

Terrell County Extension

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COMMERCIAL and PRIVATE APPLICATOR HOURS APPROVED

CROP	HOURS	COMMERCIAL/ PRIVATE
Cotton	2	X
Corn	1	X
Peanut	1	X
Soybean	1	X

Terrell County Production Meetings for 2011

We expect to receive much new information on varieties for cotton, corn, peanuts, & soybeans, as well as additional information on resistant weed control measures;

CROP	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Cotton	January 25	6:00 pm	Governmental Bldg.
Corn	January 27	12:00 am	Governmental Bldg.
Peanut	February 21	12:00 am	Governmental Bldg.
Soybean	March 7	12:00 am	Governmental Bldg.

We will have a meal served at each production meeting. We will ask you closer to the meeting date for you to let us know if you will attend, so we can plan the number of meals to prepare.

POINSETTIA FLOWERS ARE YELLOW

The bright red color of traditional poinsettias actually is the plant's bract, a leaflike part of the plant below the flower or flower cluster. In most plants, the flowers are brightly colored and the bracts are green.

PICK FLOWERLESS POINSETTIAS

To have your poinsettia look vibrant through the holiday season, pick a plant whose flowers (the small yellow center) haven't opened and whose bracts (the red portion) haven't turned vibrant red.

GIFTS FOR THE GARDENER

If you're searching for that perfect holiday gift for your favorite gardener, why not pick from this list: heirloom seeds, gardening books, garden tools, a garden scooter or a load of compost (*they would have to be a very close friend or relative to appreciate this one*).

PRUNING CRAPE MYRTLE

Crape myrtle flowers on new growth of the season, so you can prune plants any time during the late winter or early spring before growth begins without loss of flower buds. Avoid pruning in early fall before the first frost, because pruning forces new growth and keeps the plant from going dormant. Severe freezes can kill the plant if it is not fully dormant. Pruning results in an abundance of new shoots that form flowers. It also reduces the amount of vegetative growth and funnels the energy of the plant into new growth and flowers. Pruning, however, is not essential for flowering. Some of the most spectacular floral displays can be seen on old, unpruned crape myrtles along roadsides. Flower clusters are usually smaller on unpruned crape myrtles, but the number of flower clusters is greater. Therefore, the overall floral impact of the plant is not reduced.

On some cultivars, pruning to remove spent flower blossoms after they fade will stimulate new growth and another blossom flush in late summer. A second bloom is sometimes difficult to force on cultivars that bloom after mid-July. The type and amount of pruning that should be done each year depends entirely on desired shape and size. On large old crape myrtles, heavy pruning may not be advisable, since the tree form is the desirable feature. Crape myrtles in tree form make wonderful accent plants or specimen trees. Many cultivars develop attractive trunks with exfoliating bark that add interest to the winter garden (see Table 1, page 6). To develop a tree shape, select three to five nicely spaced shoots growing from ground level as the main trunks. Then remove side branches from these shoots about halfway up their height. As the plant grows taller, more lower branches can be removed each year so the canopy begins 3 to 4 feet above ground level.

You may also need to remove suckers (new young succulent spouts that grow from the base) periodically in order to maintain the desired tree shape. Some landscapers apply a synthetic plant growth regulator, called NAA (naphthalene acetic acid), to suckers after pruning to prevent them from re-sprouting. Some gardeners prefer growing crape myrtle as a compact shrub instead of a tree. To get these results, prune the stems back to approximately 6 inches above ground level each year. Severe pruning will not kill or injure a healthy plant. Prune before growth begins in the spring. The result will be an abundance of new flowering shoots. If an intermediate size of shrub is desired, prune moderately by removing the twiggy growth smaller than pencil size. This annual pruning will stimulate more vigorous growth in the spring. When pruning, remember that new growth will emerge 3 to 4 inches below where the limb is cut. Avoid cutting back large limbs and leaving stubs, because an abundance of new growth will emerge near

the cut, looking like pom-poms on stalks. Not only is this unnatural in appearance, but this thick, dense growth will be more susceptible to aphids. In the landscape industry, this type of pruning is jokingly referred to as “crape murder.”

FERTILIZING

A complete general-purpose garden fertilizer — such as 8-8-8, 10-10-10, 12-4-8 or 16-4-8 — is ideal for crape myrtle. To newly planted small plants (1-gallon size), apply 1 teaspoon of fertilizer monthly from March to August along the perimeter of the planting hole. Larger, established plants will benefit from one broadcast application of fertilizer in spring. Apply 8-8-8 or 10-10-10 at a rate of 1 lb. per 100 sq. ft. or 12-4-8 or 16-4-8 at a rate of ½ lb. per 100 sq. ft. Avoid over fertilization because it causes excess growth and reduced flowering. The best time to fertilize is just before a rain. Otherwise, water in the fertilizer after application with irrigation. It is not necessary to remove mulch when fertilizing.

Terrell County Web Site, Ag Updates & Newsletters:

<http://www.uqaextension.com/terrell>