

Ask The Plant Groom™ by Dale Groom, The Plant Groom™

For: QA1061

Hello Dale,

Last year you gave a list of tomatoes suited for Texas. I have lost my list and forgotten what you recommended. Will you please send me the list for our area and suggestions for planting? I live in Sand Flat north of Tyler where as you might guess we have very deep sandy soil. - P. S.

In thoroughly improved clay soils of North, Central and West Texas or sandy soils in East Texas the following varieties do well; 444, Celebrity, Carnival, Porter and Roma.

Plant your selections in soils that are amended with 6" of organic matter in full sun locations and have good air movement. Now is a great time to plant.

Dale,

Can you tell me what flowers are good for attracting bees? In my garden last year I had almost no squash and someone said I probably did not have many bees to pollinate the blooms. My husband hates honeysuckle so what else would be good. I live in Central Texas near Temple.

Thanks so much. - M. C.

Bees and other flying insects as well as the wind help to pollinate squash and other plants.

Hollies and Abelias are two of my favorite blooming shrubs. Additional plants bees like include; Redbud, Sunflower, Mint, Black-eyed Susan, Cosmos, Thickweed, Majoram, Rosemary, Basil, Clover, Apple, Goldenrod, Pumpkin, Blackberry, Cucumber and ... Squash.

To attract a bee population these garden workers need shelter and nectar sources. Be Earth Kind in your utilizations of pest control aids. Most aids that control flying insects will impact bees.

Dale,

I have had what appear to be wild strawberries growing in my year for years; I call them wild because I have never planted strawberry plants,

as we don't eat them. The plant foliage is exactly like a regular strawberry plant but the fruit is very small, about 1/4" -1/2" in diameter. The tiny fruit is very dry, but is red and had seeds just as a regular strawberry. The plants are impossible to kill, so I have given up and have potted the plants for the birds and squirrels around my house. My question is, is there any way to fertilize or enhance the fruit so as to be larger and more like real strawberries?

Thanks, - C. W.

P.S. I wrote to you last year about squash rotting on the vine. I have made my garden bigger this year and in an area where the air flow is better. I have a lot of bees around and hopefully they will work my garden for me.

I have always had a small and/or potted garden because of a pot-bellied yard pig (who is no longer here with me) that liked the vegetables more than we.

The wild strawberry plants you are inquiring about are considered broadleaf weeds and are not a true fruit strawberry. Weed control aids containing the active ingredient Trimec should control wild strawberries and other broadleaf weeds in your lawn. If you decide to use these products always read and follow label directions.

Growing wild strawberries or any other plants as cultivated selections is an individual choice. There is no cultural activity I'm familiar with that will make these fruits ... better.

I wish you well with your squash plantings this season. Please let me know your results.

Dale's Notes

It's time to:

- Plant cucumbers, tomatoes, squash, peppers of all types, eggplants, black-eyed, crowder, purple hull, crème and other Southern peas, corn and other frost/freeze sensitive veggies.
- Plant spring/summer annuals
- Test your soil for nutrients. You may send me your request for a FREE Soil Test Kit. To secure one send your request plus a self addressed, long envelope with two 1<sup>st</sup> class stamps on it to; Soil Test Kit, Dale Groom, 10056 Marsh Lane, Suite B-101, Dallas, TX 75229.
- Service your mower

Dale Groom, Extension Horticulturist-Dallas County, Texas Cooperative Extension, Native Texan, Author, Columnist, Radio/TV Host is also known state wide as The Plant Groom™. Send your lawn, garden and landscape questions to Dale at [dalegroom@mycvc.net](mailto:dalegroom@mycvc.net).

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