



# Alden Lane Nursery Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2010

Serving You Since 1955

981 Alden Lane, Livermore, CA • [www.aldenlane.com](http://www.aldenlane.com) • (925) 447-0280

## Announcements

- **Watch the Valley Gardener** on TV30 for great gardening tips with host Jacquie Williams-Courtright at 7:30 am and 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and repeated on Saturday at 7:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. & Sunday at 7:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.
- **The Livermore Amador Valley Garden Club** will meet on Thursday, February 11th at the Harvest Park Elementary School, 4906 Valley Ave., Pleasanton. **Gisele Schoniger** of Kellogg Garden Products will discuss breakthroughs in natural organic practices. For more information please call Lydia at 461-1725.
- **Mt. Diablo Rose Society** meets the second Wednesday of the month, 7:30 p.m. at the Dublin Library, 200 Civic Plaza, Dublin. Call for details 829-4929.
- **Bonsai Club** meetings: 3rd Saturday of each month – 1 p.m. at Alden Lane Nursery. Come one, come all!
- **Winter Tours in Walnut Creek** of the Ruth Bancroft Garden will be held every Saturday into March. Reservation are required. For more information call 925-210-9663 or visit their website: [www.ruthbancroftgarden.org](http://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org).
- **Knodts Flowers** is ready to help fill every Valentine floral desire! They are located on the grounds of Alden Lane Nursery. Drop by when you're in the neighborhood, we'd love to see you. *Have a special Valentine order?* We'll be happy to help! Just call 925-447-0800.
- If you like **armloads of cut flowers** in the spring and summer you can start now by planting lilies, gladiolus, dahlias and other summer blooming bulbs. Alden Lane has a full complement available.

## Celebrate Your Special Someone!



Our greenhouse at Alden Lane is transformed with gifts and decorations just to make this Valentines Day a memorable one. Place any special orders early – we can make up wonderful **orchid baskets and centerpieces**.

Stumped and need a gift idea? We specialize in making one of a kind living arrangements just for your Valentine – and they will be as unique and as special as your Valentine!

Call Sue to order something SPECTACULAR!

**Our Gift Shop is filled with great Valentine treats, too!**

## Great Edible Gardens From The Ground Up

**Four Great Weeks of Information  
SATURDAYS at 11:00 — FREE!!**

- **February 6th:** Kerri Kemp – *Veggie Garden Soil Prep*
- **February 13th:** Ginger from Suncatcher Harvest – *New Veggie Varieties & Old Favorites*
- **February 20th:** Josh – *Fruit Trees, Grapes, and Berries: How to Buy, Plant & Enjoy*
- **February 27th:** Annie Joseph – *Organic Insect Control for Your Edibles*

**Raffles Each Week & Win Prizes  
for attending all four classes!  
Call ahead to reserve a seat.**



### PRE-ORDER PROGRAM FOR HEIRLOOM VEGGIES!

**Pre-order through March 15th.** This offers you the first availability and freshness as well as a discount! Pre-order price for 4" pots will be \$2.69, reg. \$2.99. Come in and pick up an order form today or visit our website!

# Enjoy a **10% DISCOUNT** on Preordered Spring Planted Suncatcher Harvest Vegetables

Visit [aldenlane.com](http://aldenlane.com) to view vegetable options  
and pre-print an order form.

Ginger from Suncatcher is a great grower whose vegetable plants are legendary. Choose from over 40 varieties of her delicious tomato varieties. She also offers cucumbers, melons, peppers, eggplants, squash and pumpkins. To assure you'll be the first to receive your special varieties right off the truck you can preorder & prepay. As they arrive we'll tag the very best and give you a call. **You'll earn a 10% discount for the Early Bird order** and you'll be well on your way to enjoying a summer and fall filled with "Incredible Edibles" from your very own garden.

**Book preorders until March 15th. To help you decide which varieties to grow attend our free vegetable seminar.**



## Vegetable Gardening Class

Join us to hear Ginger from Suncatcher Harvest here at Alden Lane Nursery to "Talk Tomatoes" & more on Saturday, February 13th at 11 a.m. The grower of all our Heirloom vegetables, Ginger will provide growing secrets and help with variety selection. She will also share some delicious recipes to use with your home grown produce. **THIS IS A FREE CLASS** but call ahead to reserve a seat.



## Baked, Mashed, or Fried . . . Plant Potatoes!

- **CAL WHITE:** This wonderful boiling potato is also great for scalloped or mashed potatoes. And, it makes a great potato salad.



- **CAL RED:** It will produce potatoes that have bright red skins and white flesh. They are ideal for boiling with no darkening after cooking.

- **NORKOTA RUSSET:** Very similar to Idaho's famous Burbank. The good old fashioned baking potato with the rough skin. This one is much more disease resistant than the Burbank and very productive too.

- **YUKON GOLD:** An early potato maturing in 65+ days. Buttery yellow flesh is delicious. Makes a good steamer/boiler or use in salads.

- **ADIRONDACK BLUE:** A newer gourmet variety that is extremely popular. It has purple skin and purple flesh. They are small to medium in size and offer an excellent flavor for a "baker".

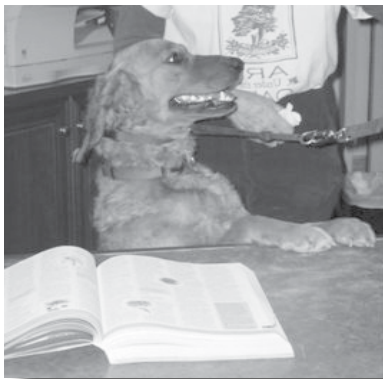
- **BANANA:** The Banana potato is excellent for salads, it is a favorite among

chefs and gourmet markets. Yellow, banana-shaped, waxy-type tubers with firm texture that have wonderful flavor baked, boiled and steamed.

Harvest new potatoes when plants begin to bloom in June and more mature potatoes when plants begin to die down in mid-summer. **The homegrown flavor is the best! Grow your own!!**

# Notes for February Gardening

- Place **three inches of mulch** around trees, shrubs and flowerbeds to keep weeds under control. Keep the mulch away from the trunks of trees and shrubs as well as the stems of bedding plants to prevent crown rot.
- Want beautiful blue hydrangea this summer. Start applying **Master Nursery Hydra Blue** monthly now.
- Last chance to dormant spray.** February is the last month for dormant spray. Apply **Miller Microcop with Bonide Copper** fungicide or **Monterey Liquicop**. NOTE: If it should rain within 24 hours of application then reapply material. Rain can make your treatment spotty at best.
- Remove old flowers** on camellias and azaleas to reduce the chance of petal blight.
- Whether planting a new tree or pruning an established tree, now is a great time to apply **Bonide Tree Trunk White** to the trunks of fruit trees to prevent sunburn and help manage boring insects.
- Apply **Master Nursery Pre-Emergent Plus Lawn Food** NOW to prevent not only Crabgrass, but a variety of other lawn weeds including dandelion and plantain.
- Prune evergreen shrubs and hedges such as boxwood between mid-February and early March so that pruning cuts are quickly covered with spring's new growth. (Leave frost tender plants like citrus to prune later.) Prune strap leaved New Zealand Flax and African Iris to 4" if a biennial renewal is wanted. (Foliage will grow back with a fresh crop of gorgeous leaves.)
- Apply Iron or sulfur now to help restore and maintain good green color in acid loving plants such as citrus, camellia, azalea and gardenias as well as many others including jasmine and photinea.
- A blooming orchid** for your love this Valentine's Day says it best! Choose from an assortment of fragrant blooming bulbs, African violets, cyclamen and lush houseplants.



## Hailey's Comments

[Hailey is on vacation so we snuck in a guest article from Sue in the Greenhouse. Hailey actually likes cats, but cats usually aren't fond of her!]

### Feline Friendly Greenery

*For the indoor cat, plants play an important role in their environment. They adore the texture and tactile fun that plants provide, (and sometimes even the taste!), but coexisting with*

*cats and houseplants does not have to be a battle of wits and wills! A few precautions and the right kinds of horticulture can bring harmony to your household.*

*Feline friendly greenery for your furry friends include African Violets, Ferns of all sorts, Coleus, Grape Ivy, Lipstick Vine, Peperomia, Prayer Plants, Spider Plants, Swedish Ivy, Wandering Jew and Goldfish plants, just to name a few. These plants also provide air cleaning and humidity qualities for the two-legged members of your home too. (If you have a question about a plant and its compatibility, just go to [www.aspc.org/apcc](http://www.aspc.org/apcc)).*

*It is a great idea to provide some nice greenery just for them which they have permission to nibble on, so plants some nice oat or rye grass seeds for their dining pleasure. Raising a little catnip would make you fast friends for life!*

*Cats naturally want to dig into the nice soft soil of your pots, and this, too can be an easy fix by placing materials on the surface soil that will deter the behavior. Plastic cross-stitch panels cut to size, or hardware cloth, even waxed paper and foil. Decorative rocks or shells also do the trick. Even old, unlit scented candles placed strategically will deter them by smell.*

*It can be easy to co-exist peacefully with your animals and household plants with the right precautions. What can be more cozy than being one with the sofa, surrounded by the beauty and life affirming joy of living plants with a good book and a cat purring on your lap?*

## Seasonal February Favorites

### This is the Peak of Selection

- Old fashioned Lilacs** – Timeless ... Classic ... Wonderfully fragrant ... Plant now for spring bloom! Pure white to the deepest purple.
- Sweet Daphne** – An old fashioned fragrance for your garden! Budded and Blooming now. Perfect for bright shade. Great container plant. Waxy pink and white flower clusters will perfume a room.
- Happy Wanderer Vine** – THE #1 Best Vine for winter color. The "Royal Cloak" of the winter garden. Royal purple at its best. Evergreen, water wise and hot sun loving.

### Fruit Trees Have Arrived!

Choose from a full complement of Peaches, Nectarines, Plums, Apricots, Cherries, Apples, Pears and much more! Not to mention our fruit salad trees.

### 2010 Rose Collection Is Here!

We have hundreds of roses to select from, including local rosarian David Lowell's new, yet to be named, hybrid that sport white centered dark pink with lavender toned petals. It's perfect for small spaces as it grows to only 3', has few thorns, and a light pleasant fragrance.

## “Daffodil Town Hall”

at  
Alden Lane  
Nursery

12:00 noon -  
2:00 p.m.

March 6, 2010

*Open To All  
Gardeners!!*

**FREE!**



Northern California Daffodil Society members will bring for display examples of the many different colors and types of daffodils.

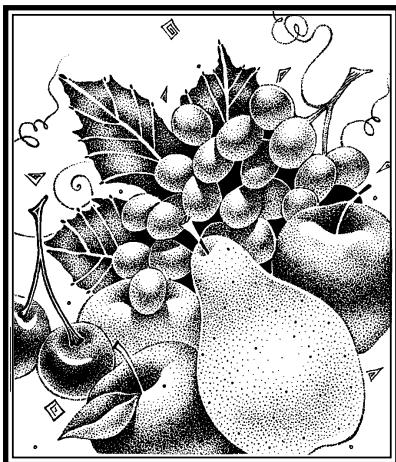
- They'll show the differences, and tell which are best suited to growing in our area - and why.

- Learn growing tips so you can add daffodils to your Spring-blooming garden.

- Society members look forward to answering all your daffodil questions - from buying, planting, growing, to cutting and showing.

- You are invited to bring daffodils from your garden - to be identified.

Call ahead to let us know you'll be dropping by to attend this **FREE** informational “Daffodil Town Hall”.



## BACKYARD ORCHARD SEMINAR

February 20th

11:00 - 12:00 noon

*“Fruit Trees, Grapes, &  
Berries: How to Buy, Plant  
and Enjoy”*

This month Josh will give you a general overview of fruit trees, grapes, and berries.

Fee: \$5.00. **Bring a friend for free!** Call ahead to register.

## Exciting News From the World of Backyard Fruit . . . *Cherries “Short & Sweet”*

Finally, a truly dwarfing rootstock for sweet cherries has been developed and is now available for a few varieties of dark, sweet cherries. The new rootstock keeps vigorous sweet cherries to a maximum height of 8 to 9 feet unpruned making it ideal for backyard growing. Now, sweet cherries can be easily kept in large containers such as a wine barrel for over five years without root pruning! Grow cherries on your apartment balcony, backyard patio, or keep it on wheels to move it around.

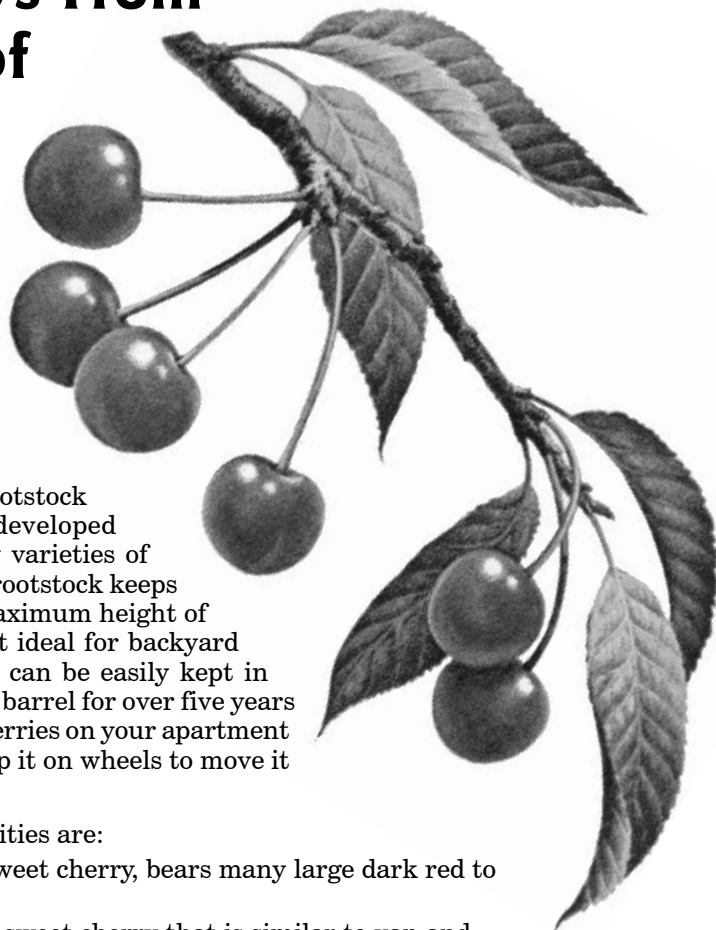
Available now in limited quantities are:

**Bing**, the world's favorite sweet cherry, bears many large dark red to black cherries;

**Lapins**, a self- fruitful dark sweet cherry that is similar to van and bing;

**Craig's Crimson** is a favorite dark red sweet cherry of the grower with compact spreading habit and rich flavor perfect for backyard growing.

Dwarf cherries are easy to fit into almost any situation, they bear fruit at a younger age, and they stay small enough to easily throw a net over to save your harvest from the birds. Cherries have always had issues with our heavy clay soils, so if you've had bad luck in the ground, now you can simply grow your cherries in a pot. This new development opens up lots of new doors for cherry lovers and we're sure we'll see even more varieties available in the future.



***Come get yours soon as stock is limited!***

**Warm the heart of your Valentine with these beautiful, hand carved, slate stepping stones.**



*A lovely lasting tribute to your Valentine that will garnish your garden for years to come.*

# It's Poppy Time

... *and who doesn't like poppies?* This month we are featuring the wonderful Iceland poppy. These poppies are available in bright colors of yellow, orange, pink and creamy white. They bear large, papery blossoms on stems that will stand tall above your pansies and other annuals. Their foliage is blue-green and somewhat airy. Iceland poppies look great when backlit by the sun, planted in front of hedge plants or en masse by themselves with their heads twirling in the wind! Their tall stems make them ideal for cut flowers and they will attract early Spring butterflies and bees to your garden. These poppies are a short-lived perennial used like an annual in our Fall/Winter and Spring gardens and they like loose gravelly soil and moderate water.

We are offering Iceland poppies in cell-packs, 4" pots and gallon containers & all will be **25% OFF THEIR REGULAR PRICE** for the month of February!!



## Give the Gift of Knowledge!

*Does your Valentine have orchids with issues?* Give them the gift that keeps on giving with an **Orchids 101 Class**.

**February 13th, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

Orchids 101 is \$10.00, and you can **bring a friend for free**, so call up our cashiers today and sign up!

This class is designed to educate and enlighten with simple information that will produce successful results. You are welcome to bring in 1 or 2 problem plants so we can explore their issues and come up with a solution, and put you on the road to future blooms. Orchids 101 will be taught on a limited basis this year, so don't miss out. Your loved one will appreciate this thoughtful gift, and you can enjoy it too!



## Recipe for Good Garden Soil! Good Garden Soil Starts Here!!

### GOOD GARDEN SOIL!

For each 100 square feet add:

- 5 to 8- 2 cubic ft. bags **Master Gold Rush** or **Bumper Crop**®
- 5 lbs. **Iron Sulfate** to acidify and add iron.
- 10 lbs. **Master Vegetable Food** or **Master Flower Food**, **Master Formula 49** can be used for ground covers.
- 50 lbs. **Gypsum**. It loosens hard soils as it adds sulfur & calcium. (An excellent addition in our heavy soil.)

Mix well with your soil to an 8" depth and water well.

# Seed Starting

February is usually blessed with a few days of stunning weather in the sunny 70s before “Marching” into a few more weeks of stormy-cloudy days; a mix of optimistic inspiration and necessary patience; a perfect time to dream about a vegetable garden and then start seeds indoors. We have all the seeds and supplies. Come in to browse through our beautifully reorganized seed section and enjoy a variety of offerings, including wonderfully illustrated and well explained selections from **Botanical Interests Seeds**

Botanical Interest Seed company was founded by real gardeners, Judy and Curtis Jones, who actually try out seeds in their own garden and write about them before adding them to their growing collection of 400 plus seed packets. Each seed pack contains nearly the equivalent to an encyclopedia entry about the particular variety of seed therein. So full of information, the text spills over into the inside of the seed packet. You actually read front and back as well as inside to pick up tips and pertinent information for starting and caring for plants in your garden.



## Some tips from the botanical Interests seed website include:

- ➔ Add fluorescent light for best results. Light from a nearby window is seldom adequate. Placing a fluorescent light as little as 3” from the seedlings will help keep seedlings from becoming leggy.
- ➔ Start seeds in a planting mix made for seed starting, not in native soil. Keep the soil evenly moist but not wet.
- ➔ Take a week to help the seedling transition to life outside. Move them outside only a little while each day, progressively lengthening the duration till a they are 100% outside.

Choose these varieties to get a head start on spring:

Artichokes • Arugula • Beets • Bok Choy, Lettuce and other leafy vegetables • Celery • Eggplant • Leeks  
Lettuce • Mache • Mesclun Mix • Micro Greens • Onions • Peas • Peppers • Tomatillos • Tomatoes



February is prime Camellia time! The *C. japonica*'s are budded and beginning to bloom. It's the perfect time to pick the flower style and color you are looking for. Among the many varieties we stock are:

- ❖ **'Bob Hope'** a large, semi-double to loose peony flower, with dark red blossoms – late February through March
- ❖ **'Debutante'** is a medium-sized peony flower with light pink blossoms – January through early March
- ❖ **'In the Pink'** medium-sized, formal double, rose pink blooms with occasional deep rose markings – March through late April

## Blooming Beauty – The Camellia!

❖ **'Jordan's Pride Pink'** semi-double peony form, displaying medium pink petals. Makes a great contrast with the glossy, dark green foliage – late January thru March

❖ **'Kramer's Supreme'** a large, lightly fragrant, full peony, deep red to rose-red blossoms – late February through March

❖ **'Mathotiana Supreme'** large, double blooms with loose, irregular, flaming crimson petals. Elegant, beautiful; average size is 6-8' – late January thru March

❖ **'Nuccio's Bella Rossa'** produces huge quantities of formal crimson-red blossoms nonstop. Great for screens, a single dramatic specimen, or a shade garden; average size is 6-8'

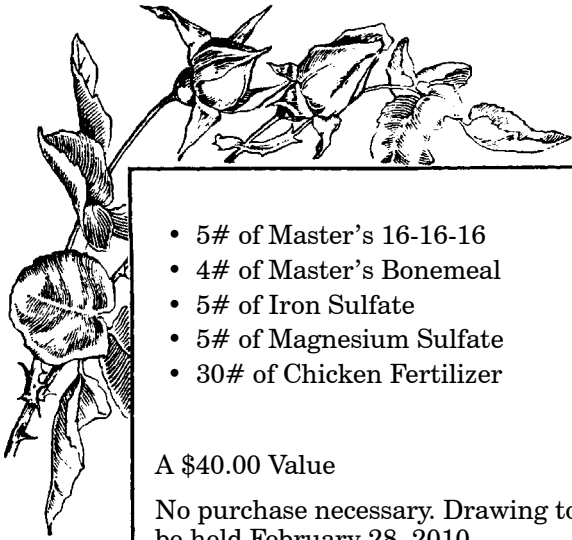
❖ **'Nuccio's Gem'** is a medium to large, formal double, with pure white blossoms – January through early March

❖ **'Pearl Maxwell'** a large, formal double, shell pink blooms – early to mid-February through March

❖ **'Silver Waves'** is a large, wavy, semi-double, with white blossoms

with sprays of stamens – February through March

The **Tea Camellia**, *Camellia sinensis*, is a beautiful compact evergreen shrub with a fragrant white flower that also provides the leaves for tea. The first few leaves and buds are harvested every few weeks throughout the growing season. The fresh leaves can be harvested and dried to make green, white, black, or oolong tea with naturally occurring caffeine and antioxidants. Different harvesting and drying procedures can result in many variations, so get creative and brew up something unique. Plant these shrubs in AM sun or light shade about three feet apart for a hedge or plant as a single specimen or in a shade garden with azaleas, ferns, and Japanese maples. They prefer an acidic soil that is moist but not soggy, and with moderate feeding, can produce several growth flushes a year providing several opportunities for harvest. Some of the most desirable tea leaves in the world come from 500 year old camellia *sinensis* plants, so plant yours now!



# Win Special Rose Feeding Ingredients

## ROSE FEEDING INGREDIENTS

February 2010

- 5# of Master's 16-16-16
- 4# of Master's Bonemeal
- 5# of Iron Sulfate
- 5# of Magnesium Sulfate
- 30# of Chicken Fertilizer

A \$40.00 Value

No purchase necessary. Drawing to be held February 28, 2010.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I would like to receive the newsletter online.

From The Garden Store

## ANDREA'S FAVES

*This Valentine's Day is for the Ladies!*

*Come to Ladybug Lane in our Garden Store where you'll find lovely gifts for the lady in your life.*



HAND PAINTED EARTHENWARE

Boston Warehouse, known for their novelty feel good products that bring a smile. Check out their Ladybug Lane design; pieces that liven up any table and bring a little humor and style to any setting!

Many people are fond of ladybugs because of their colorful, spotted appearance. Most ladybugs voraciously consume plant-eating insects, such as aphids, and in doing so they help to protect crops. Releasing ladybugs into your garden is a natural means of pest control. One ladybug can eat as many as 50 aphids a day. *Now, that's a hungry lady!*

Their distinctive spots and attractive colors are meant to make them unappealing to predators. A common myth is that the number of spots on its back indicates its age. Different ladybugs have different numbers of spots. Some have no spots while some have as many as twenty four. Ladybugs generally complete their life cycle within one year. The spots are with them all their life. They don't get more spots as they get older, nor do they lose spots. *Now, that's a classy lady!*

Ladybugs don't eat fabric, plants, paper or any other household items. Ladybugs, while trying to hibernate in your house, live off of their own body fats. They, also, prefer a little humidity. Occasionally, you might witness a ladybug in your bathroom getting a drink of water. *Now, that's a smart lady!*



981 Alden Lane  
Livermore, CA 94550  
(925) 447-0280

Change Service Requested

PRSRRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT #274  
Livermore, CA

**IMPORTANT!**  
Time Critical  
Please Deliver Promptly

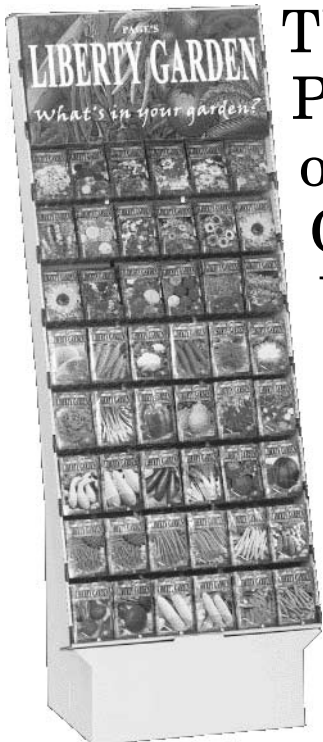
*Happy Valentine's Day to All of our Customers*

**Special February Hours For Alden Lane Nursery**

Alden Lane will be opened 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. in February with the exception of the following dates:  
February 8th - 12th and February 15th - 19th, we will be open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for staff training.

**SPECIAL COUPON**

Present This Coupon & A Canned Food Item  
TO RECEIVE FREE Your Choice of



Three  
Packets  
of Liberty  
Garden  
Vegetable  
Seed  
Varieties

(\$2.67 Value)

Food Donations are  
Optional. All donations  
go to local relief  
agencies. One coupon  
per family, please!

Offer Good  
February 1-28, 2010.

**HOW TO FIND  
ALDEN LANE  
NURSERY**

