**Weekly Express-News Article**

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**“Books by Greg Grant”**

Greg Grant is an outstanding horticulturist. He served as Extension Agent for horticulture in Bexar County for a few years, writes regularly for gardening magazines, has been instrumental in many Texas plant introductions, and is a prolific author of gardening books.

His newest book is “Texas Fruit & Vegetable Gardening” from Cool Springs Press ([www.coolspringspress.com](http://www.coolspringspress.com)) for $19.99. The book presents short write-ups along with photos of each of the many vegetables and fruits that we can grow in Texas. It is a good basic text for any vegetable gardener but especially useful for gardeners new to the area or just venturing into vegetable gardening.

The book is also charming and pleasant to read. Grant is a master of weaving his East Texas roots into the text. Almost every specific vegetable section has an anecdote that will make you smile and most will contribute to your gardening success.

The sections on soil, pests, watering, compost, harvesting, and getting started at the beginning of the book are short but potent. From now on, I am going to refer the many new residents and rookie gardeners that ask me to describe the basic facts of gardening in central Texas to author Grant’s “Texas Fruit and Vegetable Gardening.”

My favorite Greg Grant book in terms of horticultural techniques is “Home Landscaping Texas” by Greg Grant and Roger Holmes, (Creative Homeowner Press for 13.49.) The writing is good and the photos help the reader understand the recommendations. The best feature, however, is the way authors Grant and Holmes go about addressing landscape planning.

They break-up the residential landscape into manageable pieces. This is the book for a homeowner that wants to do their own landscaping but is overwhelmed by thinking of planning the whole job in one piece.

Isolate the parts of the landscape into front door area, shady side yard, area around the water feature, and “no water slope” like the authors do and the job becomes manageable.

“Home Landscaping Texas” also offers a section on outstanding plants to use in your landscape. The brief write-up and photos do a great job of presenting the palette of plants that is available to you. The choices include the Texas Superstars like firebush, “Gold Star” esperanza, and vitex that Greg had a role in introducing to the nursery trade. The author appreciates the importance of drought tolerance, soil preferences, and pest issues in our landscapes.

In 2011, Greg Grant and Bill Welch collaborated on “Heirloom Gardening in the South” (Texas A & M University Press for $29.95.) Gardeners all across the south know Dr. William Welch as a skilled ornamental horticulturist and author in his own right. His “Perennial Garden Color” and “Antique Roses for the South” are classics. “Heirloom Gardening in the South” is an expansion of an earlier version “The Southern Heirloom Garden.”

“Heirloom Gardening in the South” begins by discussing the various cultural influences in southern gardening including Native American, Spanish, African, French, German, English, and Italian. It goes on to several chapters on special topics. One of the most interesting section is “Natives, Invasives, Cemeteries, and Rustling.” Daffodils have a huge potential in our gardens that is largely unfulfilled. The chapter “Naturalizing Daffodils” will help us change that situation. The key is to use the heirloom selections.

The detailed accounts of the large number of heirloom plants and the design section will help the gardener seeking a resource for creating their own heirloom garden but “Heirloom Gardening in the South” will also provide a good read for folks that enjoy traveling through the south to view gardens and those readers that seek out historical accounts.

The book has all of the characteristics that you would expect from a Greg Grant co-authored book. It provides excellent horticultural information, good writing, and affection for every part of the gardening spectrum. It is a good read.