



## The Baker Bulletin

A  
Baker County  
Extension  
Service Monthly  
Newsletter

### Baker County Extension Service

1025 W. Macclenny Ave.  
Macclenny, FL 32063

Phone: (904) 259-3520

Email: baker@ifas.ufl.edu

Hours: M—F 8:30am to 5:00pm  
(Closed Noon to 1:00pm for Lunch)

#### County Agents

**Alicia Lamborn**  
Horticulture Agent

**Shaina Spann**  
4-H Youth Development Agent

**Alicia Halbritter**  
Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent

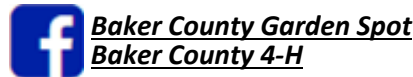
Dear Extension Friends,

We thank everyone that donated to our local food drives last month! Both the Thanksgiving baskets and Peanut Butter Challenge were a huge success! We also thank everyone that took the time to complete our newsletter survey. We plan to make some minor changes to the newsletter in the coming year and hope to include the topics that our readers suggested. Congratulations to our survey gift basket winner — Kathy Bodkin — and thanks to each of you for being a supporter of Baker County Extension programs!

Sincerely,

Alicia Lamborn, County Director  
UF/IFAS Extension Baker County

Congratulations to our  
newsletter survey winner  
Kathy Bodkin  
Winner of Wildlife Gift Basket!



Join us for an online course:

## Growing Backyard Blueberries and Blackberries

Presented by Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent for Baker County

This self-paced online course teaches you how to grow blueberry and blackberry plants in Florida home gardens. Topics include variety selection, preparing to plant, care and maintenance, pest management, and even a section on raspberries!

Access to our virtual classroom (including an instructional video, gardening resources, and recipes) will be made available no later than December 15th.

Register online for access to this FREE class:  
<https://forms.gle/tRG4MphEbob6xQLW6>

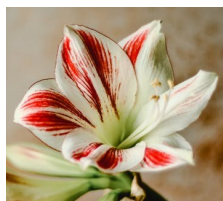
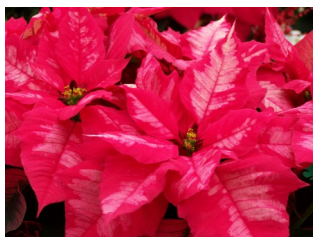
# Highlights in Horticulture

By: *Alicia Lamborn,*  
*Horticulture Agent*



## Holiday Plants— Poinsettias & More

**Poinsettias** are a holiday staple and with all the colors to choose from, you're sure to find one to brighten any room. In the store, select plants with closed flower buds. Those with open buds and visible pollen may not last through the holidays looking like perfection. Keep them in a brightly lit area inside or on a sunny porch, but protected from drying wind/drafts and frost or freezing temperatures. No need to apply fertilizer, but water when the soil surface is dry to the touch and remove any excess water from the saucer or decorative sleeve afterward.

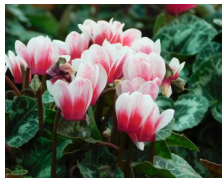


**Amaryllis** bulbs can be forced to bloom for the holidays. Leave the top half of the bulb exposed in a container that allows two inches of space between the bulb and the pot. Water it well at planting, but then wait until the bulb begins to sprout to water again.

Place in direct sunlight, but move to bright, indirect light once the flowers open.

**African Violets** are good for the home because they prefer indirect light and warmth. A pot with good drainage, adequate moisture applied every week or two, and an occasionally feeding will keep them happy for years to come.

**Cyclamens** are colorful indoor accent plants that can also be grown as winter annuals outdoors. Dark green to silvery leaves and recurved twisting flowers in shades of red, pink, or white make this a unique plant.



**Norfolk Island Pines** are often decorated as "mini Christmas trees" since their dark green, needle-like leaves are perfect for the occasion. In North Florida, they make good potted plants. Grow them in full sun or a bright indoor space, be careful not to overwater, and be ready to repot your plant every 2-3 years.

**Rosemary Topiaries** are both attractive and pleasant smelling. Trim every few weeks to encourage new growth and to maintain the desired topiary shape. If moved to an outdoor herb garden, make sure it gets full sun and has well-drained soil.



**Christmas Cactus** is considered by some to be the perfect low maintenance holiday plant. Just don't overwater or leave it out during a freeze, and it will be happy in the house or on a covered patio.

## Small holes in trees are sign of Sapsuckers

Noticed any pencil-sized holes on tree trunks lately? If these holes are evenly spaced and forming concentric rings around the trunk, then you can be confident a Sapsucker has visited rather than a wood boring insect. The Yellow-bellied sapsucker (*Syphrapicus varius*) is a Florida native, migratory woodpecker that graces us with their presence during the cooler months of October through March.

The Sapsucker is a small to medium-sized bird with a red crown, black and white facial stripes, white wing patches, black bib, and yellowish belly. Males also have red throats. While the Sapsucker is an attractive winter resident, the concentric rings of holes in our various landscape trees created by these birds last year-round. Flowing sap from these holes, and the insects attracted to them, are part of this woodpecker's diet. They will also eat suet provided at feeding stations. [\(Learn how to make DIY suet here!\)](#)



Yellow-bellied sapsuckers leave close, evenly spaced holes in tree trunks. Photos by Elmer Verhasselt, Bugwood.org

Fortunately, the damage is usually not harmful and rarely requires control measures for healthy trees. Severe damage typically occurs when large amounts of bark is lost, or a secondary infection occurs from pests/diseases, often on trees that are weak or unhealthy to begin with. But if the site of all those holes is unbearable, the most effective deterrent involves the use of aluminum flashing, burlap sacks, or plastic sheeting to prevent access to tree trunks favored by sapsuckers until the migration has passed. Hanging shiny objects such as CDs, and the use of sticky materials to deter perching are far less effective. And because these birds are protected by state and federal wildlife law, trapping or shooting Yellow-bellied sapsuckers is not permitted. So if you're like me, you try not to view the holes as damage, but instead focus on the beauty of nature's artwork!



# Giving Back to Baker County

Thanks to Extension friends, 4-H families, and community partners, food donations poured into the Extension Office last month to help local families in need during the holidays.

Thanksgiving baskets were provided to 20 families this year as part of Baker County Farm Bureau's new annual Farm City Week tradition. This year, Baker County Farm Bureau and Farm Bureau Insurance partnered with Bennett's Feed Store to donate the majority of the food needed for a full Thanksgiving meal in each basket.

Additionally, the Extension Office's Peanut Butter Challenge brought in 325 jars of peanut butter—all for our local food bank, The Samaritan House! The Florida Peanut Federation will also be providing a matching donation so that more families can be helped.





## No Bake DESSERT



### Materials and Ingredients:

- Measuring cups
- Large microwavable bowl
- Spatula
- Gallon zipper storage bag
- Microwave
- Pot holder(s)
- 1 C Powdered Sugar
- 12 oz. chocolate chips
- 4 C Graham cracker style cereal
- 3+ C Mini marshmallows
- Optional: candy, sprinkles, nuts, or colored candies!

### Directions:

#### Part 1

Pour 12 ounces (1.5 C) of chocolate chips in microwave safe bowl. Microwave for 30 seconds at a time until melted. Stir between heating sessions.

#### Part 2

Pour 4 cups of graham style cereal and 1.5 cups of mini marshmallows into melted chocolate. \*You can add nuts at this time. Fold together.

#### Part 3

Scoop chocolate cereal and marshmallows into zipper bag. Pour 1 cup powdered sugar into bag, close bag, and shake well.

#### Part 4

Add in remaining marshmallows. Add optional extras at this time.



Happy  
Holidays!



# Barnyard Bulletin

By:  
*Alicia Halbritter,*  
*Agriculture Agent*

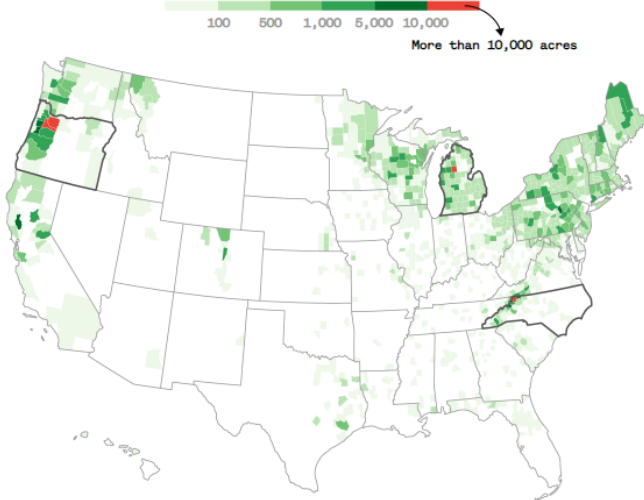


## Christmas Trees in Florida?!

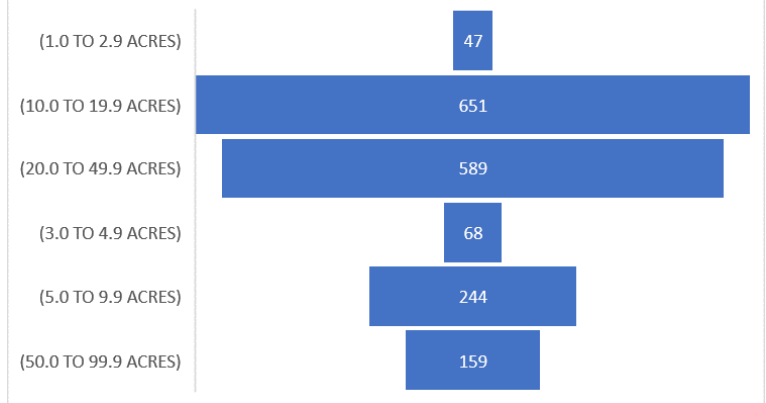
Although Christmas tree production in Florida is not comparable to some other states industry size, it is quite larger than most would expect. Florida boasts a total of 1,758 Christmas tree farms according to the 2017 Census of Agriculture. These farms currently house 28,000 trees and had over \$377,000 in sales in 2017. For every 1 tree cut down, 2-3 more are planted each year. This ensures that in 7 to 8 years time when the trees are ready to be harvested that there are trees of various sizes, there will be enough to meet demand despite some trees dying over the years, and that the operation can grow and increase sales. Nationally, over 30 million trees are cut every year and followed by the planting of 85 million trees for future harvests.

In Florida we generally see 5 different types of trees grown for the use as Christmas trees. The varieties include the most popular, Red Cedar, as well as Sand Pine, Virginia Pine, Leyland Cypress, and an Arizona Cypress. These species of trees can thrive in the Florida environment and work well as Christmas trees because of their scent and strong branches. Check out more information and get a list of local Christmas tree farms here: <http://www.flchristmastrees.com/>

Christmas Tree Production across the US



Florida Christmas Tree Farm Size



Red Cedar



Sand Pine



Virginia Pine



Leyland Cypress 'Leighton Green'



Arizona Cypress 'Carolina Sapphire'

UF/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center – Quincy  
**Tung Oil Production Webinar**



**Are you interested in growing tung trees?**

If the answer is yes, please join us on

**December 10, 2020, 10-11 a.m. EST**

Speakers: Drs. Patrick Minogue and  
Anna Osiecka

Zoom meeting link:

[ufl.zoom.us/j/96348342909](https://ufl.zoom.us/j/96348342909)

**We will discuss**

- Tung biology
- Tung cultivation
- Tung oil applications
- Tung oil production and trade

