

Alden Lane Nursery Newsletter

MARCH 2008

Serving You Since 1955

981 Alden Lane, Livermore, CA • www.aldenlane.com • (925) 447-0280

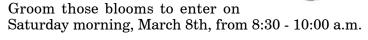
Announcements

- Watch the Valley Gardener on CTV30 for great gardening tips with host Jacquie Williams-Courtright at 7:30 a.m. every day, repeated on Saturday & Sunday at 11 a.m.
- Livermore-Amador Valley
 Garden Club meets on Tuesday,
 March 4th at 7 p.m. at the Alisal
 School multipurpose room, 1454
 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton. The
 speaker is **Dolores Bengston**talking about *Gardening in Africa*.
 For more information please contact Sally at 417-8809.
- Fremont Garden Club meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month Feb. – Oct.. Guest speakers, field trips, annual garden tea. For more info phone 510-401-0138 or email fremontgardenclub1@yahoo.com.
- The 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.
- San Francisco Garden Show will be held March 12-16. Tickets available at the Nursery. \$17 for Early Bird tickets through March 11th, \$20 after that date. Go to www.gardenshow.com for information, directions, show hours, and educational opportunities.
- The 23rd Annual Bouquet's to Art at the de Young Museum in San Francisco, March 11-15. Floral designers fill the museum galleries with floral tributes complementing works of art. Call 415-750-3504 for prices and more information or visit www.bouquetstoart.org.
- The 63rd Annual Northern California Camellia Society Show at the Pleasant Hill Community Center, 320 Civic Drive, Saturday and Sunday, March 8 & 9. Admission is free. Show hours are 2-5 p.m. Saturday and 12-5 p.m. on Sunday. For more information email GHGoff@aol.com.

The 2008 Daffodil Show "Spring Fever-Daffodil Style"

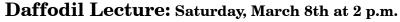
co-sponsored by the

Northern California Daffodil Society & Alden Lane Nursery

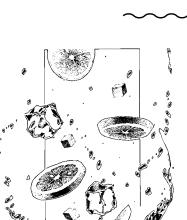


Come to enjoy the show:

• March 8th from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. • March 9th from 9 p.m to 4 p.m.



Plan to attend a free special guest lecture on "Greet Spring in your Garden with New Daffodils" by Bob Spotts.



Citrus Tasting on March 15th & 16th

If you have a hankering to know the difference between orange varieties, what parentage a tangelo might have or if there's a certain lemon variety that makes great lemonade come to Alden Lane's Citrus Tasting on Saturday, March 15th & Sunday, March 16th from 10 a.m to 4 p.m. Bring your questions and ask the experts.

Start a Family Tradition on March 7th Arbor Day

Plant a tree in your garden, your park or local school and you will bring:

- 1. Reduced Energy Use. A well placed tree will provide cooling shade in summer and insulation in winter.
- **2.** *Cleaner Air.* Did you know trees absorb 26 lbs. of carbon dioxide and replace it with precious oxygen.
- **3.** *Homes for birds.* Trees provide shelter and homes for our feathered friends.
- **4.** *Cooler Communities.* Trees provide oasis of shade during the summers and trap heat from our concrete streets and walkways.
- **5.** *Prevent soil erosion.* Tree roots hold the soil in place on slopes as well as flat surfaces



Celebrate by planting a tree in your yard or a favorite school or park. In addition to baby tree seedlings each for 2nd graders in the Livermore and Pleasanton School districts Alden Lane is offering a free tree valued at \$39.99 or a credit of \$39.99 toward a larger tree to be donated to your school or park (one tree per site please). Contact the recipient to ask what kind of tree they would like, then call us to reserve. We will hold your tree selection at the nursery until you or the recipient can pick up for planting. We are happy to help in the greening of our community. We will offer a tree starter kit at a special price to help ensure a healthy beginning. We are happy to help in the greening of our community.

Bonsai Class March 15 10:00 - 1:00



Have you ever been to a Bonsai show and wondered "how do they do it?" Well, you're in luck. On March 15th from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. we have a class scheduled dealing with creating the tree style of "Group or Forest". The cost is \$40 and will include: instruction, a pot, a plant, soil and wire. Participants may want to bring their own pruning scissors, however, limited tools will be available to borrow, or tools can be purchased at Alden Lane prior to or during the class. Prepayment is required to ensure the materials are available. For more details and to sign up call (925) 447-0280.

A New Tool Sharpening Service at the Nursery this Spring!

Beginning in March on Sunday afternoons from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., come and meet $\pmb{Absolutely\ Sharp!}$

Absolutely Sharp's goal is to make the Tri Valley a sharper place by providing a quality source of sharpening services ranging from kitchen knives to scissors and garden tools. Absolutely Sharp will make it easy to keep your valued tools in top condition.

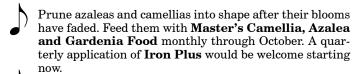
Absolutely Sharp will be set up in our entrance, offering sharpening services while you do your gardening shopping. You can bring in your tools, scissors, chain saws, and anything else you need to have sharpened. For a nominal fee, you can keep all your tools in tip top condition. Most services range from six to nine dollars. For more information, you can visit their website at **www.absolutelysharp.com** or visit them here at the Nursery, Sundays in March from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Spading Forks Make Gardening Easier

One of a gardener's most valued tools is certainly a spading fork, especially in our heavy clay soils. Looking like a four-pronged pitchfork but with flattened prongs, a spading fork allows one to dig planting holes and turn over bedding soils with less effort than the conventional all-American, long-handled shovel. No tool penetrates valley soils when they are dry, but when soils are softened by spring rains; a spading fork beats out a shovel because less surface area touches the soil surface. In other words, the weight and effort of the gardener goes farther. Use a spading fork whenever you would use a conventional shovel.

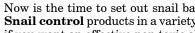
Notes for March Gardening-

Feed! Feed! Winter rains have washed nutrients from the soil. Fertilize all of your plants to support spring growth. For landscape shrubs and trees feed with Master's Formula 49 All Purpose Plant Food. If you have a citrus or avocado trees, use Master's Citrus Food. This is a good time to start feeding fruit trees, grapes and berries. We recommend Master's Fruit Tree & Vine Food for the nutrition your plants need to produce the best crop ever! Your roses will appreciate a monthly feeding of **Master's** Rose & Flower Food.

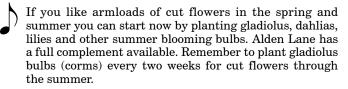


Place Yellow Jacket traps out early this month to catch the queen before she starts her family. Prevention is the

Give your lawn "a meal - not a snack" with Master Green Lawn Food.



Now is the time to set out snail bait. We carry Master's Snail control products in a variety of forms. Use Sluggo if you want an effective non toxic alternative.



Remember to water plants under eaves and in containers. It's important now to deep water trees and shrubs if it isn't raining on a regular basis. Their root systems are starting to grow now.

Start annual morning glories from seed this month and establish them in the garden or a pot by summer! Morning glories are one of the most stunning of the old fashioned garden flowers. Flowers are huge - three to five inches across - and bright, colorful blue, purple or pink. Best of all, morning glories are easy!

Prevent Wormy Apples – Codling Moth Control

Several actions can help keep this annoying critter in check. Responsible for wormy apples, pears and walnuts, the codling moth overwinters in a cocoon hidden within crevices of bark or in debris below the tree. Once it takes flight it will mate and lay eggs near fruit. Larvae will hatch and burrow into fruit.

The window for controlling these pests is narrow and timing can be critical. Use codling moth traps to identify when they are flying, apply Spinosad or Sevin immediately to kill the moths or with calculated timing to kill the just hatched larvae. Other options include bagging the fruit so larvae cannot reach it.

The whole issue of codling moth control and timing can be simplified by reading about the lifecycle and tools of the trade. Please visit our website to find a link to the UC Davis codling moth control page.



Hailey's Comments

Warm sunshine greetings to all the blue-ribbon gardeners and their faithful canines. I'm Hailey, the resident nursery dog here at Alden Lane. Spring is MARCHing through the nursery like a Pedigree Dog Show parade. Many breeds and varieties of landscaping plants have arrived for the 2008 Spring Showing. Each of the plants have been judged based on, temperament and specific physical traits such as height and width, color and shape, sun exposure, water requirement and drainage needs. Each bush, tree, and bedding

plant boasts a written list of attributes, abilities and trainability on appearance for the plants best suited for your planting habitation. I am impressed

with the similarities between the plant world and the dog world.

On a sad note I would like to show respect and honor to Waddie, our Fall Festival Hayride driver, with a 21 bark salute. This "work dog" made over 160 laps each October around the orchard on the 1946 John Deere Tractor. He has been "top show dog" on the tractor seat for the past 11 years. We mourn his recent passing with great sadness.

Follow your nose to Valley Perks Espresso Bar for an early sunrise, heart warming, beverage before your day gets harried. The Espresso Bar gate facing Alden Lane opens weekdays at 6:00 a.m. and weekends at 8:30 a.m. Bring your family litter and four pawed relations to enjoy Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate or a cold bowl of fresh water. There is seating on the outdoor patio or inside the Espresso Bar.

We recognize St. Patrick's Day this month with an Irish Setter's Blessing

May your blessings outnumber The Shamrocks that grow. And may fleas avoid you Wherever you go.



A Book Release Party!

Join us April 12 in welcoming back one of our own! Between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Sarah Jane will kick off the release of her new children's picture book, *Hope's Garden*, by reading from and signing copies of

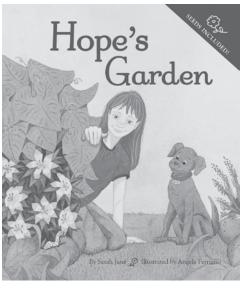
Like Alden Lane, Hope's Garden is about family, growth, and tradition. It's the story of Hope who receives flower seeds from her father and uses them to grow a beautiful garden of her own. When Hope grows up she not only continues the tradition with her children, she provides flower seeds so all children can grow their own gardens.

Now your child or a child you know can grow Hope's Garden with the flower seeds included in every copy of this book. Hope has provided you

with the seeds and the staff at Alden Lane can provide you with the knowledge and products necessary to grow a successful garden. Who knows, Hope's Garden may already be growing in your neighborhood.

*Refreshments will be provided.

ISBN: 0-9790962-0-0; 32 pages; Ages 3-7. For more information go to tvcpublishing.com.



Orchids 101

Have you been gifted with a spectacular orchid, or picked a few up along the way - and now that they are out of bloom you are trying to figure out how to make it happy so you will see blooms in your future?

THIS ORCHIDS 101 CLASS IS FOR YOU!

Sue Fordyce will guide you with simple instructions and basic "how to's" by demonstrating the gentle art of orchid growing in your home and outdoors. She will cover watering, light, repotting, humidity, temperatures, how to recognize distress and what to do about it - and much more. Get your orchid questions answered by the experts!

Orchids 101 will be repeated EVERY SECOND SATURDAY of the month from 11 am to 12 noon. The next three scheduled classes are March 8th, April 12th, and May 10th. Please pre-register by signing up at our cashier's desk. The cost per class is \$5.00 and BRING A FRIEND for FREE!

Spring In the Gift Shop!

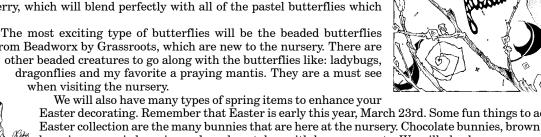
Spring is here!!! After a long cold rainy winter we are ready for some sunshine. The sunshine inspires us to get busy: busy planting and preparing the garden, busy redecorating our homes and gardens for spring, and just enjoying the longer days that spring provides.

This spring butterflies will be floating into the nursery. Butterflies seem to be appearing on all types of things, garden stakes, pots, vases, wall pieces, and other decorative items. The color for the spring season is raspberry, which will blend perfectly with all of the pastel butterflies which will be in the nursery.

> from Beadworx by Grassroots, which are new to the nursery. There are other beaded creatures to go along with the butterflies like: ladybugs, dragonflies and my favorite a praying mantis. They are a must see when visiting the nursery.

> > Easter decorating. Remember that Easter is early this year, March 23rd. Some fun things to add to any Easter collection are the many bunnies that are here at the nursery. Chocolate bunnies, brown textured bunnies, ceramic bunnies and garden stakes with bunny accents. We will also have some egg shaped soaps from La Lavande, and some real eggshells that are beautifully hand painted in Austria.

> > So if you want to get inspired please come join us in our Easter/Spring celebration here at the nursery. Our design team has put together some beautiful displays to inspire your home decorating needs.



Don't Forget Dave's Rose Fertilizer Program

This Program provides for general plant vigor and wonderful looking roses. For use on established roses(planted for at least 6 months) only in MARCH and AUGUST. For each rose apply-

illy ill MANOIT allu AUGUST. To	or each rose apply.	
• 5-5-5 E.B. Stone Fertilizer	1 cup	4# box for about 9 roses
• Bone Meal	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	4# box for 18 roses
 Magnesium Sulfate 	2 tbs.	5# bag for 70+ roses
• Sulfur*	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	5# bag for 18 roses
Chicken Fertilizer	1 shovelful	(1 bag for 9 roses)

*To supply sulfur, use one of the following: Iron Sulfate, Iron Plus, or Ph Adjuster-plus. Iron containing products can stain; wash off adjacent paving after application.

Sprinkle these four ingredients around each rose and mix into soil if possible. Then sprinkle the chicken fertilizer around each rose and water in. Remember never feed a thirsty plant!

A one-inch mulch layer may be put around your roses to conserve water and insulate roots from summer heat.

Springtime at the Nursery

Summer Bouquets Start Today

All the bulbs you plant this spring will fill your summer gardens with armloads of beautiful cut flowers. Think about what a great addition the dahlias and gladiolus will provide to a summer bouquet.

Super Glads – so named because they have larger florets and more florets per stalk. The flower stalks are taller and sturdier than any glads you have ever grown in the past. If you plant two weeks apart you will have plenty of cut flowers to arrange in summer bouquets.

Dahlias – Take your pick of separate colors in decorative, cactus and pompom flower forms. Dahlias come in a variety of sizes, colors, and heights.

Lilies – Large trumpet forms on tall stems and multi-flowered varieties are available for flower arranging including Casa Blanca and Stargazer.

Tuberous Begonias – Beautfiul hybrids with ruffled double flowers in rose form, upright and hanging basket varieties. Choose firm tubers for planting.

Check with our staff for detailed planting instructions We have the bulbs, the know-how and the experience to get you growing.

Fill Your Garden With Fragrance!

Give yourself a treat and fill the garden with fragrance. Just a few of these "old fashioned" beauties scent the garden as well as add flowers and form.

 Brown Boronia. It has a pleasant scent which combines freesia, orange blossom and other fragrances. Blooms February-March.

An all time favorite is **Winter Daphne**. It has an intense pre-spring fragrance. Daphne is a very neat, handsome plant with nosegay clusters of pink flowers that bloom in February-March.

• Lilac is one addition to the garden that transcends generational preference and is known for its sweet fragrance as well as armloads of cut flowers. Lilacs are available in a range of colors. Flowers appear in late April and May.

Although not well known,

Sarcococca rustifolia is
a powerhouse of fragrance.
Flowers in early spring are tiny,
white and nearly hidden in
foliage but fragrant enough to be
smelled many feet away.

For Fabulous Flower Beds – Read on!

Spectacular flower beds can be yours with just a little pre-planning and a trip to Alden Lane Nursery.

Plant your *sunny flower beds* with Alyssum, Dianthus, Violas, and Pansies.

For shade gardeners do not forget Primroses in a multitude of colors. All of these blooming beauties will flower for the months ahead. Also coming toward the end of March you will be able to plant Bachelor buttons, Fibrous Begonias and blue Lobelia, Marigolds and Petunias.

Come to Alden Lane Nursery for all your annual color needs. See you soon!

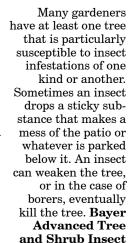
Wake up your plants. Nurture spring growth.

This time of year, especially after a cold winter like we've just had, plants emerge in spring with a voracious appetite for nitrogen. Plants are beginning to push out their new leaves. (This requires nutrients) and older leaves often appear yellow. (Greening these up also requires nutrients.)

Help your plants along in this process by having the necessary nutrients in place at the time they are needed. Applications of Maxsea Water Soluble Fertilizer, and Master Formula 49 All Purpose Fertilizer will meet this need in 2 unique ways: the Maxsea more quickly and the Formula 49 more slowly.

Bayer Advanced Tree and Shrub Insect

Control



Control is effective and is very easy to use. Apply it now to prevent this year's infestations before they begin. It is not sprayed on, but is diluted with water and poured around the base of the tree.

Hoyas



Tired of the same old houseplants and crave the interesting, unusual, easy to grow - AND often fragrant adornment for your interior or porch space?

Look no further than the hardy HOYA.

A trailing succulent which bears clusters of umbrella-like, waxy, long lasting blooms with delightful constellations of STARS at the center of each bloom. Many Hoyas are also fragrant. You will soon crave a collection of these wonderful plants.

Hoyas are typically grown in pots, indoors (most can take down to 45 degrees). They thrive on bright, indirect light, and want to be grown in a light mix of 2 parts potting soil mixed with 1 part fine orchid bark. Let them dry in between waterings, preferably about once a week (less in winter). During the warm growing season fertilize monthly with Maxsea 16-16-16.

You'll enjoy a lifelong obsession with these trailing and easy lovelies, with many cultivars to choose from to add variety to your collection.

Low maintenance, fragrant flowers and interesting foliage will soon make you a member of the happy Hoya fan club.

One application provides a whole year of protection. Get a head start and apply it to those trees you have with a reputation for infestation.

Romancing Your Garden

Webster defines "romance" as an emotional attraction. For those of us who love to garden it can become a passion. And its not only about plant material, but garden accessories can play an exciting part infilling that space where nothing else seems to work. It can be a large scale pieces such as a *fountain*, which can add a whole new dimension to your garden, or a *small figurine* nestled among those botanical beauties. *Birdbaths* not only make a wonderful centerpiece, but they also attract wildlife, creating a whole new habitat or your enjoyment. Peer into a *gazing ball* and it can take you back to that Victorian era of quaint English gardens, bestowing happiness to all those that gaze into its glistening surface. And don't stop there; *brightly colored pottery* is a spectacular accent in the garden that no only adds interest but gives you a whole other level of planting. So create a little romance in your garden, give it that personal touch that says this is your own little piece of paradise. You made need a place to sit down and reflect on the past and future of your garden and Alden lane would like to help.



Special Sale!

Announcing 20% OFF all in-stock garden benches Sale ends March 31st.

Spring & Easter Ideas

Let us put together flowering Easter baskets for your holiday celebration. These arrangements will be perfect for gift giving, or using as a holiday centerpiece. Or come for our colorful Easter Basket centerpiece class. You can choose from pure white Easter Lilies, orchids, mini-roses and more. Easter wouldn't be complete without statuary bunnies peeking out from the garden or patio. You can choose different poses, finishes and sizes. We have a bunny for every Easter occasion. Check with the staff for suggestions. Shop early! We'll be closed on Easter Sunday, March 23rd.





Create A Blooming Easter Basket For Your Holiday Table

Join us on **March 15th at 1 p.m**. to learn how to create a colorful holiday centerpiece for your table. The workshop is limited to 24 participants and will take place rain or shine! Each participant will receive a 10.5 inch brightly colored Easter Basket, 10 – four inch blooming annuals, one bird house pik and a bag of potting soil. The cost is \$40 plus tax and must be pre-paid so the materials will be at hand. Call 925-447-0280 to register.

Give the "Gift of Green" To Celebrate St. Pat's Day

You do know that everyone and everybody is Irish on St. Patrick's Day? To celebrate this wonderful day stop by the nursery and choose something green! One of the day's specialties is pot of shamrocks. We can even add a green bow to make it official! So stop by and celebrate the 'wearing of the green'.



Alden Lane's Educational Opportunities

This year
Alden Lane is
introducing
basic
gardening
classes and
scheduling
them on both
Saturdays
and Sundays
so you can
easily work
a class into



your month. A series of 4 classes will cover the most common questions we encounter from gardeners. All classes will include about 30 minutes of instruction/demonstration and optional 20-30 minutes of question/answer time.

Sunday, March 16 at 1:00 pm or Saturday, March 22 at 10:00 am

How to plant anything from a bedding flower to a 24" box or larger.
Help avoid the most likely problems and get your plants off to a great start.

Sunday, March 30 at 1:00 pm or Saturday, April 5 at 10:00 am

Sad soil?, Make it better! What constitutes good garden soil and what you can do to nurture the nature of your soil.

Sunday, April 13 at 1:00 pm or Saturday, April 19 at 10:00 am

Plant nutrition, what it takes to keep your plants looking vibrant, flowering well or fruiting well.

Sunday, April 27 at 1:00 pm or Saturday, May 3 at 10:00 am

Take the mystery out of watering.

Avoid the most common problems for new gardeners. Find out what your plant really wants and learn valuable tips to read a plant's moisture needs.

Citrus For Valley Gardeners

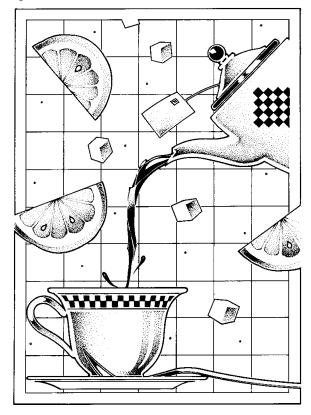
There are many varieties of citrus that do well in our area. Select a lemon, tangerine, orange or lime tree for home grown citrus. Choose a dwarf variety for a balcony or patio; they do equally well in planters or in the ground; or choose a standard size tree for larger spaces. It will add to the beauty of your landscape as well as produce fragrant flowers and delicious fruit. Follow these steps to a healthy, productive citrus:

- Select a warm, sunny location. Citrus need heat and sun and they need to be protected from the wind and winter cold. The south side of your home is the warmest and provides maximum sun.
- Provide a well drained soil that allows roots to absorb moisture, not stand in it. To avoid root rot, our heavy Valley soils need good soil preparations: dig a hole 2 times the size of the container and mix your soil 50-50 with **Master's Planting Mix**. Add and mix a cup of **Master Start** to the hole, backfill with the soil mix and water with **Root Master B-1**. For container planting, plant directly into **Master's Potting Soil**. Do not cover the top of the existing rootball and trunk with any soil.

Fertilize monthly as citrus are heavy feeders. Use **Master's Citrus Food**. We recommend the following feeding schedule for optimum growth and heavy fruit set.

Citrus Feeding & Care Schedule

Year around: Feed **Master Nursery Citrus Food** monthly. Check directions for specifics. March, May and September: Apply **Iron Sulfate** or **Iron Plus** as directed. It acidifies and adds needed iron. For insulation from the cold, spray the foliage of citrus trees with **Cloud Cover** in early November. Tent with plant blanket and add outdoor Christmas lights for extra protection. **Master Snail, Slug and Insect Bait:** Apply this bait as directed to control snails, slugs, and other hungry bugs.



GOOD GARDEN SOIL!

For each 100 square feet add:

- 10 cubic ft. of soil conditioner: **Master Gold Rush** or **Bumper Crop**® (5-8 bags)
- 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.

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

If you are preparing a vegetable garden now or just dreaming about it, it's still a great time to improve the soil. Follow our "Recipe" to improve the texture and fertility of your little piece of earth. This should be a part of your vegetable garden routine 1 to 2 times a year. Amend the valley soils to give your plants their best opportunity for growth. Keep this recipe handy for your planting needs.



A \$75.00 Value No purchase

Drawing to be held 3/31/2008.

necessary.

Win A Citrus Tree

You'll be enjoying home grown oranges, lemons or limes when you win your citrus in this month's contest. Just drop off the entry form at the nursery the next time you visit, and you may be the winner!

YOU'LL WIN:

- (1) **5 gallon citrus** of your choice (true dwarf or tree form)
- 2 cubic ft of **Master's Planting Mix**
- 4 lbs. of Master's Start
- 5 lbs. of Iron Sulfate or Iron Plus
- 5 lbs. of Master's Citrus Food

	CITRUS TREE March 2008
Name: _	
Address:	
	Yes, I would like to receive the newsletter online.

SPECIAL COUPON

Present This Coupon & A Canned Food Item
TO RECEIVE FREE

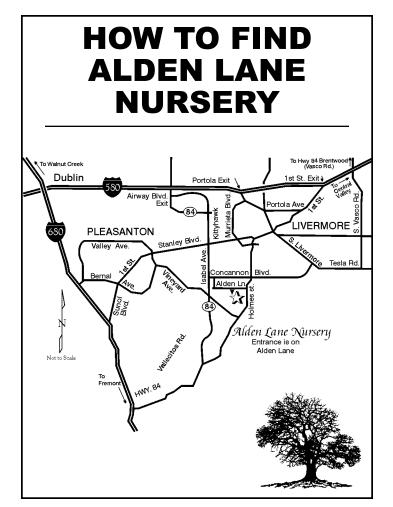


A 'Bird Feather' Decorative Plate!!

(\$3.99 Value. Decorative only. **Not** recommended for use for food.)

Food Donations are Optional. All donations go to Tri Valley Haven. One coupon per family, please!

Offer Good March 1-31, 2008.



Alden Lane Nursery Hours: Starting March 1st

8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. everyday. Closed on Easter Sunday. Have a wonderful holiday!!



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

Change Service Requested

IMPORTANT!
Time Critical
Please Deliver Promptly

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