



Baker County Extension Service Monthly Newsletter

August 2011

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Dear Extension Friends,

I hope that everyone is having a great Summer. While the rain has returned to Northeast Florida, so have high temperatures and high heat indexes. Please take the time to make sure that you are hydrated if working outside. The county-wide burn ban has been lifted, but even with the rain there is a potential for wildfires. Please continue to take precautions. Thank you to everyone who has attended programs and stopped by the office over the past month. As always, if we can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Davis
County Extension Director / Ag Agent
Baker County Extension Service



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Highlights in Horticulture

By:

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Species Spotlight: The Pumpkin!

Pumpkins come in many shapes, sizes, and colors (due to their ability to cross-pollinate readily among themselves) and are mostly grown for making jack o' lanterns and pies in the fall. While the best yields come from pumpkins planted in late March and early April (making them ready for harvest in late June and early July), these pumpkins must be stored until used in October and November, which can be problematic.

Pumpkins seeded by July 4th should be ready by Halloween, although could be more affected by virus and fungal diseases, impaired by fruit-set problems, and produce small size pumpkins. Early August seeding provides the best fall crop for Thanksgiving, but is usually too late for Halloween unless you can grow a variety that is ready for harvest 90 days from seeding or 80 days when grown from transplants.

Most pumpkins, except the bush types, need at least 6 feet in each direction to spread and grow. Plant three to four seeds in a hill, and then remove all but the strongest plant when they reach 2-4 inches tall. Pumpkins respond well to liberal amounts of organic compost. A good growing tip is to place one bag of compost (chicken or cow manure), under each hill before seeding. Mix a handful of 6-6-6 fertilizer into each hill when preparing, then side-dress with a handful of 6-6-6 every 3 weeks or as needed. All pumpkins have both male and female flowers on each plant, and bees are needed to transfer the pollen. When the plant has two small pumpkins about the size of baseballs, remove all others as they form. This allows the two that remain to reach fairly large size.

Once harvested, pumpkins keep well for a few weeks, but long time storage of 1-4 months is very difficult to accomplish in Florida. Decay is the main source of loss. Where possible, store them in a dry (70% relative humidity) and cool (50-60°F) place. Spread the pumpkins out rather than stacking them up. Some good results have been obtained by curing pumpkins before storing. This was done by keeping them for 10 days at 80-85°F and a high relative humidity (80-85%).

Recommended varieties:



For Jack O' Lanterns

- 'Connecticut Field' — the standard general purpose or large Halloween pumpkin that is used more than any other variety for carving into jack o' lanterns. Fruits have a hard orange, smooth, and slightly ribbed skin. It is also used for making pies, canning, and stock feed.
- 'Big Max' — big pumpkin well-suited for Florida gardens.
- 'Big Moon' — also grown for show (some may reach 200 pounds under ideal growing conditions)
- 'Howden' and 'Jackpot' — best for Florida.
- 'Jack O' Lantern' — good, small jack o' lantern (grows about the size of a man's head).
- 'Funny Face' — suited to small gardens with its semi-bush plants.
- 'Spirit' — good for both small jack o' lanterns and pies.
- 'Atlantic Giant' — perhaps the top show pumpkin variety; it has been weighed in at over 200 pounds in Florida, and over 800 pounds elsewhere.



For Pie Pumpkins

- 'Small Sugar' — the most popular and widely grown pie pumpkin. These round, flattened pumpkins are small, averaging only 6-7 pounds.
- Other common varieties of pie pumpkins are Cinderella, Triple Treat, Spookie, Winter Luxury, Cheese, Kentucky Field, and Cushaws. The Cushaws produce medium-sized elongated fruits, with necks and bulbous ends.

Ornamental Pumpkins

These miniature fruits are 3-4 inches in diameter. Varieties are: Munchkin, Sweetie Pie, Bushkin, Minijack and Jack-Be-Little.

House & Home: Mold in the Home

It's important to know that mold is part of our natural environment. Outdoors, molds naturally break down dead organic matter such as fallen leaves and dead trees. Mold grows when tiny invisible spores that float through the air land on moist or wet surfaces. These mold spores need 3 things in order to grow: moisture, nutrients and warm temperatures. The best way to prevent mold growth in the home is to control the moisture.



Controlling the Moisture

To control moisture problems in your home, you must find and eliminate the sources of the excess moisture, and you must dry up existing water and moisture. Otherwise, your moisture problems will keep recurring.

Look for the Source of the Problem

Find out where the moisture is coming from. Is your plumbing leaking into walls, ceilings, or floors? Are stopped-up drains causing standing water?

Check washing machine hoses, shower tile grout, and water heaters for leakage. Experts recommend that homeowners check these three areas once a month.

Check for any excessive air leakage. If outside air can flow into your house, outdoor moisture also can flow into your house. Windows, doors, electric outlets, and window air conditioning units can leak moisture into your home. Leaky windows are easily noticed because water will stream down the window. The windowsill may also be rotten because of the leak. Weatherstripping and caulking may be needed.

Check your air conditioner. Make sure that the filter is not clogged and that the evaporator cooling coils are not iced over. Look for water that may be flowing back into the room (for instance, from the condenser of a room air conditioner).

Remove Moisture Build-Up

Once corrections have been made, a clammy house can best be dried out by heating and cooling by turns.

Turn on the heat. Use a high temperature setting (80°F) so the unit will not cycle off too often. This will draw moisture out of the furnishings.

Then follow with air conditioning. Use a low setting (65°F) so the unit will not cycle off too often. Allow the air conditioning to operate for two or three hours before resetting to normal.

If the moisture level is still not sufficiently reduced, repeat the heating/air conditioning cycle.

Prevent Future Moisture Problems

To minimize the risk of future moisture problems, follow these guidelines when opening windows, using exhaust fans, and using air conditioning.

- Before opening your windows to bring in outside air, check the weather report to find out the predicted dew point or forecasted nighttime low temperature. If this will be 55°F or below, natural ventilation can be used.
- Use exhaust fans for short periods for odor and moisture removal. Remember, though, that during humid weather, outside air may hold more moisture than inside air. Ten minutes of fan operation will remove most of the moisture from the air after bathing or showering.
- During humid weather, run your air conditioning regularly rather than opening windows.
- Use the slowest air conditioner fan speed available on your air conditioner.

August 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 	3	4	5 	6
7	8	9	10	11 	12 	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Upcoming Programs are marked with a Program Area Symbol. Please match these symbols with the list on the following page for more information about the program.



Upcoming Programs & Events

Programs will be held at the Baker County Extension Office (Agricultural Center) unless otherwise noted.

- Aug. 2 Invasive Plants Workshop, 4:30—7:30 pm, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Hwy. 339 between Bronson and Trenton, FL.** Topics include species identification, herbicide control, mapping, partnerships and more. Please contact the Levy Soil and Water Conservation District at (352) 486-2672 ext. 3 for more information.
- Aug. 5 Maximizing Profits by Extending Pine Rotations, 9:00 am—1:00 pm, UF/IFAS Columbia County Extension Office, 164 Mary Ethel Lane, Lake City, FL 32025.** Topics will include economic benefits of extended rotations, selling timber, applying selective thinning, wildlife and forest health benefits and more. Refreshments provided. To reserve a space or for more information, please contact Stan Shepard at (386) 758-5713 or Stanley.Sheperd@freshfromflorida.com
- Aug. 11 Orchard Management Series Part 4: Summer Orchard Management, 8:00am to 4:30pm, UF/IFAS Suwannee Valley Research and Education Center, Live Oak, FL.** This is the last course of a four part series held at the N. FL Research and Education Center—Suwannee Valley, 8202 CR 417, Live Oak, FL. Topics will include: nutrient management, propagation, harvesting, end of season assessment, and developing next years orchard plan. Featured crops include grapes, pears, and figs. \$80 registration fee due 1 week prior; late registration, add \$25. Registration forms available at the Baker County Extension Office or visit <http://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu>. For more information, contact Sarah White at (386) 362-1725, ext. 102 or sewhite@ufl.edu
- Aug. 12 Food Preservation Class, 9:30 am—12 noon, Baker County Extension Service.** This program will emphasize the proper techniques in canning foods safely. Registration is \$20.00 per person and due by August 9. For more information or to make a reservation, please contact the Baker County Extension Service at (904) 259-3520. Space is limited.
- Aug. 25 IPM Pasture Pest Management Field Day, 3:00 pm—6:00 pm, Allison Brothers Farm, 2728 SW Cypress Lake Road, Lake City, FL.** This field day will cover Integrated Pest Management (IPM) including biological, physical and chemical control of pests that typically invade hayfields and grazing pastures. Registration is \$5.00 per person, including dinner. Please RSVP to the Baker County Extension Office by August 19 at (904) 259-3520.
- Aug. 25 WFREC Extension Farm Field Day, UF/IFAS West Florida Research and Education Center, Jay, FL.** For more information, please contact Robin Vickers at rvickers@ufl.edu or (580) 983-5216 ext. 113.



There are no 4-H club meetings or activities scheduled for August.



Quick News and Notes

- **CAMP CHERRY LAKE**—Thank you to all of the participants for this year's excursion to Camp Cherry Lake. Baker County 4-H camped this year with Nassau and Madison Counties and a great time was had by all. We had a wonderful week of weather, with rain for only a couple of days. The campers learned a lot of skills including team building, crafts, rocketry, archery, and canoeing/kayaking. We also had a campfire night and a flag retirement ceremony. I have include a few pictures from camp below and there is also a video on YouTube of our week of adventure(<http://www.youtube.com/user/BakerCountyExtension>). I look forward to next year's camping experience as I know it will be just as much fun or more so than this year.
- **LIVESTOCK CLUB—Steer/Swine:** Those participating in the Market Animal Project with a steer or swine should be getting your buyer letters out this month... the sooner the better! If you were not at the last meeting to get an address list, please contact Ms. B.J. and she will get one to you. **Rabbits/Chickens:** This is the month to get your rabbit and chicken entry forms in. Entry forms can be found in the Baker County Fair book which should be out soon.
- If you have news pertaining to Baker County 4-H, please share. Contact Michael Davis for more details.



Timber Mart—South, 2nd Quarter Summary—Stumpage Prices

The information in the following table is extracted from the Timber Mart-South, 2nd Quarter 2011, covering the months of April—June, 2011. This report was released in July 2011. This information can be very useful for observing trends over time, but may not reflect the most current condition at a particular location. Region 1 in the table covers central and northeast Florida, while Region 2 covers the panhandle. Please remember that in addition to general market conditions, prices may vary due to differences in tract size and access, quality, quantity and size of timber and distance to mills. It is always advantageous for landowners that are considering a timber sale to contact a consulting forester or their county forester to obtain the most up-to-date information concerning a sale.

Product	Region	Average (\$)	Range (\$)	\$ / Ton
Pine Pulpwood (\$ / Std. Cord)	Northeast (1)	23	16-30	
	Northwest (2)	28	25-32	
	Average	26		10
Chip-n-Saw (\$ / Std. Cord)	Northeast (1)	36	28-44	
	Northwest (2)	46	41-51	
	Average	41		15
Pine Sawtimber (\$ / MBF Scrib.)	Northeast (1)	232	212-252	
	Northwest (2)	185	160-210	
	Average	209		28
Oak Sawtimber (\$ / MBF Doyle)	Northeast (1)	172	136-207	
	Northwest (2)	146	114-178	
	Average	159		18
Mixed Hardwood Sawtimber (\$ / MBF Doyle)	Northeast (1)	166	142-190	
	Northwest (2)	95	68-123	
	Average	131		15
Pine Plylogs (\$ / MBF Scrib.)	Northeast (1)	210	183-238	
	Northwest (2)	211	177-244	
	Average	210		28
Power Poles \$ / MBF Scrib.)	Northeast (1)	319	228-409	
	Northwest (2)	386	330-442	
	Average	352		47
Hardwood Pulp (\$ / Std. Cord)	Northeast (1)	22	16-28	
	Northwest (2)	16	10-23	
	Average	19		7

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Extension programs are open to all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, handicap, or national origin. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person needing a special accommodation to participate in any activity, should contact the Baker County Cooperative Extension Service at 1025 West Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny, FL 32063 or telephone (904) 259-3520 no later than five (5) days prior to the event. Hearing impaired persons can access the foregoing telephone by contacting the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8770 (voice) or 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).

Baker County Farmers Market

The Baker County Farmers Market is open for the season! Please come out and support local growers, producers and craft-makers at the Baker County Farmers Market. The Market is held at Memorial Park (next to the football stadium). There will be many attractions throughout the year including live entertainment and animal adoptions.

If you are interested in booth space at the Farmers Market, please contact the Baker County Chamber of Commerce at (904) 259-6433 or visit the Chamber at their office at 20 East Macclenny Avenue.

The Farmers Market will run 8am to 1pm every Saturday from March 5 through November 19, 2011.

