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## **Mexican Mint Marigold... an Herb for Your Fall Garden**

by Mary Cennamo  
Bexar County Master Gardener

*I grow many of my herbs in containers, close to the kitchen, where I will have easy access for harvesting. A new favorite in this garden is the Mexican Mint Marigold (Tagetes lucida).*

*But Mexican Mint Marigold is also a fabulous fall-blooming perennial for your landscape. Compact, bushy plants will get about 2 feet tall and wide. In late summer or early fall, they will be covered in a profusion of sunny yellow, marigold-like blooms attracting many butterflies and other pollinators to your garden!*

*Start new transplants in the early fall when the temperatures have cooled down, but the soil is still warm. Or plant in the spring, after the last frost, in a full sun to afternoon shade location. While it is tolerant of a wide variety of soils, it must have good drainage. Incorporating a couple of inches of compost into the soil before planting is a good practice. Water regularly until established. Drought-tolerant, Mexican mint marigold will appreciate a deep watering once a week during the hot summer months.*

*It frequently dies back to the ground in the winter. In late winter or early spring, cut the plant back to a few inches tall, to remove any winter damage and allow it to put up fresh new growth. Mulching with 2 inches of compost is often all the fertilizer it needs, but you can use an all-purpose fertilizer scratched into the soil if needed.*

*If grown in containers, you may need to water a little more frequently than if grown in the ground depending on the size of the container and its location. You can use a water-soluble fertilizer to encourage growth as needed.*

*Few pests bother it, and it is easily propagated by seed, layering, spring divisions, and cuttings.*

*Mexican Mint Marigold is also known as Texas Tarragon. It can be substituted for French Tarragon with its anise or licorice-favored leaves, which does not grow well in our hot, Texas climate. Harvest the leaves throughout its growing season from spring through frost. Like most herbs, the leaves are their most flavorful before they bloom. You can add the finely chopped herb to salads, use it in roasting fish and meats, and even make a tea from its steeped leaves. Adding the herb to cooked dishes such as soups, at the end, will help it retain more flavor.*

*This EarthKind<sup>®</sup> plant is a great addition to any herb, pollinator, or perennial garden. Many local nurseries have Mexican Mint Marigold available for fall planting.*

*I have included a recipe for Summer Chicken Salad, that has Mexican Mint Marigold as an ingredient. I hope you enjoy it!*

### **Fall Chicken Salad**

#### *Ingredients:*

- 1/3 cup of seedless red grapes, sliced in half*
- 1/3 cup chopped roasted pecans*
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise*
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped Mexican Mint Marigold*
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar (I sometimes use 2 tablespoons)*
- Salt and pepper to taste*
- 2 cups cubed cooked rotisserie chicken*

*Mix the first 7 ingredients and then mix in the cubed chicken. I find the flavor is better if the chicken salad is served the next day, allowing the flavors longer to blend together.*