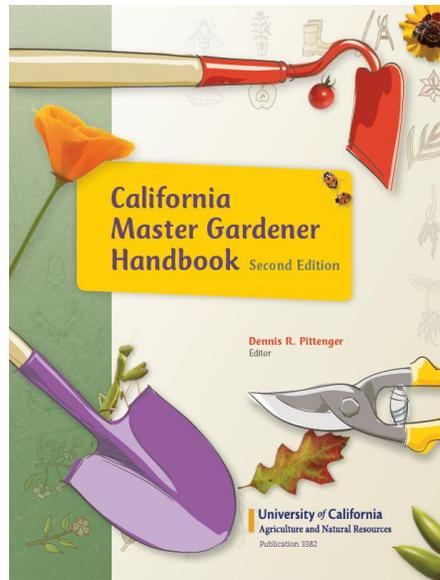


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The NEW Master Gardener Handbook
By Kathy Ruiz
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Gardening books are like seed catalogs. There is such a variety, so many specialties, and they often come beautifully illustrated. For Master Gardeners, however, the definitive gardening book is the California Master Gardener Handbook, now in its 2nd edition.

The handbook is the “textbook” for the University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardener program in counties throughout California, and no other book provides as comprehensive presentation of objective, science-based horticultural information for the home gardener as this tome does.

As in the first edition, the handbook starts with an overview of the Master Gardener Program. Subsequent chapters provide an Introduction to Horticulture, Soil and Fertilizer Management, Water Management, Plant Propagation and Plant Pathology. Chapters on Insects, Weeds, and Safe and Sustainable Pest Management practices follow. Next, chapters on House Plants, Lawns, Woody Landscape Plants, Home Vegetable Gardening, Grapes, Berries, Fruit and Nut Trees, Citrus, and Avocados focus on growing specific crops and plants popular with El Dorado County home gardeners, except perhaps, this last topic. The final chapters cover Landscape and Garden Design, Poisonous Plants and techniques for Diagnosing Plant Problems. The chapter on Household and Structural Pests was eliminated from this edition as Master Gardeners are no longer trained in this area and homeowners are encouraged to utilize the UC Integrated Pest Management website (<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/>) for up-to-date information on identifying and controlling these types of pests.

All the chapters contain updated technical information. The new edition reflects improved chapter reorganization, with topic titles to easily locate information. Many chapters reflect new content covering important emerging topics. For example, the chapter on Water Management was expanded to provide a greater emphasis on gardening in drought conditions including the

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use of drought resistant native plants. The chapter on Weeds now contains information on invasive plants, their impact and control. And, the chapter on Landscape Design was expanded to include principles for designing and maintaining fire safe landscapes. Many chapters contain information not previously available. This edition includes color photographs and in many cases updated tables and graphics. As is the case for Master Gardener program trainees, the chapters assume no prior knowledge of the topics.

Know a budding, struggling or seasoned gardener? Consider giving a gift of the new California Master Gardener Handbook. Better yet, reward yourself with one of the best gardening resources available. At \$40.00, tax included, it's the only "how to" garden book you need in California. The handbook is also available in electronic form in EPUB format for use on iOS and other compatible devices for \$30. The file size is 58.3 MB. Purchase the hardcopy version at UCCE Master Gardener classes. Hardcopy and e-book version can also be ordered through the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources website at <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/>. This is one gardening book that won't steer you wrong.

There is no Master Gardener class this Saturday, because Master Gardeners will be out in force during the El Dorado County Fair. Come to our information booth in the Floriculture Building (Farm Building) to get all your gardening questions answered, or check out any of their free mini-presentations on a variety of interesting gardening topics. UCCE Master Gardeners are available to answer your questions at local Farmers Markets and in their office every Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon, by calling (530) 621-5512. Walk-ins are welcome at the office, located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville.