



May 2015



## President's Patch

By Rhonda Bowman, President

It seems like we are having an early spring but the weather does not want to let go of winter. It has been downright chilly and I have been watching plants in my beds trying to come up because of the temperatures.

I have started my seeds in the house and have had great results. I am very anxious for winter to go away and bring summer on! The internet and various magazines have a wealth of information on planning flower and vegetable beds and trouble-shooting advice if you have issues with your plants. Also we are very lucky in Alaska to have such a wealth of local information specific to our climate and growing season.

The 'Grow Palmer' initiative will be active in Palmer this year. They will have plots located throughout the downtown Palmer area loaded with vegetables free for eating and taking home. Remember it would be great to assist with some weeding and volunteers can always be utilized.

We have a new section on our website that is called 'For Sale by Owner' for folks that have various garden related items for sale. We recommend everyone browse it frequently because you never know what you might need! Don't forget to submit your gardening photos to be included on the website.

Our next meeting will be May 6 and hope to see you there so we can discuss our Annual Plant Sale.

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### CHAPTER MEETINGS FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

#### NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 4TH, 7:00 PM

LOCATION: MTA CONFERENCE ROOM  
480 COMMERCIAL DR., PALMER, AK  
DO NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER TO ATTEND

#### MEETING AGENDA

- TREASURER REPORT
- MINUTES
- OLD BUSINESS
- NEW BUSINESS

#### TOPIC/SPEAKER:

The focus of the meeting will be a discussion on the upcoming annual plant sale. To participate in the plant sale, members must be current in club dues. The club will provide plant labels - yellow and white. Instructions will be available on the club's webpage.

## PEASANTS PERSPECTIVE, BY CURT MUELLER, MASTER GARDENER

Rooting tomatoes from cuttings is a fairly easy procedure, fun to do, and one that the peasant has been doing for several years. There are a few basic steps in the process, which if followed, should give one a 100% success ratio. Good cuttings, bottom heat, keeping the tops from drying out, and supplying some light are essential. How this is to be done will become evident in the following series of photos. A comparison has also been made to tomatoes seeded at the same time.

**1**

Selecting a strong sucker for cutting.

**2**

Cuttings have been labeled and trimmed to length. Four inch pots have been cleaned and filled with soilless medium.

**3**

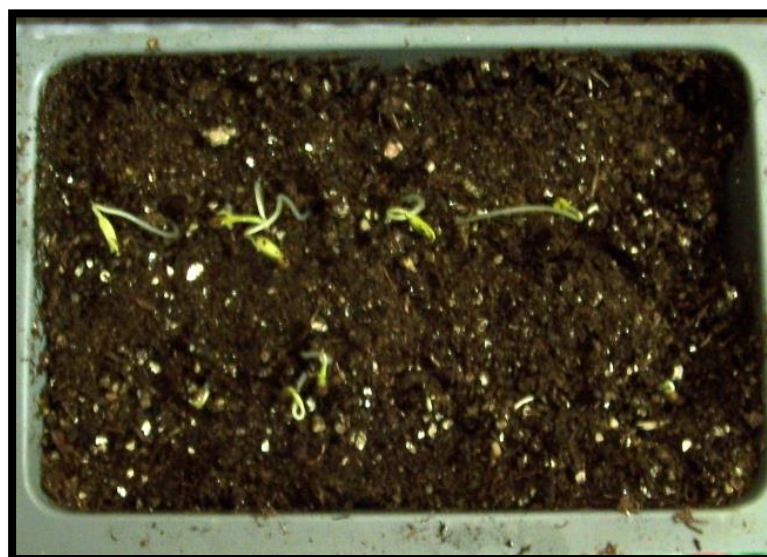
Cuttings have been carefully inserted into medium. Cut tip is about an inch from pot bottom. Roots will form first at cut tip. Pots are on bottom heat which is monitored at about 75F. Temperature at soil level is monitored at about 70F. Setup is placed at a north window in cool garage; ambient temperature at about 50F.





4

After 4 days, some minor wilt is visible on cuttings. Having the cuttings crowded together and covered with food wrap helps maintain high humidity around cutting tops. A cool ambient air temperature is also a help in limiting evaporation from the leaves.



5

These tomato seedlings were seeded on March 24 and are shown emerging on March 29.



6

These plants had the cuttings taken on March 25, and are shown on April 4. They are well rooted and ready to go to greenhouse to grow on.



7

These are a couple of the cutting plants as of April 20. They are sturdy and beginning to show blossom color.



8

This photo taken on April 20 shows a cutting plant started on March 25 alongside a seedling seeded on March 24.

It is obvious from the photos that growing from cuttings provides a time advantage as opposed to starting from seed. Of course a source for good cuttings is a must. Commercial tomato growers or friends with heated greenhouses could be a source if one doesn't have large enough plants for

cuttings. Tomato plants, especially indeterminate types, are very prolific in producing suckers. These suckers are ordinarily removed from the plant to prevent excessive vegetative growth.

It may not always be possible to provide the best conditions for rooting tomatoes. If the cuttings wilt they may still root, but they will need more time. Under no circumstances expose the cuttings to direct sunlight. If rooting in a dark room some supplemental light will be needed. Keep it far enough from the plants so it doesn't overheat them.

It is difficult to root cuttings in a house during the heating season. The air will be very dry and if also very warm, the cuttings may wilt severely. Making sure that the covering is as airtight as possible will help. It is also helpful to put a dish of water next to the cuttings. A sponge to serve as a wick to provide more surface area for the water to evaporate will help to maintain the humidity level.

The peasant would be happy to field further questions on this subject. Thanks folks.





Join **Steve Brown**, Mat-Su District ag/hort agent for the following classes:

**CHICKEN UNIVERSITY**, (class limited to 40) . . . . . **MAY 4, 7 - 9 p.m.**

This fun and informative class will help the novice learn the fundamentals of raising chickens in Alaska. Topics include breed selection, where to get the breeds you want, determining the sex of chicks, coop design, hatching, brooding, nutrition, diseases and even a little bit of poultry psychology.

**INTRODUCTION TO ALASKA VEGETABLE**

**GARDENING**, (class limited to 40) . . . . . **MAY 5, 7 - 9 p.m.**

New to Alaska or new to gardening? If so, this class is for you. Learn the fundamentals of soil sampling, fertilization, garden planning, variety selection, methods for warming soil, weed control and much more.

**ALASKA LAWN CARE**, (class limited to 40) . . . . . **MAY 18, 7 - 9 p.m.**

Creating a beautiful lawn is the single cheapest thing you can do to increase the value of your home. This class will teach you how to inexpensively create and maintain a beautiful lawn. Topics include grass selection, yard preparation, seeding rates, mower selection, fertilization and disease control. *Learn how to make the neighbors jealous.*

**SOIL SCIENCE AND FERTILIZERS**, (class limited to 40) . . . . **MAY 20, 7 - 9 p.m.**

Are fertilizers a mystery to you? Do you know how to select the right fertilizers for what you are growing? What's the difference between organic and conventional fertilizers? This class will teach you the fundamentals of soil science and all but guarantees improved results in this year's garden.

Call **745-3360** to register.

ALL CLASSES WILL BE HELD IN KERTTULA HALL, ROOM 208  
1509 S. GEORGESON ROAD, PALMER  
(MATANUSKA EXPERIMENT FARM)

[www.uaf.edu/ces/matsu](http://www.uaf.edu/ces/matsu)

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## Garden Links

### Alaska Botanical Garden

<http://www.alaskabg.org/>

### Alaska Community Agriculture

<http://www.alaskacommunityag.org/>

### Arbor Day Foundation

[www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org)

### Alaska Natural Heritage Program – Botany

<http://aknhp.uaa.alaska.edu/botany/>

### Alaska Garden Clubs

<http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org>

### Alaska Grown Source Book (online)

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/sourcebook/index.htm>

### Alaska Master Gardeners Association, Anchorage Chapter

<http://alaskamastergardeners.org/>

### Alaska Master Gardener Blog

<http://alaskamastergardener.blogspot.com/>

### Alaska Native Plant Society

<http://www.aknps.org/>

### Alaska Orchid Society

<http://www.akorchid.org/>

### Alaska Peony Growers Association

<http://alaskapeonies.org>

### Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Assoc..

<http://www.apfga.org/>

### Alaska Plant Materials Center

<http://plants.alaska.gov/>

### Alaska Rock Garden Society

<http://www.akrockgardenociety.org/>

### Cooperative Extension Service, Palmer

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/matsu/>

### Eat Local Alaska

<http://akfood.weebly.com/index.html>



### Good Earth Garden School

<http://ellenvandevisse.com/>

### Integrated Pest Management Program

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/>

### Junior Master Gardeners

<http://www.imgkids.us/>

### Landscape Plants for Alaska

[www.alaskaplants.org](http://www.alaskaplants.org)

### Local Alaskan Plants Clearinghouse

<http://www.localplants.org/Home>

### Mat-Su Borough Rain Garden Program

<http://www.matsugov.us/raingardens>

### Mat-Su Master Gardener Website

[www.matsumastergardeners.org](http://www.matsumastergardeners.org)

### Master Gardener Research Link

<http://search.extension.org>

### Master Gardeners of the Tanana Valley \*\*UPDATED\*\*

<https://fairbanksmastergardeners.wordpress.com/>

### Palmer Soil & Water Conservation

<http://palmersoilandwater.org/>

### South-Central Alaska Beekeepers Assoc.

<http://www.sababeekeepers.com/>

### Southeast Alaska Master Gardeners

<http://www.seakmg.org/>

### Sustainable Agriculture – UAF

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ah/sare/>

### UAF Cooperative Extension Service Publications

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/pubs/catalog/>

### UAF Georgeson Botanical Garden

<http://www.georgesonbg.org/>

### UAF CES Citizen Pest Monitoring Portal

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/cmp/>

### University of Saskatchewan Fruit Program

[www.fruit.usask.ca](http://www.fruit.usask.ca)

### USDA/NRCS Plant Data Base

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/>

### Wasilla Soil & Water Conservation

<http://www.wasillaswcd.org/>

## Announcements

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are needed to weed Grow Palmer boxes behind the Salvation Army. Contact Winona Benson @ 745-3423 if you would like to help.

### BOARD MEMBER OPENING

The position of Club Secretary is still open. The job involves taking minutes at meetings and attending board meetings. If you are interested, please contact Rhonda Bowman for further details and information.

### LIBRARY PLANTING THEME

The club will be supporting the Grow Palmer initiative again this year. Please bring edible vegetables and plants for the Palmer Library boxes.

## Club Membership

The membership year runs from January to December each year. Annual individual memberships are \$10 and family memberships are \$12.

Membership forms are available to download on the club's website, [www.matsumastergardeners.com](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com)

*thank you*

## CLUB CONTACT INFO

<b>President:</b>	<b>Rhonda Bowman</b>	<b>746-2948</b>
<b>Co-VP</b>	<b>Curt Mueller</b>	<b>745-6144</b>
<b>Co-VP</b>	<b>Hally Truelove</b>	<b>376-0909</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Cathy Crew</b>	<b>632-4401</b>
<b>Member at Large:</b>	<b>Marge Mueller</b>	<b>745-6144</b>

If you have gardening news, photos or information you'd like to share in the newsletter, please contact: Deb Blaylock @Email: [kdblalock@ak.net](mailto:kdblalock@ak.net)

Website: [www.matsumastergardeners.com/](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/)  
Email: [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com)

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### MAY 2015

**May 4**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, Annual Plant Sale discussion

**May 18**, Arbor Day in Alaska

**May 23**, Palmer, Mat-Su Master Gardener Annual Plant Sale

#### JUNE 2015 AND BEYOND

**Jun 1**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, Palmer Library Planting

**June 22-24**, Anchorage, Alaskan Plants as Food and Medicine Symposium,

<http://www.alaskanplants.org/>

**Jul 6**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD

**Jul 11**, Palmer, Midsummer Garden and Art Faire, <http://www.palmergardenandart.org/>

**Aug 3**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD

**Aug 27 – Sep 7**, Palmer, Alaska State Fair

**Sep 14**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD

**Oct 5**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD

**Nov 2**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD

**Dec 7**, Palmer, Annual Christmas Dinner

## How and what to Submit for the Monthly Newsletter

Your submissions are greatly appreciated and make our newsletter what it is - so don't be shy about submitting items for publication. However, there are a few rules which we all must pay attention to:

Articles, stories, poetry, upcoming events, and pictures (garden-related) are gladly accepted for inclusion in the newsletter. Please submit pictures in JPEG format and other items in Word format with no special formatting other than paragraphs. When submitting pictures, please provide a brief caption or explanation as to who or what is in the picture. I do not have a scanner to copy pictures so I cannot accept hard copies.

If you are not the author or photographer, please ensure you have permission of the author or photographer to use their material in the newsletter. The newsletter editor is not responsible for obtaining this for you.

Please do not provide magazine articles or pictures from the internet unless they are public domain items.

**Deadline for submission of articles and info:**  
**20<sup>th</sup> day of each month ~~ Thank you~~**



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**Facebook**

Website: [www.matsumastergardeners.com/](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/)  
Email: [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com)

**MAT-SU MASTER GARDENER'S CLUB**  
**PO BOX 585**  
**PALMER, AK 99645**

