**Q’s & A’s**

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Q: I am trying to grow primula and am mostly feeding the snails and pill bugs. What is that beer trap slug and snail control that you talk about on the Gardening South Texas Gardening Show?

A: Pill bugs, snails and slugs are attracted to beer. It does not matter if it is cheap, expensive or stale. Sink a plastic cup every four feet to its top in the garden, and fill them half-full of beer. The pests will fill them up. Empty and refill the cups as necessary.

Q: My tomato leaves are dying from the bottom up. The plants are full of fruit. What should I do?

A: There are two problems that cause a symptom known as “drying up”—spider mites and early blight. Look for small mites on the bottom of the leaves. If there are none, the problem is probably the early blight fungus. Both problems are too far along to stop them this late in the season. We use malathion or seaweed extract to slow down spider mites and the fungicide chlorothalonil for the fungus. Leave the fruit in place until they ripen or freezing temperatures are forecast. If you must pick them before a freeze, the largest tomatoes will ripen in the house.

Q: You were right. All the acorns have disappeared already despite the huge production!

A: There are lots of well-fed squirrels, birds and deer this fall. Weather conditions after a few lean years were just right for a big crop.

Q: My lawn is still green and looking good. Does that mean we can still apply “winterizer” fertilizer?

A: Yes, the grass will be able to uptake the nutrients and organize them for winter hardiness and a fast green-up in the spring.

Q: We like the looks of Mexican white oak. Is it just as good as Texas red oak for a shade tree?

A: Yes, both grow fast and live a long time. Mexican white oak is nearly evergreen. Texas red oak is deciduous but has good fall color. Texas red oak sometimes catches oak wilt, while Mexican white oak is resistant to the disease.