

- The Meristem -

Summer
2020

WHERE WE CULTIVATE GROWTH

NEBRASKA EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER



MG Notes

By Kathleen Cue, Extension Educator

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Resources for Master Gardeners:

Websites:

Mastergardener.unl.edu

GroBigRed.com

Facebook:

[Nebraska Master Gardeners](https://www.facebook.com/NebraskaMasterGardeners)

Send articles for publishing to:

mspath2@unl.edu

Next newsletter deadline: September 15

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Saunders, Stanton, Thurston, Washington and
Wayne Counties.

When it comes to gardening, people are sinking their hands into the soil and jumping in with both feet. Those of us already in the business of horticulture are finding ourselves totally immersed in answering questions and finding solutions. If your garden club has a Face Book page, consider answering the questions posted by your fellow gardeners. Keep a notepad by the computer to keep track of the number of questions you've answered and the amount of time devoted to informing others. Five minutes here and 10 minutes there can quickly add up when it comes to MG volunteer time.

Master Gardener Statewide Coordinator Terri James has shared that MG volunteer hours will be flexible this year due to restrictions COVID-19 has placed on many. Education hours will remain at 15 hours of continuing education for this year. If you haven't already, consider attending a session with GRO Big Red and/or the lunch-and-learn sessions sponsored by Douglas-Sarpy. Also, please be aware that Terri is continuing to develop a Master Gardener education program that is completely online and will probably be the only way for new people to become MGs in 2021.

Master Gardeners are a resilient lot. Hats off to all of you who find ways to contribute to your community, despite COVID-19!

Thank you!



Lamium in the Landscape

By Lorraine Urban, Master Gardener

About 20 years ago, when my husband and I had a detached garage built on our property, the contractors left behind a pile of dirt. I started my Master Gardening lessons at about the same time and thought the pile might become a berm garden.

I invited an MG friend over to see my mound of dirt and give me some tips as to what I might plant to make this a berm garden.

The next time she came she brought some slips of a plant she said would help me cover some of that bare space in no time. The plant she brought me was “Lamium,” a member of the “nettle” family but without the sting, earning it the common name of “dead” nettle.

The Lamium grew like a weed. I mean it grew like weeds grow – fast and all over. It looked nice in the spring, and it had pretty purple-ish flowers that looked attractive among the medium green leaves, streaked with silver & white and it did cover the bare ground. It wintered over, not even losing the green color. Just what I hoped it would do, and then some.

At the end of the 2nd summer, however, I found it was growing in / through /around /under / over the other plants that I had added to that space. It was not only “naughty” it didn't look very nice.

It was easy enough to pull out where I did not want it. After giving it a grooming, I decided to keep it in the berm garden.

In the following years, Lamium appeared in some of my other flower beds where it had not been planted. New leaf variegations appeared that were different from the original plant, and some of the flowers were white, and some were pink. And the Lamium grew wherever it could. Too much Lamium!

I have since learned that not all Lamium cultivars are so aggressive. I have bought and planted White Nancy, Pink Pewter, and Beacon Silver. Lamium is easy to grow where it can get at least some shade. It lightens up these areas, keeps the feet of my clematis cool, brings butterflies and bees to my garden, and gently covers some open ground that would otherwise attract weeds. It is such fun to watch a bumblebee charge into the hooded flower of a Lamium.



Unruly Lamium



Pink Pewter mixed with a Veronica and planted at the foot of a Samaritan Joe clematis.

Lamium in the Garden

By Lori Urban, Master Gardener

As Lamium spreads, some of the leaves that touch the ground will root. You can dig up pieces with new roots to share with a friend, place elsewhere in your yard, or add to a pot. I have used pots as a place to start a new-looking Lamium, ones with chartreuse leaves and white flowers or almost white leaves, but purple flowers.

I'm glad my friend introduced me to Lamium, a plant I've found to be enjoyable and useful.



Lamium used in arrangement in a pot.



Lamium planted in dappled shade with Heucheras and Hostas



Free range gardeners.
From: twomenandalittlefarm.blogspot.com

Test Your Knowledge—Mosaic Virus in the Vegetable Garden

By Kathy Meyer, Master Gardener

Source: <https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/dodge/mosaic-virus-on-squash/>

1. Which of the following vegetables or fruit are more likely to be infected with mosaic virus?
 - a. Cucumbers
 - b. Squash
 - c. Peppers
 - d. Melon
 - e. Eggplant
2. How does garden produce get infected with mosaic virus? Choose all that apply.
 - a. mosaic virus is seed-borne
 - b. aphids and beetles spread the virus
 - c. squash vine borers harbor the virus overwinter
 - d. infected garden tools spread the virus
 - e. coughing without a mask
3. What does mosaic virus look like on plants? Choose all that apply.
 - a. severely wilted or dead plants
 - b. mottled, “warty” areas on infected fruit
 - c. mottled yellow, white, lt. and dk. green spots on leaves
 - d. fewer leaves on plants
 - e. stunted growth and reduced yields
4. What should I do if I notice the mosaic virus on my plants? Choose all that apply.
 - a. use IPM (integrated pest management) principles
 - b. start treatment with neem oil
 - c. remove the infected plants early in the season and replant
 - d. use certified virus-free seeds
 - e. use a 10% bleach solution on garden tools
5. T or F Squash and melons affected by mosaic virus are safe to eat.
6. T or F Squash vines affected by mosaic virus can harbor the virus through the winter.
7. T or F The presence of mosaic virus on fruits will cause premature rotting.



Mosaic Virus on Squash
—Photo Credit to Tammy Peterson



Squash Mosaic Virus Leaves

1. a,b,d
2. a,b,d
3. b,c,d,e
4. a,c,d,e
5. T
6. T
7. F

Answers

Searching For An Answer

By Mary Spath, Master Gardener

How do you answer your gardening questions? Do you grab your favorite gardening book for the answers or look in a current magazine or maybe not so current magazine that you have tucked away in your stash of keepers?

I have to admit I have an assortment of books and magazines that I cannot bring myself to toss but I seldom dig them out any more as a reference to my gardening questions. As for me, I Google almost everything to come up with an answer or alternative way to help me out of my current garden problem. I ask Siri a question and answers come right to my phone screen.



Searching the web is easy. Just type in what you are looking for. You can start your search for an answer very broadly or refine it to be very specific. A few extra words in your search makes a tremendous difference. So for example, if you are looking for a new shade loving plant for your landscape you might just type in “shade loving plants”. This will get you a big list of plants to scroll through. Whereas if you typed in “shade loving plants for Eastern Nebraska that reach 3 feet in height”. This will give you a shorter list of plants more specific to what you may want.

When looking up diseases you can type: “Show me common diseases of tomatoes in eastern Nebraska” to get a good look at what diseases you might encounter.

To make sure the answers to your questions are from educational sites start your search out with “site:.edu” So in the instance to learn about tomato diseases type in “site:.edu common diseases of tomatoes”. This will give you only links to educational information not private grower’s ads or their information.

If you are a visual person and would benefit from an image to help answer your question, just click on the word “images” that appears directly below your typed question. This gives you a great assortment of photos to look at that identify the disease or type of plant you are looking to identify.

Here are some great resources on the web for ideas and answers too:

<https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/dodge/DodgeCountyHorticulture/> - This is the Dodge County Horticulture web page and a great place to read through Kathleen Cue’s newsarticles. There is a wide variety of topics, full of great information.

grobired.com – A blog that is full of gardening information from Extension Educators

mastergardener.unl.edu – A web page devoted to the Master Gardener. Here you can glean resources and look for trainings and do your volunteer reporting.

byf.unl.edu – Watch the Backyard Farmer television broadcasts and also look for answers to your questions and also submit questions to Backyard Farmer for their review.

If you are a Pinterest user search out other garden lovers and check out their ideas. I follow Nebraska Statewide Arboretum and Nebraska Master Gardeners on this site.

Have fun exploring the web to get your gardening questions answered!