Horticulture Hints



Fall 2015

Ornamentals Fall 2015

Louisiana Super Plants Are Tough, Beautiful

The Louisiana Super Plants program is an LSU AgCenter educational and marketing campaign that highlights tough and beautiful plants that perform well in Louisiana landscapes.

Louisiana Super Plants selections have a history of outstanding performance in Louisiana or have gone through several years of university evaluations and observations. Louisiana Super Plants are "university tested and industry approved."

There are three parts to the Louisiana Super Plants program. The first is identifying outstanding plants. The second is getting the word out to Louisiana gardeners. The third part is working closely with wholesale growers in Louisiana to ensure they produce the selected plants and keeping retail plant sellers informed and encouraging them to sell the selected plants.

Go to LSUAgCenter.com/superplants for more information.

Louisiana Super Plant Selections for Fall 2015

Homestead Purple Verbena – Verbena canadensis 'Homestead Purple'



- Hardy perennial.
- Plant in full sun to part sun in a spot with good drainage.
- Low growing: 10 to 12 inches tall and 18 inches wide.
- Best planted in fall or early spring to establish during cooler weather.
- Numerous clusters of purple flowers over a long blooming season.
- Flowers are rich in nectar and attractive to butterflies and bees.
- Flowering is heavy during spring and summer. Flowering tends to diminish in late summer and revives in fall.
- Reliable performance over many years across Louisiana.

Leslie Ann Sasanqua – Camellia sasanqua 'Leslie Ann'



- Hardy shrub.
- Grows about 8 feet tall.
- Outstanding fall flowering season.
- Plant in part sun to part shade.
- Best planted in fall when in bloom.
- Attractive double flowers are white edged in pink.
- Columnar shape.
- Exceptional performance in LSU AgCenter trials.

Re-potting Indoor Plants



September and early October are ideal for re-potting tropical container plants that have spent the summer outdoors. Their abundant growth during summer may mean they are pot-bound now.

Because many plants undergo some shock after re-potting, a period of gradual adjustment should be allowed before they are moved indoors for the winter. They should be left where environmental conditions do not place great demands on their systems. Shaded porches, patios and terraces or areas beneath the canopy of shade trees usually are best for getting plants over the trauma that may occur from re-potting.

Plants generally do not require frequent re-potting. This is especially true if the potting mix drains well and contains a high amount of organic matter. Frequency depends on the plant, condition of the potting mix, container size and growth rate of the plant. Look for roots growing out of the drainage holes or gently slide the plant out of the pot. A solid mass of packed roots means it's time to re-pot.

Don't cut corners in obtaining the best possible soil mix when re-potting. The life of the plant is influenced by the quality of that mix. Most nurseries and garden centers have prepared mixes for container plant culture. Make sure the mix has a loose, fluffy texture instead of a fine, heavy texture so it will drain well.

Fertilize re-potted plants after three to four weeks. Use a water-soluble plant food and follow manufacturer's directions. Most plants will not use much fertilizer after they are moved indoors, because the amount of light necessary for growth is considerably less. Plants should be in top shape before being moved inside for the winter.

Spring-flowering Bulbs Generally Planted During Fall

Spring-flowering bulbs are those that generally bloom in our climate between February and April. But these bulbs usually are planted in October, November and early December.

When buying bulbs, try to purchase the highest quality your budget will allow. Selecting loose bulbs at a local garden center is like choosing produce at the supermarket. Pick the largest, plumpest bulbs that are firm and don't have any obvious cuts, soft spots or rot.

Overall, the price you pay for color from bulbs is higher than for longer flowering cool-season bedding plants like pansies and dianthus. For most of us, garden budgets are limited, so spring bulbs are used more for embellishment than for providing the primary floral display. For that, it's best to rely on bedding plants, such as pansies, violas, snapdragons and dianthus.



Good drainage, part to full sun and moderately fertile soil are all that are needed for bulbs to do well. About six hours of direct sun a day will produce the best plants and is especially important for those bulbs you expect to re-bloom in future years.

A rule of thumb is to plant bulbs at a depth equal to twice their height – generally about 1 inch deep for small bulbs and 5 inches deep for larger bulbs. Once the bulbs are planted, you can plant over them with low-growing cool-season annuals such as alyssum, violas or pansies. Be careful not to disturb the bulbs. The annuals cover the bare soil and provide color before, during and after the bulbs bloom.

Tulips and hyacinths will perform much better if they are refrigerated at least six weeks in the vegetable bin of your refrigerator prior to planting (and storing longer than six weeks is fine). Store them in paper or net bags (labeled well!) away from apples and other fruit. Plant them in late December or early January when the soil has had a chance to get cold.

Most of the spring bulbs available locally or in catalogs will bloom well their first year. Some of the favorites include tulips (especially Darwin hybrids, lily flowered, parrots and early doubles), grape hyacinth, hyacinth, crocus, ranunculus, anemone, scilla, freesia, ixia, sparaxis and ornithogalum. These bulbs tend to be short-lived in Louisiana, blooming well just their first year or, at most, for a few years. More spring-flowering bulbs are reliably long-lived in north Louisiana than in south Louisiana.

Several spring bulbs tend to be reliably long-lived even in south Louisiana. One group includes the narcissus cultivars, such as Paperwhites, Chinese Sacred Lily, Soleil d'Or, Grand Primo, Cheerfulness, jonquils, Sweetness, Trevethian, Peeping Tom, February Gold, Thalia, Ice Wings and Petrel. Another group includes larger flowered daffodil cultivars, such as Ice Follies, Unsurpassable, Carlton and Fortune. Other re-blooming bulbs include snowflake (Leucojum aestivum), some flowering onions (Allium neapolitanum, A. drummondii), ground orchid (Bletilla striata), amaryllis (Hippeastrum species and hybrids), Spanish bluebells (Hyacinthoides hispanica), spring star flower (Ipheion uniflorum), Dutch iris (Iris x hollandica) and Easter lily (Lilium longiflorum).

Moving Houseplants Indoors After Summer Outside

Container-grown tropical plants commonly are placed outside for the summer, where they provide a beautiful addition to decks, patios and porches. But these plants will not withstand freezing temperatures and must be brought back inside for the winter.

About four weeks before you intend to bring them inside, move outdoor tropicals in containers to well shaded locations outside. Acclimating them to lower light conditions helps them adjust to the reduced light available inside most homes.

Houseplants that spent the summer outside should be groomed so they will look their best, and you will be less likely to bring pests inside with the plants by taking a good look at them while grooming.

- Clean the outside of containers using a brush and a mild solution of dishwashing liquid and water. Add a little bleach to the solution to kill algae growing on the pot. But do not get this solution in the soil.
- Hose down the plants, and wipe the foliage clean with a soft damp cloth to remove dust and debris.
- Remove all dead or yellow foliage, old flower stalks and dead or injured branches and stems.
- If you discover insect infestations, spray the plants with the appropriate insecticides to control the problem before you bring plants indoors.





Prune Roses in Late Summer

In Louisiana, our everblooming roses produce two great seasons of bloom – during spring and early summer (from April to early June) and again in October and November when mild weather is ideal for quality flowers.

As a result, we prune twice a year. Those times are early spring (late January or early February) and again in late summer (late August or early September) to get rose bushes in shape for the fall blooming season.

To prune, first remove all the dead growth. Make your cuts well into the healthy part of the canes just above a leaf or dormant bud, or remove the dead cane entirely back to its point of origin. You may need loppers for this job.

Next, weak, spindly canes the diameter of a pencil or less should be removed, particularly those growing in the interior of the plant. This is most important for hybrid tea and grandiflora roses. Many old garden roses, such as the Chinas, and landscape roses have a naturally shrubby or twiggy growth habit. You should not remove twiggy growth in these types of roses unless you want to thin out the interiors. In the case of grafted roses, prune any sprouts originating from below the large knobby graft union. Do not, however, remove any strong new shoots growing from the graft union.

For hybrid teas and grandifloras, the major part of the pruning involves shortening the remaining vigorous canes. Cut the canes back to about 30 inches from the ground. Ideally, try to make each cut just above a bud that faces outward or away from the inside of the bush. This pruning needs to be done, even if there are flowers on the bush now.

Everblooming old garden roses, shrub roses, landscape roses and other groups may be pruned now, but the pruning required generally is less severe and is done mostly to shape the bush or to control the size of more vigorous cultivars. Use your best judgment when it comes to pruning those roses.

There are even know a few gardeners who prune their bushier roses with hedge trimmers. This is a particularly effective technique if you have planted a long hedge of roses that would take a long time to prune with hand pruners.

Clean up and dispose of all leaves and cuttings from the area and fertilize the roses to encourage vigorous new growth. Use your favorite rose fertilizer according to label directions or use a general-purpose fertilizer appropriate for your area.

Many climbing roses, species roses, ramblers and old garden roses bloom only once during spring and early summer. They should not be pruned much now. They will produce their flowers next year on the growth they made this summer. Cutting them back hard after August, or any time before they bloom next year, will reduce the number of flowers they produce.

Forcing Paperwhites

Paperwhite narcissi in our gardens generally begin to bloom in mid- to late December or January, so they typically bloom in winter. Bulbs also can be planted in pots now and easily grown for bloom during December.

Plant the bulbs with their pointed ends exposed in pots of well-drained potting soil. Plant enough bulbs in the pot to fill it without the bulbs touching each other. Keep the pots in a sunny, cool location – preferably outside.

If grown in conditions that are too warm or with too little light, the leaves and flower stalks will be tall and tend to flop over. This frequently occurs when people try to force paperwhites in a warm room indoors on a windowsill.

For pots that are outdoors, bring them inside on those nights when freezing temperatures are predicted. When the first flower buds open, move the pots indoors to enjoy (some people find the fragrance objectionable). Move the pots of paperwhites into a cool, unheated location at night and back to their display locations during the day to make the flowers last longer.

Paperwhites also may be grown in bowls of pebbles and water. Choose a shallow decorative bowl and fill it half full of gravel, pebbles or marble chips. Place the bulbs on the surface and add enough rocks so the bulbs are two-thirds covered. Add enough water to touch the bottom of the bulbs, and maintain the water at this level. Proceed from that point as directed above to grow potted bulbs.

After forcing, you can plant the growing bulbs outside in a bed that receives part sun and they will bloom for you year after year.



Checklist for September, October, November

1. Begin preparing beds for fall planting.
2. Take soil samples from landscape beds and submit to your parish LSU AgCenter Extension Service office for analysis. Check with your parish LSU AgCenter Extension Service office for more information.
3. Fall is a great time to plant hardy trees, shrubs, ground covers and vines.
4. Plant spring-flowering bulbs in your gardens from late October through early December. Exceptions are tulips and hyacinths, which must be refrigerated and planted in late December or early January.
5. Garden mums make a great addition for fall color. Check your local retail garden center for availability.
6. Watch azalea plantings for early fall infestations of lace bugs. Control with Orthene, horticultural oil sprays and other recommended insecticides.
7. Build a compost pile out of leaves, grass clippings and remains from your vegetable garden.
8. Divide Louisiana irises in September.
9. Many of the summer-blooming perennials are finished or are finishing their floral display for the year. Cut back the flower stalks and old faded flowers to keep the plants looking attractive.
10. October weather can be dry. Water plantings as needed. Pay special attention to any newly planted areas. It generally is best to water direct-seeded beds of flowers or vegetables lightly every day to make sure the seeds do not dry out.
11. Prune everblooming roses by early September.
12. Fall is an excellent time to plant many herbs in the garden. A few herb plants provide a lot of harvest, so don't plant more than you can use. Herbs to plant now include parsley, sage, thyme, dill, cilantro, rosemary, oregano, borage, fennel, nasturtium, French tarragon, chives, mint and catnip.

Fall Lawns in Louisiana

Should You Fertilize Lawn During Fall?

Louisiana usually stays warm well into the fall, and lawns continue to grow until nighttime temperatures dip into the 50s. Be sure to mow and water your lawn, as needed, to keep it healthy.

More than likely, however, it is time to put up your fertilizer spreader. Fertilizing warm-season grasses during the fall with high nitrogen (summer-type) fertilizers or winterizing fertilizers containing nitrogen is not recommended for Deep South lawns.

Stimulating fall growth of St. Augustine, centipede and zoysia grasses with nitrogen leads to increased brown patch disease and winter kill. Bermuda grass may be fertilized into September, but it is not advised to make any more applications of nitrogen-containing fertilizers after late August on St. Augustine, centipede or zoysia grasses.

If you would like to extend the green color in home lawns this fall, apply foliar iron spray or spreadable iron granules. This will give you a nice flush of green color without increased growth.

The only other fertilizer that could be applied during the fall is muriate of potash. Muriate of potash (0-0-60) is the true winterizing fertilizer and it may be applied in September or October to provide increased disease resistance and cold tolerance. Most garden centers and feed stores have some form of potash. Get a soil test before applying potash to your soil, however, since there is no advantage to applying excessive amounts.

Speaking of Soil Tests…

Fall is the best time of the year to get your soil tested by the LSU AgCenter Soil Testing Lab.

Soil testing really is the first step to a beautiful lawn next spring and is the best way to determine exactly what your lawn needs to become thick and healthy. If you haven't tested your soil during the past several years, do it now.

To test your soil, submit a pint of soil to the LSU AgCenter Extension Service office in your parish. The pint should be a composite of soil samples collected from several different areas in the lawn. You only need to go about 4 inches deep. Also, to simplify the soil sampling and submission process, there are new pre-addressed submission boxes with sampling instructions at several garden centers across the state.

The sample results will be sent to your home mailbox and/or email in about two weeks. An LSU AgCenter extension agent can help you interpret the results from the soil sample. Sample results may indicate lime is needed to increase soil pH. If so, fall or winter is a good time to apply lime, since it takes several months to activate in the soil. Elemental sulfur also may be recommended to reduce soil pH in alkaline soils.

Ron Strahan
Weed Scientist/Turfgrass Specialist

Vegetable Gardening

Top 10 Reasons Why Louisianans Should Plant a Fall Vegetable Garden:



1. It is finally not stifling hot. Warm, yes, but not miserably hot.
2. The insects seem to be on vacation or at least most of them have left the garden.
3. The trees are begging us to collect their fallen leaves to mulch the garden.
4. You have read the recipe for kale chips, and you are dying to try them. You're just a few seeds away from making it a reality.
5. The same goes for beets. People are making chips out of those, too.
6. The new scarecrow needs something to protect.
7. It's a new school year. What better way is there to teach science?
8. The doctor said it is time for you to start eating healthfully. Gardening has two-fold benefits – fresh, healthful food and exercise wrapped into one activity.
9. Making a fresh-from-the-garden broccoli salad is not a traditional Thanksgiving side dish, but consuming it makes you feel better about that second piece of pie.
10. The in-laws are coming for the holidays. Wow them with your gorgeous garden.

Vegetables to Plant

September

Beets, broccoli (transplants or seeds through September), Brussels sprouts (transplants or seeds), cabbage (transplants or seeds), Chinese cabbage (transplants or seeds), cauliflower (transplants or seeds), collards (transplants or seeds), endive, carrots, English peas, snow peas, garlic (late September), kohlrabi, lettuce, mustard, onions (seeds, late September), parsley, snap beans (early September), radishes, rutabaga, shallots, spinach, Swiss chard, turnips and kale.

October

Cabbage, broccoli (transplants), mustard (during the first part of the month), turnips, collards, kale, parsley, shallots, radishes, beets, spinach, leaf lettuce, Chinese cabbage (during the first part of the month), celery, onions, Swiss chard, garlic, carrots and endive (during the first part of the month).

November

Beets (during the first part of the month), shallots, garlic (during the first part of the month), Swiss chard, spinach (during the first part of the month), kale, radishes, mustard, carrots and turnips.

Crop Highlights

Onions (Bulbing)

Onion seeds may be sown into containers for transplanting during December. Start seeds mid-September until mid-October. Keep the soil moist, because seed coats are hard. It may take two weeks for onion seeds to germinate. Onion transplants should be the width of a small pencil or smaller when planted to avoid bolting. Seeds can be sown directly into the garden space, where they will mature in late May to early June.

Short-day varieties to plant:

Red: Red Creole C5, Pinot Rouge or Red Burgundy.

White: Super Star Hybrid (All-America Selections), Candy (golden), White Bermuda or Georgia Boy.



Yellow: Granex 33, Texas Grano 1015Y, Nirvana, Savannah Sweet or Sweet Melody.

Fertilize plants sparingly prior to planting in the ground. This will prevent excessive growth; premature seed stalk development and bolting. About 2-3 pounds of 20-20-20, 7-21-21 or 8-24-24 per 100 feet of row is sufficient. Side-dress onions during the spring just before they bulb. Then side-dress two additional times at two- to three-week intervals. (Follow the same schedule for bulbing shallots.)

Green Shallots

Plant shallot sets any time during the fall or winter. Re-plant a portion of the bulbs each time you harvest. By doing this, you'll continue to produce shallots throughout the spring. The largest shallot bulbs for sets are made by transplanting from mid-November to December.

Garlic

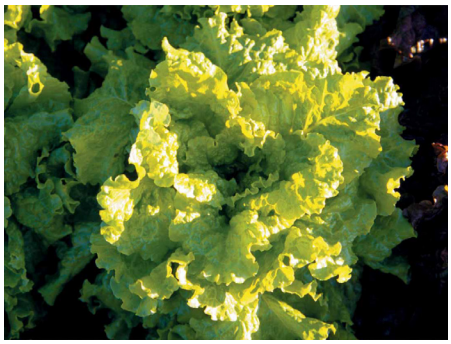
Garlic bulbs are separated into individual toes and planted throughout late September and all of October. Tahiti and elephant garlic are the largest and mildest of the recommended garlic varieties. The Italian and Creole varieties are smaller and stronger. But we can grow any soft neck varieties.

Check the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Market Bulletin's website for possible sources of sets, or visit your local hardware store.

Plant the toes 1 inch deep and 4-6 inches apart in the row. Several drills may be planted on one row. Allow 6 to 8 inches between drills. Fertilize before planting with 4-5 pounds of 8-24-24 per 100 feet of row. Side-dress with nitrogen after garlic has sprouted and again in February and March just before the bulbs swell.

Lettuce

September and October are the best months to plant lettuce. Head and semihead lettuces should be planted so they are harvested before a hard frost. Date from seed to maturity varies widely by cultivar. Space lettuce plants 12 inches apart in the row. They may be double drilled. Three to four weeks after transplanting, side-dress lettuce and repeat side-dressing again two to three weeks after the first application.



Recommended lettuce varieties include:

Semihead: Green Forest, Buttercrunch (All-America Selections), Oak Leaf or Parris.

Leaf: Simpson Elite, Red Fire, Red Salad Bowl, Nevada or Sierra.

Head: Great Lakes, Ithaca or Maverick.

Romaine: Green Towers, Bambi (dwarf romaine) and Cimarron.

Lettuce seeds should be lightly covered for best germination, but some varieties require sunlight, so read the seed packet! If sunlight is required for germination, simply press the seeds into the soil rather than covering.

For endive or escarole, choose Ruffle, Salad King or Full Heart.

Greens

Direct-seed greens throughout the fall. As the seeds emerge, thin them to 3-4 inches between plants. A trick to avoiding thick plantings is to shake the seeds out of a recycled herb/spice container into the soil. For optimum germination, keep the soil moist. To control weeds, incorporate Treflan into the soil prior to planting. Double drills may be planted on one row, allowing 10 to 12 inches between drills.

Recommended Collards: Blue Max, Champion, Top Bunch or Top Pick.Recommended Mustards: Green Wave, Red Giant, Golden Fills, Tendergreen and Florida Broadleaf.



Broccoli and Cauliflower

Transplant both broccoli and cauliflower during September and October in south Louisiana. Space cauliflower 12 to 18 inches apart and broccoli 9 to 12 inches apart.

Both crops respond to fairly high rates of fertilizer, 4 to 6 pounds of 8-8-8 or 3 to 4 pounds of 8-24-24 per 100 feet of row. Side-dress cauliflower and broccoli with 2 pints of calcium nitrate per 100 feet of row about two to four weeks after transplanting. Side-dress again at two-week intervals two to three more times. This will increase yield.

Recommended broccoli varieties include Packman, Green Magic, Castle Dome, Everest, Windsor, Diplomat, Patron and Gypsy. Recommended early cauliflower hybrids are Snow Crown (All-America Selections), Majestic, Freedom, Cumberland, Candid Charm and White Rock.

Cabbage

Recommended varieties for fall and winter production are Bravo, Rio Verde, Silver Dynasty, Thunderhead, Emblem, OS Cross, Blue Vantage, Cheers and Vantage Point.

Chinese Cabbage

Chinese cabbage is an excellent crop for fall gardens because the heads are pretty as well as tasty. Seeds are planted in September. Solid heads form 55 to 60 days after seeding.

English Peas and Snow Peas

Plant English peas, snow peas and other edible pods during September. The key to success is to plant the peas early enough so they bloom before frost and late enough so they aren't blooming when temperatures are too high.

Space peas 1 to 2 inches apart. About 2-4 ounces of seed will plant a 100-foot row. Between 70 and 80 days are required from planting until harvest. Staking or trellising peas, even the bush types, will help increase useful yields.

Spinach

Spinach requires a cool, fertile and well-drained soil with a pH of 6 to 7. Wait until temperatures cool for best germination, or germinate seed in the refrigerator prior to sowing.

Apply 4 to 5 pounds of a complete fertilizer such as 13-13-13 per 100 feet of row about two weeks before planting. Two pounds of calcium nitrate per 100 feet of row is needed for side-dressing approximately one month after seeding. Doing so will keep spinach growing quickly, making it tender and improving quality. An additional side-dressing after harvest will improve yields on second cuttings.

Plant seeds about ½ inch deep and thin plants to 1 to 3 inches apart in the row. Since seeds are slow to germinate, be sure to keep soil moist. Double drills may be planted on one row. Allow 8 to 12 inches between drills.

Suggested varieties are Melody, Ballet and Tiger Cat.

Pumpkins and Winter Squash

Harvest pumpkins and winter squash after they have developed a hard rind and are the appropriate color for their varieties. If the rind cannot be easily penetrated by the thumbnail, the fruit is mature. Leave about 3 inches of stem attached to the fruit. If stored in a cool, dry place (off the ground and floor, if possible), these cucurbits will keep well for several months.

Watch out for worms. If they eat all of the foliage, pumpkins will be sunburned (just like with watermelons). Bt and Sevin are great insecticides for use with pumpkins. But try to spray at dusk to minimize injury to pollinators.

Carrots

Start direct-seeding carrots during September and continue to plant throughout the fall season. Form high, well-drained rows. Thin seedlings to about 2 inches apart.

Choose Danvers 126, Thumbelina and Purple Haze (All-America Selections). For sandy soils, use Apache, Choctaw, Big Sur, Maverick or Navaho. If you have heavy clay soils, simply cover the seeds with a loose potting mix. Clay soils tend to form a crust and prevent the seeds from emerging.

Beets

Direct-seed beets from fall through winter. Choose Ruby Queen, Scarlet Supreme, Chariot or Solo.

Kathryn Fontenot, Ph.D.
Extension Vegetable Specialist



Lawn Weed Management

Granular pre-emergence herbicides can help manage winter weeds if applied prior to weed germination. These are the same herbicides used for pre-emergence crabgrass control that are applied in late winter and early spring.

Pre-emergence herbicides containing pendimethalin (Scotts Halts), dithiopyr, (Hi-Yield Weed Stopper) and benefin plus trifluralin (Green Light Crabgrass Preventer) provide good control of annual bluegrass, common chickweed and various other winter annuals prior to their emergence. Isoxaben (Green Light Portrait) provides good control of winter annual broadleaves. Isoxaben has no activity on germinating grasses, however, so consider applying one of the previously mentioned herbicides on the same lawn for a complete broad-spectrum, pre-emergence weed control program.

Ron Strahan
Weed Scientist/Turfgrass Specialist

Local Food Systems

While there is no consensus about how to define "local food systems" in terms of the geographic distance between production and consumption, defining "local" based on marketing arrangements – such as farmers selling directly to consumers at regional farmers markets or to schools – is well recognized.

Local and regional food systems are experiencing rapid growth in the United States. With a little help from forward-looking public policy, they will continue growing, benefiting their customers, their local economies and the nation's public health and environmental goals.

But what are they, exactly? Defining "local" is challenging, so we will focus on markets in which farmers sell food directly to consumers or institutions. Below is a quick primer on some of the most common ways farmers sell their food directly to customers, bypassing mainstream consolidated distribution and retailing systems.

Farmers Markets allow individual farmers and other vendors to market their products directly to consumers in a single location, giving shoppers choices from a variety of fresh, local food. Frequently these markets occur in an outdoor public venue at specified times during the growing season. Farmers markets were once common in the United States, but the rise of supermarkets and improvements in highway transportation led to their decline. By 1970, there were just 340 farmers markets left in the country. In recent decades, however, farmers markets have made a dramatic comeback, and their numbers had grown to more than 7,000 by 2011.



Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a system in which consumers buy a share of a farm's output at the beginning of the year and receive weekly installments of food throughout the growing season. This arrangement helps farmers by providing an infusion of cash early in the year and by allowing them to spend less time on marketing once the growing season begins. Benefits to consumers include the opportunity to support and interact with a local farmer and to receive fresh produce. According to one recent estimate, there are currently more than 4,000 CSAs operating in the United States.

Farm-to-School programs aim to improve the nutrition of school children by adding fresh, local food to cafeteria menus, to enrich education through curriculum development and experiential learning opportunities and to foster connections between local farms and communities. Similar models in other institutional markets – such as hospitals, prisons and military installations – also are attracting growing interest.

Food Hubs are distribution centers that provide a logistical and marketing interface between farmers and regional buyers. Farmers deliver their products to the food hub, which provides storage, processing and packaging services and markets the food to wholesale buyers such as restaurants, hotels, and universities, as well as retail customers. These facilities make it easier for local and regional farmers to compete with the mainstream consolidated food production and distribution system.

Roadside Stands have long been a familiar fixture along secondary roads in rural areas. They provide farmers with the most convenient marketing channel imaginable (the food never has to leave the premises) while attracting customers with the promise of maximum freshness.

U-Pick Operations, like roadside stands, rely on bringing the customers to the farm. They differ by allowing the customers to go into the fields or orchards to harvest the food themselves. For many customers, there is a strong appeal in the idea of getting their food directly from the field it was grown in.

Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food

Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food, or KYF2, as some are calling it, is helping communities scale up local and regional food systems and strengthen their economies.

The aim is to simplify the process and help communities put U.S. Department of Agriculture programs to work for them. Follow the Web page link below (http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/knowyourfarmer?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER) for a list of more than two dozen programs at USDA that can help build local and regional food systems. This list is not the entirety of USDA's offerings, but it is a great starting place.

Whether you are an individual farmer looking to extend your growing season, a cooperative of growers looking to rebuild a food hub, a farmers market that wants to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits, a school that needs cold storage to store locally procured meat, or anyone in between, this short guide to USDA's programs will help you identify funding options to support you.

Each link listed on the Know Your Famer page will take you to a short, easy-to-understand description of the program, an explanation of how it can be used to support a local or regional food project and a link to



the USDA agency Web page where you can find more information about the application process.

http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/knowyourfarmer?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER

MarketMaker

MarketMaker is a national network of states that connects farmers and fishermen with food retailers, grocery stores, processors, caterers, chefs and consumers. It is an ever-growing partnership of land-grant universities, departments of agriculture and food and agricultural organizations investing in a coordinated effort to build a virtual infrastructure that brings healthful, fresher and more flavorful food to the average consumer.

MarketMaker was created at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2004 and is licensed to Riverside Research, an independent not-for-profit organization. Riverside Research is investing in additional research and development to expand MarketMaker's capabilities to new markets and regions, both nationally and globally.

Whether you are a producer looking to reach new markets; a buyer wanting to connect with local or specialty suppliers or a consumer looking for goods and services in your area, MarketMaker is a must-have resource.

MarketMaker is the largest and most in-depth database of its kind, featuring a diverse community of food-related businesses such as buyers, farmers/ranchers, fisheries operations, farmers markets, processors/packers, wineries, restaurants and more. MarketMaker provides simple yet powerful search tools to connect with others across the production and distribution chain.

Learn more at https://foodmarketmaker.com/



LouEASYana GARDENING

Louisiana gardeners love figs, and everyone loves gifts. This November, you can take cuttings from your prized fig tree for spring gifts.

Fig trees are rather succulent and therefore very easy to root from simple cuttings. All you need is a sharp knife or pair of pruners, a few disposable cups and a bag of potting soil.

First, punch holes in the bottom of a plastic or foam cup. This is to ensure proper drainage.

Next, take cuttings from the top growing points of the fig branches, making sure the cuttings are between 5 and 6 inches long. Mark the top of the cutting and the bottom. I usually do this by cutting the bottoms at an angle and the tops flat. (See the diagram.)

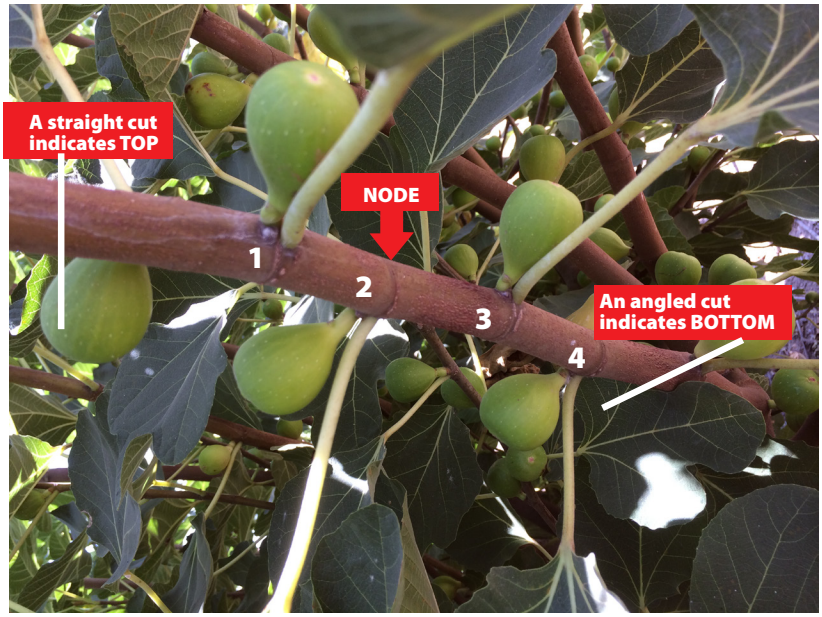
Then fill the cup with potting soil and apply water until it leaches from the drainage holes. After that, simply stick the cutting into the soil so at least 2 nodes are below the soil and 2 nodes are above the soil. This should be very simple, since fig nodes are very close to one another.

It is extremely important that cuttings are not placed upside down in the cups because they will not take root unless they are placed correctly.

Finally, water in the cutting to ensure soil makes contact with the stem. Keep the cuttings moist but not saturated and in partial to full sun. In just a few months, you will notice root development.

Once roots are touching the sides of the cup, pot them into larger containers or plant them in the ground. Just be sure to clearly mark all trees planted directly into the ground so no one runs them over with the lawn mower!

The diagram below shows how to mark your cuttings so that once they are removed from the tree you remember which side was up and which side was down. Note: In November, it's not likely that you will have leaves or fruit on the tree, but if you do, both need to be removed from the cuttings before rooting them.



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