I would like to thank the Board members for approving many diverse projects at the MGAA July 8 Board meeting to liquidate the remaining funds in our association bank account. One of the requests approved was for $4,000 to support the start-up costs for the Friends of the Pinellas Master Naturalist, Inc. The money will be used to file as a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization and to purchase office equipment. We received a thank you note from the Friends to MGAA:

Thank you tremendously for your support of our New Friends of the Pinellas Master Naturalist, Inc, 501c3. Your commitment to educating people about Florida’s ecosystems, flora and fauna, and conservation issues is commendable. We will use your donation to share science-based information about these ideas with youth and adults in our community, region and state. We greatly appreciate your assistance in our mission.

Sincerely, Friends of Pinellas Master Naturalists, Inc.

A check for $2000.00 representing the scholarship funds approved by the MGAA dissolution plan was presented to Greg Charles of PTEC on 7/24/2008. The PTEC Horticulture Department at the St. Petersburg Campus has been training students since 1976. Throughout the state, including The University of Florida, PTEC St. Pete is host to all of the green industry certifications, job prep programs and CEU’s for all certifications. The partnership between IFAS, our extension service and PTEC has been stellar. The continuing help of garden clubs and master gardeners provide scholarships for teaching people in the wonderful field of horticulture. During this economical downturn and high fuel costs, the scholarship funds will provide the boost that will help young people enter our wonderful industry.

More MGAA donations on next page.
We are especially appreciative of staff, MGs, and others who contribute articles, events, and other items of interest to *The Green Leaf* each month. Please submit your input by the 20th of each month. This will help us assemble and publish the newsletter in a timely manner. Also, to save mailing costs, please limit your articles to 700-800 words or less. Limited newsletter space does not allow for full photograph viewing. If you would like a copy of any photograph presented in the newsletters, please contact me @ 727-582-2117.

**Chuck Scaffidi**
MG Editor

*The Green Leaf* is published by Pinellas County Extension for the County Master Gardeners and depends on submission of articles from Master Gardeners, Extension Staff and other authors.

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*The Green Leaf* is available on line by clicking on newsletter at: [http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/master_gardener/index.shtml](http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/master_gardener/index.shtml)

MGAA approved a $250 donation to the City of St. Petersburg’s City Beautiful Commission. Our donation will support a program that recognizes the importance of beautification as a component of the overall quality of the City of St. Petersburg.

*On behalf of the City of St. Petersburg’s City Beautiful Commission, I wish to express our sincere appreciation for the generous donation of $250 from you and the Master Gardeners of Pinellas County. Your kind donation will help insure the continuing success of the City Beautiful Awards Program. If you and the Master Gardeners would like a guided tour of the Kopsick Palm Arboretum, please contact me and we shall be glad to accommodate your group.*

*Thank you again for your donation.*

Sincerely,

**PHILLIP J. STAGER**
Chairman
City Beautiful Commission

MGs Freda Dexter left and Natalie Oliver at right. Center Phillip Stager receiving MGAA check from Chuck Scaffidi. MGAA chair. Taken at the Kopsick Palm Arboretum in St Petersburg

Master Gardeners Advisory Association is registered on GoodSearch. MGAA receives a direct donation every time supporters use GoodSearch to search the Internet! Please go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) At about 1 cent a hit, GoodSearch is earning MGAA money. We have earned $21 since inception. Come on, join in and try this search engine. Most of you probably use Google. Yahoo’s search engine also seems to be adequate.

The first time you use it you need to sign in as *Master Gardener Advisory Association*. If you need help call Chuck at 727-582-2117. ■
Plant of the Month in our FBG
By JAMES STEVENSON, Public Education Specialist, FBG

Goutystalk Nettlespurge
_Jatropha podagrica_

With over 4,000 different types of plants in the Gardens to choose from, it is often difficult to choose just one to write about. Sometimes inspiration can be found right under one’s nose. Such was the case for this month’s plant, the Goutystalk Nettlespurge, or _Jatropha podagrica_.

This plant is found in several areas of the garden and sports bright orange flowers year-round. The muse for this article is found growing right outside my office window, where I have enjoyed the parade of pollinators it attracts. Late this winter I was surprised to see a ruby-throated hummingbird sipping nectar from the nettlespurge flowers. Later in the season, common swallow-tailed butterflies stopped-by for a sip. Most recently this plant has been feeding zebra longwing butterflies, a species that is not as common as it once was, despite being the state butterfly of Florida.

Nettlespurge is related to the other spurge, in the Euphorbiaceae family. This family includes poinsettia, and castor bean; both of whose toxicity is well-known. Therefore it is safe to assume the characteristic white latex sap in the nettlespurge should best be avoided. Some members of the Euphorbiaceae have such toxic sap, that just a drop in the eye can cause blindness. Others have photo-reactive sap that causes blistering if the sap, on bare skin, is exposed to sunlight.

So what is good about it? This very “funky” plant has an interesting growth habit, slowly growing to 4’, forming a swollen trunk (or a “gouty stalk”), and sporting large, lobed, peltate (like an umbrella or dollarweed leaf) leaves. The leaves are slightly silvery underneath, and are produced year-round. This plant is evergreen, and as mentioned before, always in flower. The flowers are small, but held in bright orange clusters, visible from quite a distance.

Like other members of the family, the seeds are explosively expelled, and seedlings might be found some distance from the parent plant. For this reason, we do not recommend growing nettlespurge anywhere near a natural area, so as not to introduce this plant.

In the wild, nettlespurge occurs naturally in Central America where it grows in arid environments. This makes it quite adapted to our climate and sandy soils, not needing any supplemental watering. We have found this plant at home in both full sun and full shade situations. ■
Florida Botanical Gardens Report
By Mary Campbell, Extension Director

High-Profile Visits: In June, the Gardens were visited by Commissioners Seel and Latvala on separate occasions. Both expressed glowing reports on the quality of the Gardens. Bob Albanese, the Maintenance Team and all the Garden Volunteers deserve a big pat on the back for getting the Gardens in shape for summer.

Garden Maintenance: Now that the rains have arrived, the weeds have had their signal to JUMP! Just as the newly planted areas are beginning to look their best, the summer ritual of weed-control has begun. We are thankful to have the services of County Spray Tech Katie Robertson, who comes twice a week to help with weed control across the entire property. Katie’s vast knowledge of native plants allows her to control weeds in the Natural Area, and she keeps an eye out for rare and unusual wildflowers as she patrols the property.

Several Queen Palms have been removed from the Gardens, as they fell victim to one of the “new” palm diseases sweeping the County. Commercial Horticulture Agent Jane Morse has been writing on this subject in various publications, and helping landscapers identify these threats. As the Gardens continue to develop as a Florida-Friendly showroom, we will have the opportunity to interpret what makes a plant Florida-Friendly—disease resistance being one factor.

Children’s Trail: A work order has been submitted for the concrete platform that will support the binocular station of the Children’s Trail. This will be located at the north end of the GCMA pond. It is hoped that the County’s roving crew will be able to get this on their schedule in the coming weeks.

Education: The Garden Explorers’ Discovery Backpacks have been a great hit this summer among our younger visitors. Several larger groups have also taken advantage of the backpacks to entertain and educate summer camp groups that have chosen the Gardens as a great place to bring their campers. Sustainability Educator James Stevenson has been giving short conservation-themed tours for the participants of this year’s Heritage Village Summer Camp.

FBG educational/promotional materials are now available in a pamphlet dispenser that will remain outside the Gift Shop. Garden maps, membership brochures, newsletters, etc. may be made available from this dispenser. It is asked that the Foundation makes sure to keep this dispenser filled with any materials specific to the Foundation (membership forms, donations information, newsletters, etc.)

A new FBG video is in production to replace the version created in 2000. This video will highlight the Florida-Friendly practices and plants available to view by the public. This video will be produced by Pinellas County Communications, and will be available on the web, on PCCTV, and on DVD.

NOTES FROM YOUR MG LIBRARY
Books on the Shelves
By ANGELA STRAIN, MG

The vast assortment of books on the shelves in the Landscape Design/Construction category, might come in handy as reference for those of you taking the Florida Friendly Landscape Design classes.

- A History of Garden Design, Clifford, 1963
- All About Landscaping, Cotton, 1980
- Classic Garden Design, Verey, 1989
- Fundamentals of Landscape & Site Planning, Root, 1985
- Garden Design, Crowe, 1959
- Garden-Making, Bailey, 1919
- Greenhouses & Garden Rooms, Martin, 1988
- How to Build Fences & Gates, Vandervort, 1972
- How to Plan your Own Home Landscape, Weber, 1965
- Landscape Management, Griffin, 1970
- Landscaping & the Small Garden, Dietz, 1973
- Landscaping with Ornamental Grasses, Gilsenan, 2002
- Landscaping Your Home, Morris, 1974
- Monet’s Passion, Murray, 1989
- New Forms of the Garden, Sullivan, 1986
- Patio Roofs & Gazebos, Vandervort, 2002
- Perennial Gardens, Williamson, 1988
- The English Garden, Plumptre, 1993
- The Landscape We See, Eckbo, 1969
- The Outdoor Room, Stevens, 1994
- Trellises Arbors & Pergolas, Johnston, 2004
- Urban Landscape Design, Eckbo, 1964
Thanks from the Foundation…We Appreciate You!
By DIANNE WHEATLEY-GIOLOTTI, FBGF Chair

The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation, Inc. (FBGF) values every Master Gardener that continuously contributes to the enhancement of the Florida Botanical Gardens. We value this partnership to keep the gardens growing with you, Extension, Pinellas County, and the private sector for the enjoyment and education of the public. We invite you to become a member of the FBGF or renew your membership in the FBGF. Membership forms are available in the Botanical Bounty gift shop or on line at www.flbg.org/foundation.htm.

We invite you to visit the Botanical Bounty gift shop for that unique gift for a special person including yourself. Foundation members get a 10% discount on all purchases.

We invite you to permanently recognize someone by buying a garden paver, a leaf on the Botanica – Omega Tree in the extension lobby, or a garden bench. Donation forms are available in the Botanical Bounty gift shop.

We invite you to learn more about FBGF by attending a monthly board meeting of your choosing. Our next meeting is Wednesday September 10 from 9 AM to 10:30 AM in the Gardenia Room. Currently we are filling vacant Board positions for the fiscal year starting on October 1. Board members make collective decisions as to how the Foundation can assist financially in the development of the Gardens. If you are interested in serving, please send a brief resume to Barbara Goss, Nominating Committee Chair, roboflo@aol.com; or leave your resume in the file folder for the FBGF chair in the MG volunteer office. Chuck Scaffidi is the Master Gardener liaison to the FBGF board. Many of the FBGF board members are Master Gardeners.

We invite you to join a Foundation standing committee (Development; Gift Shop; Grounds; Marketing; Policies; and Nominating) or a projects committee (Children’s Trail; Inspiration Garden; Garden Lights). Non board members are active volunteers with these standing and project committees. We are grateful for the contributions of your talented members in moving the Children’s Trail project to completion. Your financial contribution of $2000 to this project is a bonus.

A cadre of dedicated volunteers is even more crucial to the Florida Botanical Gardens’ success particularly when local governments are operating under mandated fiscal constraints. To help fill this funding void, the FBGF will keep the gardens lighted this holiday season by hiring a contractor to hang the beautiful lights heretofore hung by county staff. Please check your mail box to see how you can help to keep the lights on this year.

The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation (FBGF), a 501 (c) (3) corporation. It was established in 2003 to secure funding for future expansion of the Gardens that opened in 2000. Pinellas County maintains the facility. The FBGF provides project support for the Gardens through memberships, a botanically orientated gift shop, donations, memorials, and proceeds from special events. The FBGF actively promotes awareness of the Gardens to Tampa Bay area residents and visitors.

A Gift for the Children’s Trail
This past month MGAA Treasurer Linda Barnette, presented a $2,000 check to the FBGF Chair Dianne Wheatley-Giolotti for the Children’s Trail.

Pictured left to right: Pat Dieterich, Gail Rasmussen, Chuck Scaffidi, Linda Barnette, Dianne Wheatley-Giolotti, Alicia Chivers, Cindy Peacock and Betty Lipe.
Deadly New Diseases Are Killing Our Palms
By Jane Morse, University of Florida/IFAS Pinellas County Extension Agent

There is a new killer in our landscapes and it is called Texas Phoenix Palm Decline. This new disease is caused by a phytoplasma (a type of bacteria that lacks a cell wall). It is very similar to the phytoplasma that causes another fatal disease in palms: lethal yellowing. Lethal yellowing may also be coming into our area.

Texas Phoenix Palm Decline (TPPD) was first discovered in late 2006 in the Ruskin/Apollo Beach area. Phoenix palms were showing symptoms that were very similar to lethal yellowing. Upon further study, a totally new and different organism was found that was causing these symptoms in the palms. TPPD had arrived on our shores from Texas.

Initially, the palm species affected by this disease were the Phoenix species, specifically P. canariensis (Canary Island date), P. dactylifera (date palm), P. sylvestris (silver date palm) and Syagrus romanzoffiana (queen palm). A devastating new PRELIMINARY finding is that it is now also affecting our state tree, the Sabal palmetto (Sabal palm).

The first obvious symptom of this disease on mature palms is a premature drop of most or all fruits (assuming the fruit stalks have not been removed and the palm is old enough to produce fruit). Death of the flowers also occurs.

Secondly, a discoloration of the foliage beginning with the oldest (lowest) fronds is seen. The fronds do not turn yellow (or only briefly) but quickly turn varying shades of reddish-brown to dark brown or gray. This discoloration begins at the leaflet tips. This symptom can also be confused with other palm problems such as nutrient deficiency or Ganoderma butt rot (another deadly disease). There will also be a greater number of dead fronds on a palm than would be normal. When less than one-third of the oldest fronds have discolored and died, the spear leaf (newest frond) dies. If palms are being regularly trimmed, this early symptom will not be seen because these fronds would have already been removed. It is the fronds below the horizontal line of the canopy (9 and 3 o’clock) that would be the first indicator fronds.

ALWAYS REMEMBER: Palms should never be pruned above the 9 and 3 o'clock position.

Once the spear leaf dies, no more fronds will be produced and the palm is essentially dead. The remaining fronds will continue to discolor from oldest to youngest and die. Usually, by the time the spear leaf has died, the roots of the palm at or near the soil surface are unusually soft in texture and easily broken. The palm can be easily rocked back and forth in the ground because the root system is rotting. This is now a hazardous palm that can easily topple over.

If the spear leaf has not died yet, the disease can be treated with the antibiotic oxytetracycline HCl (OTC). Injections of this antibiotic will be needed every four months. This antibiotic treatment can also be used preventively to protect palms when this disease, or lethal yellowing, is known to occur in the area. For a self-administered, on-going prevention program the cost based on treating less than 5 trees would be approximately $4.00/tree per treatment. This is based on an ongoing program, the reuse of needles and syringes, and utilizing the casing for 2 treatments. This does not include the cost for drills, drill bits, labor, insurance, etc. The above prices are approximate costs for the OTC and casings only. This antibiotic can be obtained from: www.palmtreesaver.com

If the spear leaf is dead, the palm should be removed as soon as possible.
Positive diagnosis must be confirmed by a laboratory test. For sampling and mailing instructions, see this document at: [http://flrec.ifas.ufl.edu/pdfs/LY-TPPD-Trunk-Sampling.pdf](http://flrec.ifas.ufl.edu/pdfs/LY-TPPD-Trunk-Sampling.pdf)

A second deadly new disease to hit our area is the Fusarium Decline of queen palms and Mexican fan palms.

Symptoms of this fungal disease on queen palms begin on the oldest 2 to 3 fronds which turn brown but do not break or hang down. The next 2 to 3 younger fronds will turn varying shades of yellow and then brown. This will continue up the canopy until the entire palm canopy is brown. As the fronds are dying, there will be a brown stripe on the rachis (frond stem). Initially, there may also be one-sided death of the frond, with leaflets on one side of the frond turning brown while the leaflets on the other side are still green. The palm dies within a few months of infection.

Symptoms on Mexican fan palms also follow this same general pattern. However, be aware that Mexican fan palms can get a petiole blight disease that is not normally fatal and is different from the Fusarium decline which is always fatal. Only a laboratory test can determine which disease is present.

Palms with Fusarium decline should be removed immediately and the canopy destroyed. There is no cure once a palm is infected, and no preventive fungicide treatment is recommended. The disease is probably spread by wind into new sites and could also be spread by contaminated pruning tools. Always make sure pruning tools are sterilized after each palm is trimmed or use a new saw blade.

All you can do at this point is to keep a sharp eye on your palms, stop trimming them so you can see early symptoms, and keep your fingers crossed that we don't lose all of our palms to new and old diseases.

For more information contact the Extension Service Horticulture Helpline Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, 9 AM to noon and 1 to 4 PM, by calling 582-2110. Or visit the office M-F, 8 AM to 5 PM. You can see a narrated presentation about TPPD at: [http://pinellascountyextension.org](http://pinellascountyextension.org) (select the commercial horticulture link). The presentation is located in a box on the right-hand side of the page that says 'presentations'. You can also visit (Google) the Ft. Lauderdale Research and Education website and follow the links to palm diseases.

Information and pictures for this article were provided by Dr. Monica Elliott, Plant Pathologist, University of Florida/IFAS, Ft. Lauderdale Research and Education Center.
**MG Advisory Association, Chuck Scaffidi, Chair**

A general MGAA membership meeting was held on July 8, 2008. The minutes of the meeting were E-mailed to all MGs as a record for closure of MGAA. Also, a board meeting was held following the vote to dissolve to liquidate our assets before official closure December 31, 2008. Many projects were approved to do this. As we close them we will highlight them in the *Green Leaf* and I plan to hold another Board meeting in November to go over our financial status at that time. Remember all bills must be submitted for payment by the end of November.

**Allen Cordell’s Retirement Open House**

Thursday, August 21 from 4-6pm at Extension. Please RSVP to Jean Field at (727) 582-2504 or email jfield@pinellascounty.org if you plan on attending.

Refreshments will be served. Bring a happy memory or story to share.

**August MG Update**

Friday, August 8. from 10-11:30AM in Magnolia Room

Jean Murphy, Wildlife Biologist, will be talking about urban coyotes. **Don’t forget - bring in your plants for the Plant Exchange!** These exchanges have been very successful and we plan to continue them.

**Looking Ahead - September MG Update**

Monday, Sept 15 at 9:30 -3:30

Citrus 101. Steve Futch, PhD UF Citrus Specialist, will be presenting citrus culture, variety and diseases in the Magnolia Room. Get hands on training with assorted specimens. This is part of this year’s MG training and all MGs are invited. This takes the place of the September 8 update.

**Free Butterfly Gardening Class**

Want a butterfly-friendly environment in the yard? Already have some butterflies in the yard but want to attract more? Join MG Adrienne Andrews to hear more about welcoming these beautiful insects. Participants may attend either the 2PM or 6:30PM session on Wednesday, August 13 at the Crystal Beach Community Hall, 517 Crystal Beach Ave. Admission is free, but space is limited. Call Extension at (727) 582-2673 to reserve a seat.

**From the Herb Garden Team - Walking Plants?**

Master Gardeners, we ask for your help in assisting us. The potted herbs in the area behind the herb garden are needed to replenish the herb garden on a regular basis. We have noticed that some herb plants are disappearing. Please pass this on to those you work with so everyone understands the importance of this.

**A Message from MG Marie Singer**

The Dirty Half Dozen: Six Insects That Are Harmful To Vegetable Gardens: In the past year, more people have decided to raise their own vegetables for a great number of reasons. The upsurge of first-time vegetable gardeners is quite noticeable. They have a hard time deciding what is a beneficial insect, and what insects will do their gardens harm. Here are six different insects that you do not want hanging around your vegetables. We will call them The Dirty Half Dozen. Read more at: http://davesgarden.com/guides/articles/view/1341/

If you haven't yet discovered Dave's Garden, get ready to be amazed at all it has to offer a gardener! The photography in the article is very well done in beautiful color. It also includes how to get rid of each noxious critter.
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS

For August & September

- Native Plant Landscape Tour
- Compost & Raised Beds

An Invitation from Bob Albanese

We are having a GRAND OPENING/COMPLETION PIG OUT for the new deck being constructed south of the building near the entrance. The date is set for September 4th 2008. It will be an event in the tradition of the Thursday’s Group PIG OUT. Please plan on stopping by for a bit and bring a dish or dessert to share (or not). There is a sign up sheet in the employee lounge to the right of the candy machine. Lunch usually starts around 11:30ish and continues till we cannot eat any more. There will be a charcoal BBQ available if you want to bring something to cook on the grill. Hope to see you there! This is a rain or shine event! (The Magnolia Room is reserved as an alternate in case of rain.)

Update from Children’s Trail Committee Meeting

The Children’s Trail Committee met July 28th. Great progress has been made in a number of areas. Specifically, the illustrations for the signs are complete and are being sent to the sign maker. The frames for the signs have arrived, and the brochure design has been sent to the printer. Plans are underway for a Grand Opening to coincide with the opening of Market in the Park on November 1st. Stay tuned for more details!

Next meeting: Monday, September 8, 10:30-12pm in the Orchid Room
Committee Members: Dianne Wheatley-Giolotti, Mary Campbell, Vivian Haicken, Betty Lipe, Cindy Peacock, Chuck Scaffidi, Pat Dieterich, Bob Albanese, Andy Bergeron and Bobbie Jones.

Volunteers Needed for Second Annual Native Plant Landscape Tour

Pam has approved this for MG volunteer hours. The Florida Native Plant Society – Pinellas Chapter is looking for Master Gardeners to volunteer to help with the native plant landscape tour. This year there will be two tours.

- The south county tour will have 8 yards and will be on Saturday, September 20th from 8 am – 12:30 pm.
- The north county tour will have 6 yards and will be on Sunday, September 21st. from 1 – 4 pm.

Volunteers can choose to help at one of these half-day tours (or both). The Chapter will need volunteers to assist with answering questions about native plants, the particular landscape that you are assigned, and to educate tour participants about the benefits of using Florida native plants in home landscapes. The benefit of volunteering for this tour will be that you will be able to learn more about Florida native plants and their uses in landscaping. If you are interested in helping with the tour or would like more information, please contact Jim McGinity at (727) 733-2928.

Help Needed in Composting and Raised Vegetable Bed Areas!

Volunteers are needed to work in the composting and raised vegetable bed demo areas on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Contact John Kingsbury 727-569-6409, Pam 727-582-2112 or Carol 727-582-2124 to let them know if you are interested in this volunteer activity. You might get to take home some wonderful compost!
By PAM BROWN, Urban Horticulture Extension Agent

August always promises to be hot – but I was in Philadelphia visiting my daughter in July and it was hotter there! Remember, if you are working outside, wear sunscreen, a hat, and drink lots of water. You are very important to us!

The new Master Gardener class starts this month on August 6th. Please greet any new faces that you see and make them feel welcome. There are 30 in this class.

August marks the month that Michael Pettay moves from Horticulture to Distance Education. He will still be using his extensive horticulture knowledge, but in a different way. He will be helping to move much of our educational programming to a web-based format. This does not mean that our traditional methods of education will be replaced – we will still provide programs and other educational outreach as we have always done. This additional web outreach is an enhancement to attract those who like to get information from the Internet.

I know that there are rumors out there about what is happening to Extension and the MG volunteer program. Please, please, come to me with things that you hear or need answers to – I almost always know the answer or know where to find it. Change is never easy, but we can all make the best of it, if we work together. We need Master Gardeners more than ever to keep Extension the great service it has always been. Together, we can do great things.

For the crews working in the gardens, we are working on a way for you to get directions when you need it. We hope to have a listing on the bulletin board that will show who to go to with questions about each garden area. We will not be able to have horticulturists outside on a regular basis – there are just not enough left. We hope that you will feel comfortable working more independently. There will always be a horticulturist available to answer your questions or to give advice.

We so appreciate all that you do for us. Thanks you so much,

♥ Pam

SAFETY NET

By PAM BROWN
Urban Horticulture Extension Agent

Is there anything consumers can do at home to reduce the risk of Salmonella infection?

- When selecting fruits and vegetables at the market do not pick damaged produce, avoid selecting those that are too soft or have translucent skin. Even though Salmonella and E. coli O157:H7 do not cause produce decay, damaged vegetable are more likely to also contain these human pathogens. Avoid picking fruits and greens that are soiled.

- Store your produce dry in a cool place. While storing at cooler temperatures does not consistently reduce any potential contamination, it helps to prevent pathogens from multiplying.

- Never soak your vegetables in water. This may increase the chance that any bacteria present on the surface may infiltrate into the inner tissues.

- Fruits and vegetables that have been minimally processed (i.e. thoroughly washed and brushed, cut, sliced, peeled, lightly cooked, etc) should be stored refrigerated and only for a limited time.

- Clean your refrigerator. Regularly wipe refrigerator shelves and crispers with a household cleaner.

Safety Net continues on page 11.

28th Annual
MASTER GARDENER
CONTINUED TRAINING CONFERENCE
Monday, October 20– Wednesday, October 22
Coral Springs Marriott Hotel, Golf Club & Convention Center
Coral Springs, Florida

Dear Master Gardeners,
I am very excited to let you know about the 28th Annual Master Gardener Continued Training Conference to be held October 20-22nd. This year’s conference will be in the Ft. Lauderdale area and will be held at the Marriott Coral Springs Hotel. We are putting a great program together for you. Visit our website to view the agenda and to get registration information. I hope to see you in October for a fun and educational event.

http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/gardener/index.html

Sincerely,
Tom Wichman
Florida Master Gardener Coordinator
Safety Net continued:

- Washing produce is an important way to remove some contamination on the surface of fruits and vegetables. Thoroughly washing produce in warm water with common detergents reduces, but does completely eliminate bacteria on surfaces of tomatoes.

- When washing fruits and vegetables at home, consumers should make sure that detergents are food-grade, are approved by FDA for this purpose and do not contain any harmful chemicals. Fruits and vegetables should be washed under clean running warm water. Do not wash your vegetables or fruits in bleach solutions: they are not considered safe for consumption.

- Wash fruits and vegetables immediately prior to eating them. Washing removes fruits' natural protective wax coating and brushing will abrade the skin. This will reduce the shelf life of produce and create potential routes for contamination. Beware that washing is not likely to remove *Salmonella* or other human bacterial pathogens that may have gotten inside. Washing is only modestly effective in removing pathogens from vegetables with rough surfaces (cantaloupes, strawberries, broccoli, cauliflower, etc).

- When slicing tomatoes, cut out the stem scar, the corky area on top of a tomato fruit that was attached to the stem. Studies using artificial contamination show that after tomatoes are picked, and soaked in a suspension containing *Salmonella*, the stem scar appears to contain higher numbers of bacteria.

- When preparing fruits and vegetables at home, avoid cross-contamination by separating fruits and vegetables from meats, poultry, seafood, and those vegetables (potatoes, leeks, etc) and cucurbits (melons, squash) that are normally soiled.

For complete document:
http://www.solutionsforyourlife.org/hot_topics/families_and_consumers/salmonella_QandA.doc
Reminder

- MG Update Meeting
  Friday, August 8, 10-11:30AM
  Jeanne Murphy, Wildlife Biologist