

COMPOSTING

Benefit your garden and reduce the amount of trash you send to the landfill by making your own compost, with or without the assistance of worms.

Master Gardeners give classes in both types of composting; call or email our hotline for details. Information and composting videos can be found at <http://www.uccemg.com/>

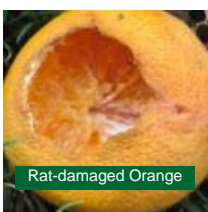
The City of Irvine website explains both composting and vermiculture (worm composting): <http://www.cityofirvine.us/howtocompost.php>

RATS

Nobody wants them, but nearly everyone has them. They are particularly annoying and frustrating when they eat your home-grown fruit and tomatoes. What can you do?



Control their food sources! Rats prefer to eat snails, dry dog food, and bird seeds/nuts more than your produce, so eliminate snails by baiting with an iron phosphate product; never leave pet food outdoors overnight; and manage your birdfeeders so as not to leave seeds/nuts on the ground overnight. If you do all this, rats may conclude that your garden is not worth bothering with.



After all those measures, if you still see evidence of rats, then set traps or bait to lower rat populations. Orange County Vector Control can help you. They will come to your home and inspect it to be sure that rats cannot get inside. They will also

hang bait stations if necessary. There is no charge for this service.

<http://www.ocvcd.org/index.php>

To learn more about rats, read our Rat PestNote:

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PDF/PESTNOTES/index.html>

RESOURCES FOR GARDENERS

Our public website at www.uccemg.com is up and running! More gardening information is being added every day. We have videos, free downloadable information, and all manner of garden information specific to Orange County.

The Agricultural & Natural Resources website offers garden publications with information on home orchards, lawns, weeds, drip irrigation, and insects. Many can be downloaded free; others can be ordered through the ANR Catalogue at:

<http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu>

California Master Gardener Handbook, *Home Orchard*, and *Pests of Landscape Trees and Shrubs* are all highly recommended books that can be ordered through the ANR catalogue.

LOCATE AN ARBORIST

To find a certified arborist, visit our website at: <http://www.uccemg.com> — >General Gardening — >Arborist. You're invited to add your comments about your favorite arborist on that page.

You can also visit: <http://www.treesaregood.com> for more tree information and to verify arborist certification.

Most established tree service companies have arborists on their staff.

SOIL TESTING

You can purchase a soil test kit at many retail garden centers and do the testing yourself or send a soil sample to a testing laboratory. For information on soil test kits and testing laboratories, call or email our hotline or visit our website at

<http://www.uccemg.com> —> Soils/Fertilizers/Compost—>Soil

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENERS
OF ORANGE COUNTY



Master Gardener Hotline Summer Brochure 2011

Information for Home Gardeners
from our Garden Hotline



Contact our Master Gardener Hotline
for free help with gardening questions:

Hotline Phone: (714) 708-1646

Hotline Email: hotline@uccemg.com

Master Gardener Website

<http://www.uccemg.com>



Tomatoes continue to be one of the most popular crops for the home gardener. Our hotline questions so far this year indicate that Blight diseases seem to be common this year, probably as a result of our wet winter.

If you think that your tomato plants might have a blight, check out the pictures of blighted plants at:



http://www.longislandhort.cornell.edu/vegpath/photos/lateblight_tomato.htm



Blossom end rot results from a low level of calcium in the fruit and water balance in the plant. It is aggravated by high soil

salt content or low soil moisture. Try to ensure that the root zone neither dries out nor remains saturated.

Nematodes can cause tomato plants to decline in health for no apparent reason; roots have nodules. If you have been planting tomatoes in the same location for several years, try a different location.



VEGETABLES

New to vegetable gardening?

For *Vegetable Garden Basics*, visit:

<http://ucanr.org/sites/gardenweb/General/>

For information on all aspects of vegetable gardening:

www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/GARDEN/veggies.html

To learn about tomato pests and diseases and for tips on growing tomatoes, visit:

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/GARDEN/VEGES/tomato.html>

VEGETABLES FOR WINTER

August and September are the best months to sow winter vegetable seeds, such as beet, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, carrot, cauliflower, celery, endive, garlic, kale, kohlrabi, leek, head and leaf lettuce, onion, pea, radish, spinach, Swiss chard and turnip. Just about any of these can be put in as transplants later in September or October. Check this link for information on individual plants:

http://vric.ucdavis.edu/main/veg_info.htm

LAWNS & GROUND COVERS

We continue to receive hotline questions on replacing lawns with more drought-tolerant alternatives. **Whether you need information on lawns or on alternatives to lawns, our hotline is ready to provide you with answers to your specific questions, so don't hesitate to call or email us.**

To investigate alternatives to lawns, visit:

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

For in-depth information on each type of grass and its characteristics

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/TURFSPECIES/index.html>. This is part of an excellent UCCE website

on turf grasses:

If you must have a lawn, Bermuda, St. Augustine, and Zoysia grasses are more drought-tolerant and commonly recommended for our area. For information on lawn care, visit:

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/>



FRUIT TREES

Information about growing a variety of backyard fruits, and identifying common problems of fruit trees can be found at:

<http://homeorchard.ucdavis.edu>

<http://ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/GARDEN/fruit.html>

For information on unusual fruits, take a look at the California Rare Fruit Growers website at:

<http://crfg.org/>

<http://crfg.org/pubs/frtfacts.html>

FRUIT TREE IRRIGATION

More trees are lost to over-irrigating than probably to any other cause and at a time of severe water shortages, over-watering is particularly bad. Over-irrigation combined with poor drainage can lead to tree death.

Check the website below for detailed irrigation information and be sure to keep your fruit trees adequately mulched to conserve water.

<http://homeorchard.ucdavis.edu/>

[The Big Picture/Irrigation/](#)

Fireblight on pear trees and apple trees generated a number of hotline questions last summer. If a twig or branch on your tree appears to have been hit by a blow-torch, be sure to look at the following website for advice:



<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7414.html>



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