

# HORTICULTURE TIPS FOR WARD COUNTY, TX

A bi-monthly newsletter for gardeners January/February 2021



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## General Gardening Tips

- Keep a gardening journal. The calendar is a great place to do this. Record date and amount of rainfall, date you plant something and keep the labels that tell you how each plant is cared for and its name. This will help you avoid repeating past mistakes.
- Plan before you shop. Prepare a scale drawing of your garden so you won't spend extra money on plants you don't need.
- When laying out a new bed or design in your garden, use a water hose or long orange extension cord to lay out the design.
- Check out companion planting. There are plants that replenish nutrients lost by another and some combinations even keep bugs away.
- If your space is limited, go vertical. Squash, cucumbers, and melons can all be grown on trellises.

- Research succession planting. You may be able to grow several crops in the same space over the growing season.
- Start tomato and pepper seeds indoors in January.
- Start herb seeds cilantro, dill, fennel, and parsley February 14.
- When trimming back grasses or flowering shrubs, use a bungee cord wrapped around the plant to gather the stems.
- Once the biggest part of the plant is trimmed, you can perform further cuts to achieve the shape you desire.
- Add a drop of food coloring to your dry rain gauge. After the next rain, the water level will be easy to read.

Excerpted from the Permian Basin Master Gardener website -

<https://www.westtexasgardening.org/copy-of-resources> Retrieved 12-31-20



## The Herb Corner-

***Growing and Using Herbs*** - Check out this article by Permian Basin Master Gardener & herb enthusiast Barbara Porsch. You will wish you already had some herbs in a pot!

[https://00160b1d-a065-4860-aa93-af6c717cd660.filesusr.com/ugd/bb4a59\\_0cf142d619d943b6bf84e057ebe8f27f.pdf](https://00160b1d-a065-4860-aa93-af6c717cd660.filesusr.com/ugd/bb4a59_0cf142d619d943b6bf84e057ebe8f27f.pdf)



## Texas farmers grow Christmas cheer with poinsettias

WACO, Texas Christmas trees, holly, mistletoe, poinsettias—so many of our Christmas traditions are rooted in agriculture. Literally. And we're lucky to live in a state with diverse agricultural production. Texas farmers grow Christmas trees and poinsettias in addition to our traditional crops like corn, wheat and cotton.

Did you know about 150 Texas farmers grow 200,000 Christmas trees annually? That's right. So when you gather 'round the tree on Christmas morning, you may be celebrating beneath the boughs of a Texas-grown pine.

And what's prettier than poinsettias in dreary December weather? Poinsettias are a popular gift among neighbors, friends, and loved ones in November and December— for good reason. The bright red and dark green leaves bring a pop of color and living touch of holiday cheer to homes and businesses.

Once again, Texas growers are help bring you that festive foliage. One facility in East Texas grows around 1 million poinsettias annually, with many other nurseries and greenhouses across the state also busy growing the plants and other seasonal ornamental plants.

Although poinsettias may seem finicky, Texas grower Nolan Jeske says they are actually pretty easy to care for. Here is his advice on keeping your poinsettias looking perky all season long.

- Poinsettias do not like cold and are sensitive to temperature fluctuations. Keep them in a warm spot away from doors and drafty windows.
- Do not overwater! This is the most common mistake poinsettia owners make. If it has one, take the plant out of the foil wrapper surrounding the pot before watering. Allow the water to completely drain before placing it back in the foil.
- They need plenty of sunlight. Bright, indirect light is best. Aim for at least eight hours a day.

While Christmas decorations are a sight to behold, nothing is more beautiful than a family enjoying the holidays together. We hope your family enjoys a safe and happy holiday season!

—Jennifer Dorsett, Field Editor, Texas Farm Bureau

Excerpted from Morning Ag Clips December 5, 2019  
<https://www.morningagclips.com/texas-farmers-grow-christmas-cheer-with-poinsettias/>

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