



**April 2009**

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**Newsletter Editorial Staff:**

- Esther Blacklock—  
Cook's Nook
- Kyle Tator—  
Project Reports  
& Announcements
- Loretta Torres—  
M. Gardener Bio's  
& Guest Columnists
- Loretta Torres—  
Newsletter Layout  
& Editor
- Miriam Moore—  
Contributing Editor

Valencia County Extension

# Master Gardener News

NMSU Cooperative Extension Service  
PO Drawer 1059  
Los Lunas, NM 87031

Kyle V. Tator  
Valencia County Agriculture Agent  
505.565.3002

Contributions from the readers are being solicited on the different topics. As an incentive to your participation, Kyle says that articles written on the headings (dark text) shown in the newsletter will be awarded 1.0 hour of volunteer time when printed. Please submit your article to the editor for the subject heading by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.

## What's Happening This Month?

If you have questions, announcements or knowledge of events coming up, please bring these to the attention of the editor for this column, Kyle Tator at [ktator@nmsu.edu](mailto:ktator@nmsu.edu), or at 565-3002.

### VCEMG Newsletter Announcements:

**Congratulations** to those who completed the educational segment of the Valencia County Extension Master Gardener certification!

**Plant Clinics will be posted:**  
<http://valenciaextension.nmsu.edu/valencia-county-extensio.html>

**Sign up with Kyle for your new VCEMG Shirt.**

**Los Lunas Farmers Market Meeting:**  
Thursday, April 16, 2009  
6:00 pm  
Valencia County CES Office

**VCEMG Volunteer Hours Due:**  
Wednesday, September 30, 2009  
No later than 4:00 pm  
\*A minimum of 40 volunteer hours are due to the Extension Office on, or before this date.

### **Hays Honey Farm Bee Lecture & VCEMG Plant Clinic:**

Saturday, April 25, 2009  
VCEMG Volunteer Opportunity!  
No sign-up necessary.  
Show up at Hays Honey Farm (Esperanza Road, Bosque Farms) at 8:00 am.  
Lunch is a POTLUCK. Please call (505) 869-2369 by Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> to sign up for your contribution to lunch!

### **Next VCEMG Meeting:**

Monday, April 13, 2009  
Advisory Board: 9:00 am  
General Meeting: 10:00 am  
Potluck: following the General Meeting—this is your opportunity to get to know everyone better and enjoy a nice lunch.  
Valencia County CES Office  
\*A complete volunteer list will be discussed and available at this meeting.

## In the Garden --

by **Miriam Moore**

The why, what, when and how of gardening in Valencia County. If you want to see your name in print and give us the benefit of your experience while earning an hour of volunteer time, submit your article to Miriam Moore by email, or in writing at [moore2life@dofnet.net](mailto:moore2life@dofnet.net).

**Papaya** from <http://www.uga.edu/fruit/papaya.html>



### Botanical Description

Papaya belongs to a small family of only 4 genera and 27-30 species, the Caricaceae (some estimate up to 71 species).

A large, single-stemmed herbaceous perennial, to 30 ft, <20 ft in cultivation. Leaves are very large (up to 2 ½ ft wide), palmately lobed or deeply incised, with entire margins, and petioles of 1-3.5 ft in length. Stems appear as a trunk, are hollow, light green to tan brown, up to 8" in diameter, and bear prominent leaf scars.

### Flowers

Plants are dioecious or hermaphroditic, with cultivars producing only female or bisexual (hermaphroditic) flowers preferred in cultivation. Papayas are sometimes said to be "trioecious" meaning that separate plants bear either male, female, or bisexual flowers. Female and bisexual flowers are waxy, ivory white, and borne on short peduncles in leaf axils along the main stem. Flowers are solitary or small cymes of 3 individuals. Ovary position is superior. Prior to opening, bisexual flowers are tubular and female flowers are pear shaped. Since bisexual plants produce the most desirable fruit and are self-pollinating, they are preferred over female or male plants.



### Origin, History of Cultivation of Papaya

Papaya is native to tropical America, from Southern Mexico through the Andes of South America. It was spread to the south by Indians, and throughout the Caribbean with Spanish exploration. The Spanish also carried it to Europe and the Pacific Islands.

By the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, papaya was distributed pantropically. Papaya was introduced to Hawaii in the 1800s, and Hawaii remains the only state in the USA to produce papaya commercially. A small industry developed in Florida in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but declined rapidly with the introduction of viral diseases that today threaten papaya elsewhere.

In fact, the recent decline of the Hawaiian industry was caused primarily by the same pathogen that destroyed plants in Florida - papaya ringspot virus. However, the disease was overcome by biotechnologists at the University of Hawaii, who inserted a gene into the 'Sunrise' cultivar that conferred resistance to the virus. This made the papaya the first genetically modified fruit crop used for human consumption. Since 1998, most of the papaya acreage in Hawaii has been changed to genetically modified cultivars.

**What is the origin of April Fools' Day?**

From the Old Farmer's Almanac

Although the origin of playing practical jokes and pranks on this day is hazy, many folklorists believe that it may go back to 16<sup>th</sup>-century France. At that time, New Year's Day was March 25, with a full week of partying and exchanging gifts lasting until April 1.

In 1582, the Gregorian calendar moved New Year's Day back to January 1. Those who forgot, or refused to honor the new calendar, were the butts of jokes and ridicule.

Weather folklore states:

*If it thunders on All Fools' Day, it brings good crops of corn and hay.*

**NMSU Greenhouse Demo**

"Thank you, Del Jimenez from NMSU!" Del kept his commitment for April 1<sup>st</sup> even though he was still feeling the effects of a bout of pneumonia.

The installation of the straight sided, 17" x 32' Season Extension House went very well considering the weather played a real April Fool's Day trick on all of us with 45 and 60 mile per hour winds and lots of sand in the face.

The whole crowd was troupers and stayed 'til the end. No one was injured and we shared a pleasant lunch break. Everyone was surprised at how well this house of plastic stood up to the wind and several people mentioned plans to build one for themselves.

**2009 VCEMG Advisory Board**

Jeff Nickelson	864-3688
Cindy Moya	866-1078
Yvonne Riley	869-2119
Esther Blacklock	864-6001
Loretta Torres	869-9409
Kyle Tator	565-3002

## **Cook's Nook**

Contributions or suggestions for this column will be gratefully accepted as a written, word or notepad file by its editor, Esther Blacklock, by e-mail [estherb616@yahoo.com](mailto:estherb616@yahoo.com)

Papaya is back in the markets and this is a nice, refreshing salad just a bit different from our usual fruit salads. This recipe is from Sunset Recipe Annual 1997

### **Papaya, Orange and Berry Salad with Lime-Chili Dressing**



- ¼ cup lime juice
- 1 TBSP fresh cilantro, minced
- 1 or 2 jalapeño chilies, stemmed, seeded and minced
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 oranges
- 1 papaya (about 1 ¼ lb.), peeled and seeded
- 1 cup raspberries, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup blueberries, rinsed and drained
- Butter lettuce leaves (or other crisp lettuce), rinsed



1. Mix together lime juice, cilantro, chilies and sugar. Cut papaya lengthwise into ½" thick slices. Cut and peel white pith from oranges. Cut between membranes to release segments, discard any seeds.
2. In a bowl combine orange segments, raspberries and blueberries. Add lime juice mixture and stir gently until fruit is evenly coated. Line individual plates with lettuce leaves. Arrange papaya wedges in a fan. Spoon berries, orange segments and juice over papaya slices.
3. Garnish salad with papaya seeds if desired. They have an interesting, peppery taste. Substitute halved strawberries for other berries if desired.

**Note of Interest:** Papaya is native to the Americas. The flesh contains an enzyme called "papain" which is a natural tenderizer. Rubbing the fleshy side of the peel over your hands and feet will give you wonderfully soft skin!

#### **Correction for Black Forest Cake:**

Regarding the Black Forest Fudge Cake; I sprinkle approximately ½ CUP or less, of chocolate chips on top prior to baking. Sorry for the typo.

## Los Lunas Farmers' Market Meeting

The next Los Lunas Farmers' Market Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM at the Valencia County CES Office at 404 Courthouse Road in Los Lunas.

Vendors, and other interested persons, are invited to attend. At this time there are 23 vendors on our mailing list. If you know anyone else interested, please, bring them or let them know about this meeting.



*Taste the Difference!*

## Garden Books in Review

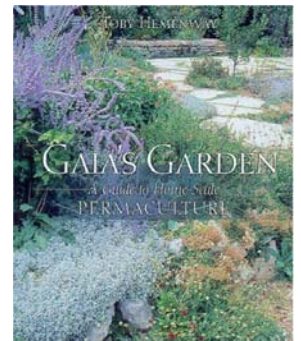
*GAIA'S GARDEN—A GUIDE TO HOME-SCALE PERMACULTURE* contains much useful information for the gardener who wants to work with Mother Nature instead of against her.

In his book, Toby Hemingway says "permaculture is a set of techniques and principles for designing sustainable human settlements." Permaculture uses organic gardening principles to deal with big as well as little problems. Permaculture is involved with the local rose and the ecosystem within which the local rose lives. Most of the ideas Hemingway suggests have been "out there" for some time, but Hemingway combines and organizes this cumulative knowledge into a coherent approach. I especially like the sheet composting approach even though I find it difficult to obtain the huge quantities of much or other organic matter it requires.

While I don't agree with everything Hemingway suggests, I think most of his ideas are worth trying. The book is also very readable.

Hemingway seems to have acquired much of his hands-on experience in semi-arid areas on the West Coast, so some of his "live and let-live" tactics may not work on the more lush East Coast.

I do like some "wildness" in my patch, and have given over certain parts of the yard to natural vegetation (as long as it does not include the most pernicious weeds like mustard, bindweed, thornberry, datura etc).



**Valencia County  
Extension  
Master Gardener  
Newsletter**

NMSU –Valencia County  
Cooperative Extension  
Service Office

Kyle Tator,  
Extension Agriculture Agent  
PO Drawer 1059  
Los Lunas, NM 87031

PHONE:  
(505) 565.3002

FAX:  
(505) 565.1316

E-MAIL:  
KTATOR@NMSU.EDU

**We're on the Web!**

See us at:

<http://valenciaextension.nmsu.edu>

**Committee Contacts**

Home Visits	Kyle Tator	565-3002
Newsletter	Loretta Torres	869-9409
Photo Archivist	Paul Gardea	865-3281
Plant Clinics	Kyle Tator	565-3002
Publicity	Nancy Erickson	866-3533
Testing	Yvonne Riley	869-2119
Treasurer/Records	Cindy Moya	866-1078

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."  
Margaret Mead, Anthropologist 1901-1978

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EXTENSION  
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PO DRAWER 1059  
LOS LUNAS, NM 87031**