



Henderson County Master Gardeners Weekly News Article June 12, 2017

HCMGA Offers Free Vermicomposting Program by Lydia Holley



Master Gardeners Bill and Marie Hancock will present “Yes, You Can Vermicompost, Too!” on Tuesday, June 20, 5:30 p.m., at the Clint W Murchison Memorial Library, 121 S Prairieville St., Athens. This presentation is free to the public.

Most gardeners assume that vermicompost, which is earthworm castings, is a great fertilizer and soil conditioner. But, are there scientific studies backing up that claim? Yes. Studies have shown that applying a vermicompost tea to developing plants helps increase root development. Additionally, at least one study has shown that the plant’s tissues hold increased nutrients when using vermicompost tea. This is important because the food that you eat from a garden that uses vermicompost tea will be denser in vitamins.

Vermicompost also improves the soil by enriching the microbial activity. Studies are also being conducted on the suppression of plant disease using this type of compost. So, you can see that the benefits of vermicompost are not just a gardener’s urban legend, it really is very good for your garden.

Vermicompost is so good, Cornell University calls it “a living soil amendment”. Earthworm castings have also been called “nature’s organic fertilizer”, since it has been shown to have a higher nutrient content than other forms of compost.

Want to learn how you can easily acquire your own earthworm castings? The Hancocks are extremely enthusiastic about vermicomposting, and have convinced many of the simplicity and practicability of having an earthworm bin of their own. The Hancocks are so convincing, they will have you wanting an earthworm bin or two, even if you are generally squeamish about such things.

Come learn the small amount of equipment you will need, what to feed and what not to feed your worms, the answers to the most frequently asked questions about raising earthworms, and how soon you will be able to have earthworm castings for your own garden.

This presentation is a part of Henderson County Master Gardener Association’s “Learn at the Library” series held on the third Tuesday of each month.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email hendersonCMGA@gmail.com or visit www.henderson-co-tx-mg.org.