garlic needs 1 to 1.25 lbs. of 19-19-19 fertilizer per 100 sq. ft. of

bed or 1.5 to 2 lbs. of 12-12-12 fertilizer per 100 sq. ft. of bed. Only apply half of this at planting and then apply the other half in the spring when growth resumes. Once you have your soil worked up and fertilizer worked in you can start to plant your garlic. Garlic comes in bulbs. Depending on the type and variety, the bulbs can have anywhere from 5 - 16 cloves per bulb. There are two types of garlic, hard neck and soft neck.

Hard neck garlic produces scapes and bulbils. The scapes can be used in culinary dishes and the bulbils can be used as seed. However, it is best to remove the scapes so that your plant puts its energy into producing a nice big bulb instead of a seed head. Hard neck garlic produces fewer cloves but they are much larger and more uniform than soft neck varieties. Hard neck generally has a shorter storage life than soft necks do and they are adapted to cooler growing conditions.

Soft neck varieties generally do not form scapes and they have many cloves per bulb. Their skins are tighter and they generally have a longer storage life than hard neck varieties. Soft neck garlic grows better in warmer climates, has a flexible stalk for braiding and is most commonly used for commercial garlic production.

Separate the cloves from the bulb when you are ready to plant. Don't worry about peeling the cloves, they will grow fine.

Choose only the biggest, nicest cloves for planting. This will ensure that you get nice full bulbs. Dig a row 2" deep and place your clove basal plate (big end) down.

Space the cloves 4-5" apart and gently press them into the soil to keep them upright. Once your cloves are set out you can gently cover them up. If you are planting more than one row, space your rows 12-24" apart. Once your cloves are covered with soil, 4" of mulch like clean straw or leaves should be added to the rows to protect the garlic for the winter and to smother out any winter annual weeds.



Is it Time to Think about a Priority Watering Plan?

by **Connie Smith, Master Gardener Coordinator**



Lack of rainfall, prolonged record heat and dry weather caused many to simply give up that watering of containers, vegetables and so much more. As this lack of rainfall continues to exist

for many of us in the area, it might be time to think about the benefits of a watering plan. What is most valuable in my landscape? Did I have new trees and shrubs planted this year? Should I try to water my lawn? What about my vegetable garden? These are all good questions and I hope will help homeowners put some perspective in their late summer-fall water plans, especially if Mother Nature does not give us any needed rainfall.

We have had less than 6" of rain in the last 6 months, which is just half of the normal rainfall needed for a productive agricultural growing year. On the farm, cows are being fed hay earlier than ever. Many folks find themselves hauling water, because springs and cisterns that are heavily relied upon for watering livestock are simply drying up.

TREES, SHRUBS, PERENNIALS - Think about watering those permanent plants first. These include newly planted woody trees and shrubs; they need a thorough soaking throughout their root zones approximately once a week, assuming it has not rained that week. Newly planted perennials, rosebushes and perennial vines also require attention. Water the base of plants to avoid getting leaves wet and reduce foliar diseases. Consider the use of soaker hoses or drip irrigation. Water deeply and less often to promote deeper, healthy roots. Add 2-3" of shredded bark to the root zones of trees and shrubs to keep valuable moisture from evaporating. Mulch perennial or mixed borders to retain moisture and improves soil texture.

LAWNS - Lawns actually need less water than we think. Turf grass can go dormant. It will turn yellow, but the crown of the plants will remain alive with just ½" of water over several weeks. Grass will green up as soon as normal rainfall returns. Consider raising your mower height to 3-3.5" to result in a denser, healthier lawn. As small as they are, longer grass blades mean more photosynthesis and stronger, deeper grass roots. The grass blades also shade the grass crowns and soil, keeping them cooler during times of dry weather.

VEGETABLE GARDEN - The vegetable garden needs one inch of rain per week. By using a simple rain gauge or following weather reports, you can determine if your garden received one inch of rain over the past week. One inch of rain is a lot of water. For a 100 sq. ft. area, one inch of rain is 62 gallons. Multiply the length and width of your garden to get total square footage. If a garden is 20 ft. by 30 ft. (600 sq. ft.), after a week without rain it would need 372 gallons of water.

If the total amount of rain in one week is only three-eighths of an inch, you would need to supply the other five-eighths of an inch of water. Water gardens on sandy soils twice a week, supplying ½" of water (31 gallons per 100 sq. ft.) each time.

WHEN TO WATER - Water in early morning to allow leaves to dry and reduce foliar diseases and mildew. Feel the top 6" of soil. Dry? Time to water.

Some gardeners place a small can or other measuring gauge within the root zone of a tree so they can see when one inch of water has accumulated. The most effective watering devices are the slow soaker or drip hoses, plastic tree bags or the small sprinklers that distribute water close to the ground, reaching the entire root zone.

Just knowing what, when, where and how of watering in your garden or landscape is key to growing healthy plants and conserving our precious water supply.

Be Fire Aware During Drought Conditions



source: OSU Ag Safety Team

Widespread drought, dry and windy conditions . . . All of these factors are leading to fire safety concerns. Couple the dry conditions with the reported shortage of volunteer fire fighters in rural areas, and this becomes a real concern for the rural community.

Another non-farm related concern for the farm fields relates to the actions of the general public. When persons throw out their cigarette butts into ditches and fields – or when persons burn trash or tree limbs from storm debris – there can be a risk for field fires.

State Fire Marshal Orders Ban on Open Burning for Certain Ohio Regions

In response to extremely dry conditions in various areas of the state, Ohio Fire Marshal Kevin Reardon has ordered a regional Ban on Open Burning effective immediately. The ban impacts any county in Ohio identified by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) or United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as being in the “Extreme Drought” or “Exceptional Drought” categories as identified by the United States Drought Monitoring System.

The Ban on Open Burning, ordered Sept. 6, 2024, includes the following Ohio counties: Athens, Belmont, Carroll, Fairfield, Fayette, Gallia, Guernsey, Harrison, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Jefferson, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Perry, Pickaway, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Tuscarawas, Vinton and Washington.

Examples of outdoor activities prohibited by this order in the ban area include the following: lighting or maintaining any fire of any type at any location, smoking (including cigarettes or similar devices, and as part of a cooking process), non-electric cooking (regardless of fuel source), using or discharging any type of fireworks, throwing down/discarding lighted or smoldering material (including matches or cigarettes),

campfires, bonfires, live fire training events, flame effect(s) based displays or exhibitions (including sky lanterns and cold spark machines) and using spark causing devices for recreational purposes.

“Fire safety is a responsibility we all share,” said Ohio State Fire Marshal Kevin Reardon. “It’s critical that Ohioans understand and appreciate the significant risks associated with fires, especially during the current drought conditions. Together we can protect our communities and environment.”

Most of the plant materials in Ohio that can fuel wildfires are currently dry and will stay this way until we have significant rainfall. Current dry weather patterns with warm temperatures, low humidities and wind are increasing the risk of wildland fires in Ohio.

Dry grasses, shrubs, dead leaves and fallen pine needles are all examples of plant materials that can fuel wildfires. Even if rain is in the forecast, it will require an extended period of soaking rains to reduce the elevated threat of wildfires throughout the state. Spring and fall are the typical wildfire seasons in Ohio; however, the current weather situation and resulting wildfire fuel situation is not typical. Warm, dry windy days in the fall, combined with abundant dead leaves falling and herbaceous plants entering dormancy and drying out, typically create situations conducive to wildfire igniting and spreading.

Residents can take measures to prevent accidental wildfires including: avoiding burning trash and debris, keeping grass trimmed, not discarding cigarettes and other smoking materials outside, postponing fireworks and avoiding open cooking fires or campfires. Additionally, farmers should regularly check their equipment for any irregularities that can lead to a brush or crop field fire.

Anyone who sees any signs of wildfire should call their local fire department immediately to report it. Accurate and timely reporting of wildfire responses to Ohio fire departments is important for a rapid response to the incident.

Cover Crops for Gardens

by Keith Eichhorn, Master Gardener 2017

Farmers have been using cover crops for years to improve organic matter in the soil and to prevent the erosion of the soil. We now have the option of using a cover crop for our gardens that offers these same benefits. Walnut Creek Seeds offers a unique blend called “Fall Cover Mix” or a winter kill variety that self-terminates from the freezing temperatures of the winter. This blend is mostly Cow Peas, Field Forage Peas, and Oats with small amounts of Millet, Flax, Nitro Radish and Ethiopian Cabbage. The forage from this mix is terminated with the first hard winter freeze and the dry matter is almost fully decomposed by April 1 in time for tilling and spring planting. You can either plant through the residue or till the soil depending on the crop you wish to plant. The roots from the terminated forage remain in the soil which worms decompose and this leaves holes in the soil for improved drainage. The Nitro Radish roots also decompose leaving two inch diameter holes in the soil which also aid in drainage. The nitrogen nodules on the roots of the peas decompose leaving a source of Nitrogen for the crop you wish to grow that year. The decomposed dry matter adds carbon to the soil which is a micronutrient that plants need. There are other cover crops that can be used in gardens but this self-termination of this blend makes it ideal for early spring tillage.

This crop needs to be planted from July through mid-September in order to achieve the maximum amount of residue or organic matter for the soil. The seeding rate used in this trial was 1 pound per 300 sq.ft and was broadcast seeded and covered with ½” to 1” of soil after seeding. Walnut Creek offers this in 1 and 5 pound bags which is ideal for seeding small gardens. You will have to consolidate early crops together in your garden so they can be harvested in time to seed the cover crop by early September in that area of your garden. You won’t be able to seed the entire garden to a cover crop but seeding half of it will be a big benefit and you can do the other half the following year. Another option would be to take a portion of your garden out of production that year

and devote it to cover crops, which will not only benefit the soil, but also help with disease and insect pressure the following year. The benefits of this cover crop certainly outweigh the cost, aids in stopping soil erosion and encourages improved drainage of your garden in early spring.



Area on the right was seeded Mid-August and the area on the left was seeded Mid-September. The photo was taken Mid-October.



This is how the cover crop looked in early January after a hard freeze.



This photo shows how the cover was decomposed by April 1. The seed bed was ready for tilling without any termination of the cover crop.

Please send changes in your contact information
Stoklosa, lmstoklos@gmail.com.



Invasives on the Brink: Amur Corktree

by Carrie Brown, ANR Educator, Fairfield County

A few years ago, I was on an early morning hike in a local Ohio hardwood forest. Surrounded by gigantic sugar maples and stately beech, I felt like I was being hugged by friendly giants. As I continued to meander up the trail, I came across a tree I didn't recognize. With a **relatively short & stocky trunk, large, broadly spreading branches and a distinctly corky bark**, the tree appeared to be taking advantage of a large gap in the canopy. I ambled over for a closer look. I was thrown for a loop when I saw it had an opposite branching pattern and **oppositely arranged pinnately compound leaves** on its thick branches. And like ornaments on a tree, it was adorned with **clusters of small black drupes** in terminal panicles. I went through the short checklist of trees I knew with this opposite branching habit . . . and none fit the bill! Though I was perplexed, I was also a wee bit excited: I do love a good game of "Name that Tree." I scratched my head and looked around for other clues.



I quickly noticed that I was encircled by an abundance of small saplings that looked like miniature versions of this behemoth. They didn't seem to be at all perturbed by the heavy shade cast upon them by the surrounding maples. The sheer quantity of progeny from what I assumed might very well be this parent tree, made me a bit uneasy. I took out my trusty pocketknife and nicked the bark of one of the saplings and was struck when I noticed a **bright yellow inner bark**. I'm talking, mustard-stain-on-a-white-tee-shirt yellow. Like a good detective, I took my evidence back to my office and began my investigation.



It wasn't long before I was able to narrow down my culprit to *Phellodendron amurense*, **Amur corktree**. Native to Eastern Asia, Amur corktree was first introduced in the 1850s as an ornamental. Growing to a **height of 35-45 feet, this deciduous tree is dioecious**, meaning that female and male flowers occur on separate trees. As such, trees with female flowers pose the larger risk for spread due to birds consuming and dispersing their seeds.

Amur corktree **appears on invasive species lists of several northern Midwestern states** including Pennsylvania, Indiana, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Minnesota, as well as several New England states. According to EDDMaps, "This tree is demonstrating invasive characteristics in suburban and urban fringe forests. It escapes intended plantings to invade and displace native hardwood forests."

What do you do if you come across Amur corktree on your next hike? First, make its presence known! Use the Great Lakes Early Detection Network (GLEDN) app to report your sighting. According to EDDMaps, Amur corktree is already known to occur in eight Ohio counties. It can be controlled using the same methods that apply to other invasive tree species. Small seedlings can be pulled from moist soil. Cut stump treatment, girdling, and foliar treatments are all options for larger trees, and herbicides should be carefully selected based on the time of year and the site conditions. Contact your local Extension office for more information on Amur corktree management.



Garden Trends—Chaos Gardening

by **Barbara Kochick, Master Gardener 2013**



As I started out with my own property I liked to imagine myself with a garden style. What I really aspired to was English Country Garden. Nursery planting guides provided templates for this.

One could even purchase the whole deal, plants for the back, middle and front. Having been to England and seen this style, I now feel that the only place anyone can truly have one is in England. Too bad for me but I think that the emerging style of chaos gardening suits me.

What is chaos gardening? It is certainly having a moment on TikTok. The definition though depends on who you ask but everyone seems to embrace the unruly growth of nature and a rebellion against control and neatness. It is a welcome move towards a more natural style of gardening and is eco-friendly. The movement has been started by a younger generation seeking to escape the formality of traditional gardening.

Naturalistic planting and self-seeded flowers are welcome here. Recent research has shown that plants perform best when left to their own devices and when grown in colonies are less susceptible to pests and disease. Whether the result will be a wonderful mix of surprises or a crazy quilt of work depends on how it is done. What about the weeds? Will they run wild? One is encouraged to think beyond the concept of weeds and welcome some species to the mix. Polite weeds are welcome such as coneflowers but thugs are discouraged. But here's the best part - you can make your own rules.

However, if you would like some guidelines, avoid regimented planting and severe lines, allow self-sow and choose plants that have a

natural look. Some proponents suggest pouring all of your leftover seed packets together, scattering and seeing what thrives without help. The mixed growing of vegetables and ornamentals is encouraged. Make the most of any wall, stones or objects on the property. Of course, the usual iron clad rules about soil, sun and water apply. Allow self-sow but when the seedlings appear edit as desired.

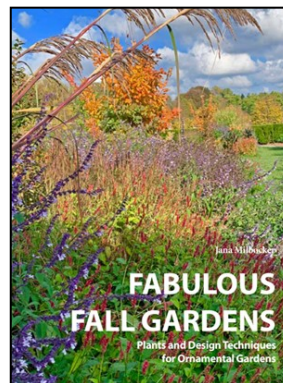
Found my style! Just call me a chaos gardener!

FEATURED BOOK

Fabulous Fall Gardens

by **Jana Milbocker**

reviewer: **Barbara Kochick, Master Gardener 2013**



Something a little different here as this excellent guide to a colorful fall garden is an e-book and is only available as a purchase. I found this to be well worth the \$14.99. The author lives in New England and has gardened for thirty years. She found that fall is the

season that requires extra thought and research. By visiting botanical gardens and experimenting in her own landscape she has come up with a list of her favorite long lasting, easily grown garden worthy plants. She has done that exploration for the reader. She gives succinct details on more than one hundred trees, shrubs, perennials and vines for color and interest in this season. Also included are many color photos of planting arrangements. If you would like to extend your enjoyment of the landscape and provide a late hospitable environment for butterflies, insects and birds this would be a perfect guide.

To order this and other related e-books, go to:
<https://www.enchantedgardensdesign.com>.

In and Around the Garden—You Won't Want to Miss It!

Mark your calendars with these important dates and upcoming activities and events!

UPCOMING EVENTS

MGV Meeting at Ag Center

September 24 (Tues.) 1 p.m.

Presentation with Robin Leja—Gardening Through the Seasons

Following the meeting, travel to **Ochs Fruit Farm**, 2161 Pleasantville Road for an apple tasting demonstration beginning at 4:00 p.m.

All are welcome at both events!!

Fairfield County Fair Week

October 6-12

Master Gardeners will most likely have a small booth in the Art Hall highlighting Spotted Lantern Fly Awareness beginning on Tuesday, October 8. We will be cooperating with Fairfield Soil and Water . . . so we are in a wait and see mode with this project. Details will be shared as soon as we have completed our plans.

State Master Gardener Conference (Virtual)

October 24-25

See page 4 for information about Awards Ceremony Watch Party

MGV Meeting at Ag Center

November 14 (Thurs.), 1 p.m.

Report on team wrap-ups; depart for tour of **Recycling Center**, 1761 East Main Street, Lancaster with Keri Murphy

MGV Holiday Gathering at Ag Center

December 12 (Thurs.), 1 p.m.

Bring your favorite snack or cookies!



Through the Vine is a publication of the Ohio State University Extension Office in Fairfield County

Lisa Stoklosa, Fairfield Master Gardener Volunteer Editor

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For the latest information and news about OSU Extension in Fairfield County, including the Master Gardeners of Fairfield County, visit <http://fairfield.osu.edu/>



Ohio Master Gardener Program Mission

We are Ohio State University Extension trained volunteers empowered to educate others with timely research-based gardening information.