

Southern Region Master Gardener Conference 2016
Breakout Sessions

Thursday, November 3, 2016

1:30pm-2:30pm

Please note: Registration required

Genetically Modified Organisms/Genetic Engineering

Justin Scheiner, Assistant Professor and Extension Viticulture Specialist at the Department of Horticultural Sciences at Texas A&M University

A genetically modified organism (GMO) is an organism that has been modified from its original state by the insertion of genes from other organisms or by otherwise altering its genetic makeup using genetic engineering techniques. These technologies enable scientists to introduce, delete, and enhance traits in organisms that may not be possible with traditional breeding. However, traditional breeding does alter the genetic makeup of plants and animals and has been used for hundreds of years for crop and livestock improvement, so the term genetically engineered (GE) is often used to distinguish organisms that have been modified using genetic engineering techniques.

The development of a GE crop begins with the identification of the gene(s) responsible for the trait(s) of interest. The gene(s) is then extracted from the donor organism using restriction enzymes that cut the DNA at specific sites, and the gene(s) is introduced into the crop using one of several possible techniques. To date, the majority of cotton, corn, and soybean acres in the U.S. are GE, and a small number of GE horticulture crops have been registered. This presentation will overview the technologies used to create GE crops and highlight the GE crops that are currently registered in the U.S.

Dynamic Soils

Dr. Sam Feagley, Professor and State Soil Environment Specialist, Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, Texas A&M University

Soils are a dynamic natural body that we use in many different ways. Around our homes we use it to build our homes on and grow plants that provide us with aesthetics and food. It is a primary key to growing plants. Topics to be discussed are essential nutrients, what they do in plants and how we should manage them; soil testing and interpretation; organic matter and soil organisms; sources of nutrients and application methods; and optimum watering methods.

Creating Your Perfect Garden Room

Steven Chamblee, Horticulturalist at Chandor Gardens

Creating your perfect garden room – form follows function in all design, and the same is true for creative living spaces out-of-doors. We will take a virtual tour of dozens of beautifully functional garden rooms, each designed to enhance the lifestyle of its owner.

Landscaping with Limited Time

Janet Carson, Horticulture Specialist, Arkansas State University Extension Services

Do you want a pretty yard but don't have much time to maintain it? By choosing the right plants for the right place, you can have your garden and time to enjoy it.