Since the summer issue, I have harvested, roasted (and eaten!) my Carolina Black and Virginia Jumbo peanuts! It has been a truly rewarding experience to watch these plants from start to finish! Below includes a recap and update since July:

**Planting:** On June 5th, I planted the legumes in a 1" trench, filled with all-purpose sand, in my 4x 8 foot raised garden bed. Peanuts grow best in loamy sand. **Growing:** The peanut plants sprouted within three days under a row cover. They looked like mini lush trees! Like sweet potatoes, peanuts grow along the stem of the plants underground. Yellow blooms signal that the peanut are forming. **Maintenance:** I used drip irrigation (once a day for 15 mins) because it’s important to keep them well watered as they are blooming. **Harvest:** On October 25th, I finally harvested the peanuts, four and half months after planting! Normally, you would harvest when the plant leaves turn yellow. However, as advised by Ira Wallace from the Southern Exposure Seed Company, it was important to pull them up before the rainy season and before the first frost hits. I was surprised to harvest a total of 367 peanuts; 261 Carolina Black and 106 Virginia Jumbo! **Storage and Curing:** I stored the peanut plants in my garage and let them cure for two weeks. **Roast:** On November 8th, I roasted the peanuts. Though my initial plan was to unshell all the peanuts and experiment with honey-roasted peanuts and boiled peanuts, my mother and aunt persuaded me to roast a simpler way – with the shell on like my grandmother did. I placed them in the oven at 300 degrees for a total of 15 minutes, turning every five minutes so that they would not burn. **Tasting:** Because I plan to make peanut butter, I unshelled the peanuts. The Virginia Jumbo only had one or two per shell; the Carolina Black had as many as four per shell! I had a hard time restraining myself from eating them! Don’t worry – you will get your chance to taste them at the December quarterly meeting!

Sources: Southern Exchange Seed Exposure, Mineral, VA and Park Seed Company, Hodges, SC.
Salad Table Demonstration!

Back on August 22nd, MG’s Linda Crandall and Patrice Hopkins and MG Interns Jane Sanders and Jennifer Malig participated in a new event for our county and the MG program. The Country Life Outdoors Festival was held at the SM Fairgrounds over the course of three days. The MG’s were invited to provide a demonstration to festival visitors. The MG’s listed above demonstrated how to build and use a salad table. They did a great job sharing this useful project to the public and later this salad table was used as a demonstration item at the County Fair. The salad table is now outside the doors of the Extension Office and continues to catch people's eyes! Thank you Linda, Patrice, Jane and Jennifer!

A Few Timely Tips from HGIC

- Don’t begin mulching your perennials until after the first hard freeze- around mid-November. The mulch should be 2-3 inches deep and surround the plant crowns. Waiting to mulch will help the ground to cool and remain cold during winter. The freezing and thawing of the soil in winter can cause many perennials to heave; mulching helps moderate temperature fluctuations thus, reducing this problem.

- Cut back and compost other annuals and perennials after hard frost kills the top foliage. Do not compost foliage from plants that suffered from disease problems this season. Fall garden clean-up may result in a healthier garden next season by reducing disease spores and insect eggs, which overwinter in plant material.

- It’s time to dig summer bulbous and tuberous plants, such as cannas, dahlia, gladiolus, caladium or tuberous begonia, and store them indoors for the winter. After digging, remove loose soil and cut the foliage back to just above the bulb and spread them out to cure for one to three weeks.

- Leave the large seedheads of black-eyed Susans, coneflowers, and native grasses for birds to feed on over the winter. Plants also offer shelter and provide winter interest in the garden.

- Clean all nest boxes and feeders. Scrape and remove debris and scrub with hot, soapy water. Rinse and let dry. Some birds that are cavity nesters such as (chickadees and titmice) may use the nest boxes for roosting during the winter.

- Don’t put your bird bath away. Birds need fresh water for drinking and bathing throughout the fall season. Clean frequently and keep filled with fresh water.

- Spinach, lettuce, arugula, kale, and other cool-season crops should be protected from freezing with a cold frame, plastic sheeting or floating row cover. Be sure to vent your cold frame or plastic cover on sunny days to prevent excessive heat build-up.

- It’s getting to be that Holiday time of year and MG Suzanne Patterson suggested that some information about caring for those gift plants we all receive would be helpful. Here are a few links from UME and other Extensions.

*Care of Amaryllis (a.k.a Hippeastrum) Plants
*Care of Fresh Flowers and Holiday Plants
*Care of Holiday Plants
*Thanksgiving & Christmas Cacti

*Rosemary Care Indoors: http://extension.umd.edu/learn/rosemary-care-indoors
The University of Maryland Extension (UME) in St. Mary’s County held an open house on October 14th to mark the 100 year anniversary of the Smith Lever Act of 1914, which officially created the National Cooperative Extension System. You can read more about this anniversary in the College of AGNR newsletter from this summer. Check out the link; it is called MomentUM! This celebration was combined with a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the official completion of the Agricultural Service Center.

UME - St. Mary’s County relocated to the Agricultural Service Center this past summer, joining numerous other agriculturally focused organizations including the St. Mary’s Soil Conservation District, St. Mary’s County Farm Bureau, Farm Service Agency, National Resource Conservation Service and Ag and Seafood Section of the St. Mary’s County Department of Economic Development.

“We are very pleased with our new space,” said Ben Beale. “St. Mary’s now offers a one stop shop for the many services farmers utilize. We are very grateful to the St. Mary’s County Board of Commissioners and the St. Mary’s Soil Conservation District for their continued commitment to the concept of an Ag Service Center.”

Local representatives from our county, the state, as well as from our Ag agencies helped to cut the ribbon outside the conference room.

Thanks to Veronica Spicuzza and granddaughter, Mary Sistrunk, Sue Gibbs and Gabriel Horton for helping to weed and plant pansies in the front of the building. We received many compliments!

Dean Wei, AGNR- College Park and the UME-St. Mary’s Faculty and Staff
A Volunteer Opportunity
By William Grube, MG Intern

As a father of four young children I am always trying to find creative ways to encourage my children to join me in the garden whenever possible. However, my ability to accomplish even the most basic tasks in the garden is often slowed by an abundance of questions, misplaced tools, trampling feet, and a general apathy for pulling weeds! Three of my children now attend the Chesapeake Public Charter School (CPCS) and they are exposed to gardening almost daily. They all enjoy their time in the garden with the three chickens, and tasty treats that make their way to the salad bar in the school cafeteria. The school has yet to turn my kids into master weed-pullers, but they do have a great deal of pride in their school’s garden.

The ‘Garden Project’ is central to the CPCS charter and numerous references to the importance of a school garden can be found in the school’s 2004 founding charter. Below is an excerpt that captures the role the garden plays in the schools mission:

The mission of the [CPCS] Garden Project is to provide a nature based learning environment in the form of a school garden. The purpose of this project is to promote sound nutrition and physical fitness in all students. It is our belief that the daily, weekly and seasonal rhythms of this garden project will provide consistent structure in the educational process.

Consider helping with the CPCS garden! I will be leading a project elective this winter on composting techniques and I would be glad to partner with anyone that might be interested. These take place on Fridays from 1:45-3pm and run approximately 6-8 weeks. Other opportunities include garden instruction, project planning, general maintenance, and help with the annual plant sale. Please contact William “Howie” Grube by email at wgrube2011@my.fit.edu or by phone at (240) 538-3942 if you are interested in helping at the school.

From the Bay Wise Committee...

What’s holding you back from having your landscape PRACTICES certified as Bay-Wise?

Common Bay-Wise Myths
- You have to have all Natives in your yard.
- You can’t have a septic system.
- You have to have a rain garden.
- Everything has to be neat and tidy.
- You can’t ever fertilize.
- You can’t ever use a pesticide.

Recently, The St. Mary's Garden Club received a $200 prize for having 44% of its members Bay-Wise certified. Congratulations!
Sweet potato is from the Morning glory (Convolvulaceae) plant family. Its correct spelling is "sweetpotato" as one word. As a crop it is totally different from a potato (Solanum tuberosum) and from a yam - "nyami" (Dioscoreaceae).

Scientists believe that sweet potato was domesticated 5000 years ago in Central or South America. After his first voyage to the Americas in 1492, Christopher Columbus took sweet potatoes back home to Europe. The crop was introduced into China in the late 16th century and spread through Asia, Africa, and Latin America during the 17th and 18th centuries. The biggest producer is currently China and over ½ of the crop is used for livestock. North Carolina is the biggest producer of sweet potatoes in the U.S.

A sweet potato is hardy, has broad adaptability, and its planting material can be multiplied quickly from very few roots. You do have to be cautious that it will take up a fair amount of garden space and deer love them. That being said, they are drought tolerant, insect resistant, well worth growing and are recognized as a highly nutritional food source. It is now grown in more developing countries than any other root crop.

Thomas Jefferson was known to grown Sweet Potatoes at Monticello and his sweet potato biscuits were served at the first meeting of the First Continental Congress in 1774. Taken from Food.com, his recipe is as follows:

**Thomas Jefferson's Sweet Potato Biscuits**

**Ingredients**
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, cut in small pieces
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup milk
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup sweet potato, mashed (about 1 large Virginia Sweet Potato)
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 1/2 cup pecans, chopped

**Directions**

Preheat oven to 450°F.  
Combine the dry ingredients. Add butter with fork, food processor or pastry cutter until the texture is small crumbs.  
Combine milk and sweet potatoes. Add to flour mixture. Add pecans.  
Knead dough with your hands until it is a smooth mass. Roll out on a floured surface to 1/2” thickness and cut with a 2” biscuit cutter.  
Place on a greased baking sheet 2” apart. Bake for about 10-15 minutes, or until lightly browned.

Reference:  
Anne’s Zucchini Pineapple Cake

*From the kitchen of Anne Rullman. Submitted by Linda Carlson*

Many of you are aware of the recent passing of MG Anne Rullman. Linda Carlson shared the following, “Here is a cake recipe that I received from Anne Rullman a few years ago”. This recipe is for a Zucchini Pineapple Bundt cake that Anne Rullman made and brought to one of the Master Gardener Quarterly meetings. Her handsome Bundt cake was slightly green from the zucchini, and so delicious and moist. Anne graciously shared her recipe with me, and when we make this cake we can remember her.”

**Ingredients**
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 tbsp. vanilla
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups zucchini, peeled, grated and drained
- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 cup crushed pineapple (drained)
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 1/2 cup raisins

**Directions**
Beat eggs until fluffy and add sugar, vanilla, oil and zucchini. Mix flour, until fluffy and add sugar, vanilla, oil and zucchini. Mix flour, baking soda and salt. Add to mixture. Stir in raisins, nuts and pineapple. Grease and flour a Bundt or tube pan. Pour batter into pan. Bake 1 hour at 325 degrees.

Skillet Apple Pie (recipe from Trisha Yearwood)

*From the kitchen of Patricia Armstrong*

**Ingredients**
- 1 stick butter
- 1 c. brown sugar
- Two refrigerated ready-made pie crusts
- 1 can apple pie filling
- 1 tbsp. cinnamon
- 1 tbsp. sugar

**Directions**
Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a cast iron skillet, melt one stick of butter on top of the stove. Remove one tbsp. of butter to use later. Add brown sugar. Bring to a bubble and remove from heat. Lay in one of the ready-made pie crusts into the skillet. Pour one can of apple pie filling into the skillet. Sprinkle a little cinnamon and sugar on top. Then lay in the second pie crust and fold the edges inward. Cut four air vents into the top crust. Brush top of crust with the reserved melted butter. Sprinkle top of pie with cinnamon and sugar. Bake at 400 degrees for 30 minutes.

Let cool. Enjoy! Great with vanilla ice cream.

Fair Thank You!

What a great four days of the SM County Fair we had! Many thanks to those who helped staff the MG Table and helped with the judging in the 4-H building.

One of our MG Interns, Mary Sistrunk, who lives in Charles County had a better fair season than she ever anticipated! She said, “On a whim and suggestion from one of my Master Gardener intern friends, I entered four canned items from my vegetable garden. To my surprise, I won a 3rd, a 2nd, a 1st, and the Best of Show (for pickled peppers). What a surprise!!”
Our Vision: The Maryland Master Gardener vision is a healthier world through environmental stewardship.

Our Mission: to support the University of Maryland Extension mission by educating residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities.

---

**Book Recommendation**

This book is recommended by MG’s Bev Middleton and Suzanne Patterson. And it’s carried by our local library!

*Gardening for a Lifetime: How to Garden Wiser as You Grow Older* by Sydney Eddison

---

**Apps to check out!**

*MG Intern Cheryl Keney*

I read an article that had the top gardening apps according to the *New York Times*. I do not have them all but they are as follows:

- Rain harvest (free)
- GardenTracker (.99)
- HomeOutside ($2.99)
- Landscapers Companion ($5.99)
- Iveggiegarden ($9.99)
- Digmygarden ($2.99)
- Gardening for Iphone (.99)
- Growbuddy for Andriod ($3.57)
- Gardenate ($1.99)
- Leafsnap (free)

Thought they might be of interest to others, they were to me!”