



UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe Lake Tahoe Horticulture News November 2018

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Coordinator's Corner:

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."
- Winston Churchill

We hope you enjoyed your Thanksgiving holiday! And in the spirit of being thankful the UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe would like to thank the many Tahoe residents for their contributions to our programs. We have compiled our efforts into an [annual report](#) so that you may see the impact we have together made on the Tahoe horticultural community!

We are joining many other nonprofits today, Tuesday, November 27th for #GivingTuesday, a global day of giving that harnesses the collective power of individuals to celebrate generosity worldwide. Kick off the holiday season with us!

The UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe offers its services at no cost to our local communities, connecting concerned citizens and home gardeners to research and information directly from the University of California. With your support, we invest in research, education, and services in our community-to be a neighbor in times of need. And, we can't do this without your help.

[Your gifts allow UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe volunteers](#) to be the most reliable source of high quality research-based gardening information in our area.

Sincerely, Megan Suarez-Brand

A Year in Review

The UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe have had a very busy year! Check out the UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe [2018 Annual Report!](#)

2018 UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe Outreach Efforts

850+ VOLUNTEER HOURS

1,865 GROWING FOOD IN TAHOE CONTACTS

We provided 30 vegetable gardening workshops across 4 Tahoe counties and 2 states, distributed over 2,000 plants, 11 garden notes newsletter on how to successfully grow veggies in Tahoe.

3,537 SCHOOL GARDEN CONTACTS

We provided over 80 school garden workshops to over 2,000 youth and 277 adults while working in 4 elementary school garden spaces and partnering with local school districts and agencies.

287 TAHOE FRIENDLY GARDEN CONTACTS

We provided a series of in depth TFG workshops and events to over 267 Tahoe residents. We also spent a great deal of time revisiting BB's garden at the South Lake Tahoe public library.

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/mglaketahoe/>



Fire Preparedness and our Home Landscapes



Fire is sadly on many of our minds. We are stunned and saddened by the horrific events that have happened to our northern neighbors. As Tahoe residents we too live in the *Wildland Urban Interface* (WUI) and must be diligent to acquaint ourselves with what that means.

Did you know that there are many resources available to us?

In Tahoe we have the [Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team \(TFFT\)](#) which was formed in 2008 to implement the Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy. Members are a group of dedicated professionals committed to protecting life, property and the environment at Lake Tahoe through proper management of the forests to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire, thereby protecting communities, while safeguarding the exceptional natural resources of Lake Tahoe. The TFFT is overseen by a Multi-Agency Coordinating Group which includes the seven Lake Tahoe Basin fire chiefs and nine local agency executives. TFFT has numerous [publications](#) that as gardeners can help us better prepare our yards for living in the wildland urban interface (WUI).

Additionally, join or start a **Fire Adapted Community** in your neighborhood! [The Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities \(Tahoe Network\)](#) is a program designed to help residents and visitors prepare for wildfire. This multi-agency and community collaboration helps residents take individual action to help collectively reduce their neighborhood's risk from wildfire. Led by the Tahoe Resource Conservation District and working closely with local fire districts, TNFAC members have the opportunity to work together with neighbors to become fire adapted communities.

Growing Food in Tahoe-- A Season in Review



As Master Gardeners we are interested in finding out which vegetable plants grow best in our unique Tahoe climate. We often get asked what edible plants can I grow?

The answer can be complicated. That is why in 2015 we started our Growing Food in Tahoe program. To study which plant varieties grow best in our climate. Varietal phenology is the study of periodic phenomena that occur in relation to weather and climate. In horticultural terms, it's the timing of plant growth within a season. But, we aren't just looking at climate, we are also assessing soil type, exposure, and bed type. Our goal is to determine which plant variety fits into our short growing season.

2018 was a very busy year for our Growing Food in Tahoe Program. We held over 30 workshops in the spring and fall around the entire Lake Tahoe basin. We taught classes on growing potatoes, onions, lettuce/kale, berries, tomatoes and garlic. We sent out 11 separate *Garden Notes* newsletters which included tips on how to grow the specific plant varieties. We are already working on our 2019 spring *Growing Food in Tahoe* workshops and can't wait for you to join us. We thank the many Tahoe residents who provide us feedback on their growing experiences.

Winter Protection

By: Jen Cressy, UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe ([This excerpt is from the Putting the Garden Bed article](#))



Cover marginally hardy perennials and newly planted perennials with pine needles and evergreen boughs after the soil freezes to minimize damage from freeze-thaw cycles. In early spring this layer would need to be removed to reduce the chance of crown rot. Repeated freeze-thaw cycles damage roots and can heave the plant up from the ground (frost heave). Damage from frost heave can also be minimized by planting in well drained garden beds. Soggy ground will freeze and thaw repeatedly and susceptible plants will heave. Even a bit of exposed root can cripple or kill a newly planted perennial. That being said, routinely check your new plants for holes next to the root balls left by squirrels burrowing their fall food finds. Not if, but when you discover them, refill the hole and water thoroughly to eliminate air pockets where water can collect and freeze.

A gift for the gardener in your life: forcing paperwhite bulbs (*Narcissus tazetta*)

The paperwhite bulb (*Narcissus tazetta*) is in the same family as daffodils but is a tropical flower. Unlike daffodils, the paperwhites do not require a cold period to grow. They require little less than to be potted (with or without soil) and watered to produce clusters of fragrant blooms. The white, fragrant flowers usually open up within 2-3 weeks of planting. The bulbs can be planted in soil, stones or decorative rocks in shallow bowls or jars. Just add a little water and the bulbs rapidly form roots, grow leaves, and shoots. The only drawback with these beautiful indoor winter plants is that they tend to get leggy and wilt over.

Researchers have found some easy solutions to deal with the "leggy problem." Research conducted by the Flowerbulb Research Program at Cornell University has found a simple and effective way to reduce stem and leaf growth of paperwhites. The "secret" is using dilute solutions of alcohol. Properly used, the result is paperwhites that are 1/3 to 1/2 shorter, with equal sized flowers that last as long as normal.

[Continue reading...](#)

Sincerely,

Megan Suarez-Brand, Program Coordinator

The UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe strive to meet the horticulture needs of the Lake Tahoe Basin Community, we are pleased to extend research-based information to fellow gardeners on home horticulture. Our Master Gardener volunteers receive training and certification from the University of California Cooperative Extension and provide practical scientific gardening information.

The University of California working in cooperation with County Government and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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