

# Growing Hops in our Area

*by John Jons*

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The hop plant can be an attractive large climbing vine-like ornamental. The hop plant's flowers called cones are used in herbal medicines and as a flavoring and stability agent in beer. The young hops shoots may be eaten like asparagus. To grow hop plants:

- Grow the plant in raised garden bed that is at least 12" high and about 48" wide with good soil, drainage, air movement and irrigation. The bed will need to have or be near a vertical structure (trellis) to support a mature climbing plant that may weigh up to 50 pounds.
- Hop plants are sold as rhizomes and are usually available late spring. The varieties that do well in our area are "Cascade" and "Nugget."
- Plant the hop rhizome after the final frost. After a couple of weeks, fresh green hop canes called bines will emerge from the rhizome and naturally grow upward, adhere to and spiral clockwise around any vertical support. Select 2 to 3 bines and keep encouraging them to grow up the vertical support.
- You may be able to harvest the hop plant's cones from May through September. As soon as the cone gets to be about ½ to 1" inch long, and feels dry and springy, harvest it by cutting it off the bine. The cones can be used fresh or stored for future use. Stored cones will need to be dried and frozen.
- Late in the fall the hop plant will go dormant and the bines will dry out. Leave the dried out bines on the plant until after the last frost the following spring. Below the ground the single hop rhizome will have grown into a mass of tangled rhizomes called a crown from which the new growth will emerge. Before the new bines emerge, cut away the dried out bines at ground level.

For a more details on how to grow hop plants locally refer to

[https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/GCMG\\_Newsletters/209\\_Jan-Feb\\_2018\\_MG\\_Newsletter\\_Small.pdf](https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/GCMG_Newsletters/209_Jan-Feb_2018_MG_Newsletter_Small.pdf)