



Baker County Extension Service Monthly Newsletter

June 2011

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Dear Extension Friends,

It looks like Summer has arrived in Northeast Florida. Thanks to all of you who have taken advantage of our soil testing for your gardens, pastures and lawns. If you have any questions about the results please contact Michael Davis or Alicia Lamborn. According to the latest reports, Northeast Florida is still in a D2, or severe drought. Please keep an eye out for the potential for wildfires, especially considering the fire in the areas north of Baker County. If you have specific questions about burning, contact our County Forester at (904) 259-5128. As always, if we can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Davis
County Extension Director / Ag Agent



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Alicia Lamborn

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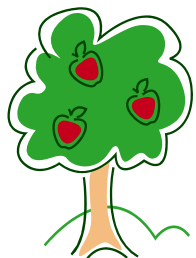
Interim 4-H Agent



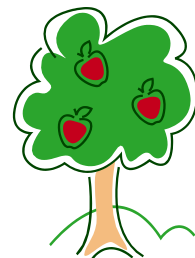
Highlights in Horticulture

By:

Alicia Lamborn,
Horticulture Agent



Fruit Tree Calendar: June



The following fruit trees require attention this month. All fertilizer recommendations are for optimum growth of fruit trees. It is important to remember that you always have the option of applying less fertilizer, but the amount of fertilizer should not exceed these recommendations.

It's a busy month for fruit growers...

Apples: Fertilize this month using 10-10-10 with micronutrients, esp. Zinc and Boron; apply 1 pound (2 cups) of fertilizer for each year of age, up to 7.5 pounds.

Blueberries: *Year 1:* Fertilize using 1 ounce (2 Tbsp.) per plant of 12-4-8 with 2% magnesium (Mg). If plants are mulched heavily, use 1.5 ounces (3 Tbsp.) per plant per application rather than one ounce. Spread fertilizer evenly over a circle 2 feet in diameter with the plant in the center. *Year 2:* Fertilize using 2 ounces (1/4 cup) per plant of 12-4-8 with 2% magnesium (Mg). Spread fertilizer evenly over a circle 3 feet in diameter with the plant in the center. *Year 3+:* Fertilize using 3 ounces (< 1/2 cup) per plant of 12-4-8 with 2% magnesium (Mg). Spread fertilizer evenly over a 4 foot diameter circle, or broadcast in a continuous band 3 to 4 feet wide, centered on the plant row.



Figs: Pruning should occur only as needed and after fruit ripening (early in the summer) to allow for flower-bud initiation for the next year. For late-maturing cultivars, pruning may result in a significant reduction in yield the next year.

Muscadine Grapes: *Year 1:* Fertilize this month using 1/4 pound (1/2 cup) of 8-8-8 or 10-10-10; apply the fertilizer in bands about 1 foot to either side of the vine.

Pears: Apply 1/2 pound (1 cup) of 6-6-6 or 8-8-8 per year of age, up to 5 pounds total. Excessive fertilization should be avoided as it may make the tree more susceptible to fire blight.

Pecans (Newly Planted): A soil fertility test should be conducted prior to planting and no fertilizer should be placed in the planting hole during installation. *Year 1:* Fertilize early this month using 10-10-10 with micronutrients, 1 pound (2 cups) per tree. *Year 2:* Fertilizer early this month using 10-10-10 with micronutrients, 2 pounds (4 cups) per tree. *Note: Fertilizer should contain Zinc (Zn) to prevent nutrient deficiencies. Do not apply fertilizer in a clump or directly against the trunk, instead spread out the fertilizer in a circle with a 3- to 5- foot diameter around the trunk of the tree.*

Pecans (Established): June 1st – submit leaf samples for nutrient testing; sample 25 leaflet pairs from fully expanded leaves in the mid-portion of the terminal growth.



Pecans (Established): Fertilize this month according to nutrient test results. Otherwise, use general recommendation: Fertilize using 10-10-10 with micronutrients, 2 pounds (4 cups) per inch trunk diameter, measured one foot above the soil (2-4 lbs for bearing trees). Large trees (30 inches or more in diameter) may require 60 to 120 pounds of fertilizer. *Note: Fertilizer should contain Zinc (Zn) to prevent nutrient deficiencies. Some growers prefer to bury fertilizer at 10 or more sites below the tree canopy to reduce runoff and increase fertilizer use efficiency compared to a broadcast application.*

Persimmons: Apply second of three applications of fertilizer; fertilize using 1/2 to 1 pound (1-2 cups) of 10-10-10 with micronutrients per year of age. All three applications should not exceed 10-15 pounds per year.

To access our Fruit & Nut Calendar, visit our website and look under 'Gardening Information'

Living Well in Baker County

By:
Melanie Thomas,
FCS Agent

Preserving Foods Safely: Freezing Vegetables

Freezing is an excellent way to preserve fresh vegetables at home. Freezing does **not** sterilize food; the extreme cold simply retards growth of microorganisms and slows down changes that affect quality or cause spoilage in food.



The quality of frozen vegetables depends on the quality of the fresh products and how they are handled from the time they are picked until they are ready to eat. It is important to start with high-quality vegetables because freezing will not improve the product's quality.

Make sure the vegetables you plan to freeze are at peak flavor and texture. Whenever possible, harvest in the cool part of the morning and freeze within a few hours. Wash vegetables thoroughly in cold water, lifting them out of water as grit settles to the bottom of the washing container. Sort according to size for blanching and packing.

Blanching

Blanching (scalding vegetables in boiling water or steam for a short period of time) is a must for almost all vegetables to be frozen. Blanching slows or stops the action of enzymes that can cause loss of flavor, color and texture. Blanching cleanses the surface of dirt and organisms, brightens the color and helps retard loss of vitamins. Blanching also wilts or softens vegetables and makes them easier to pack.

Blanching time is crucial and varies with the vegetable and its size. Underblanching stimulates the activity of enzymes and is worse than no blanching. Overblanching causes loss of flavor, color, vitamins and minerals. In order to ensure proper blanching times please visit the Baker County Extension website at <http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu> where we have a link to the National Center for Home Food Preservation or give us a call at 904-259-3520.

Cooling

As soon as blanching is complete, cool vegetables quickly and thoroughly to stop the cooking process. To cool, plunge the basket of vegetables immediately into a large quantity of cold water, 60°F or below. Cooling vegetables should take the same amount of time as blanching.

Drain vegetables thoroughly after cooling. Extra moisture can cause a loss of quality when vegetables are frozen.

Two basic packing methods are recommended for frozen vegetables -- dry pack and tray pack.

Dry Pack -- Place the blanched and drained vegetables into meal-size freezer bags or containers. Pack tightly to cut down on the amount of air in the package. Leave 1/2-inch headspace at the top of rigid containers and close securely. For freezer bags, fill to within three inches of the top, twist and fold back top of bag; tie with a twist or rubber band about 1/2- to 3/4-inch from the food. This will allow space for the food to expand. Provision for headspace is not necessary for foods such as broccoli, asparagus and brussel sprouts that do not pack tightly in containers.















Tray Pack -- Place chilled, well-drained vegetables in a single layer on shallow trays or pans. Place in freezer until firm, then remove and quickly fill bags or containers. Close and freeze immediately. Tray-packed foods do not freeze in a block, but remain loose, so the amount needed can be poured from the container and the package re-closed.

Labeling and Storing

Label packages with the name of the product and the freezing date. Freeze at once at 0°F or lower. Most vegetables maintain high quality for 8 to 12 months at 0°F or lower. Longer storage will not make food unfit for use, but may impair quality.

Source: Judy A. Harrison and Elizabeth Andress; adapted for use in Florida by Amy Simonne , Preserving Food: Freezing Vegetables (EDIS Document FCS8768).

June 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 		

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.

-  **June 8 Vegetation Management for Wildlife: Field Tour, 9am—12pm, UF/IFAS Range Cattle Research and Education Center, 3401 Experiment Station Road, Ona, FL.** Topics include prescribed fire, mechanical treatments, plant ID, ID and control of invasive exotic plants and financial assistance for management. Register online at <http://wildlifevegetation.eventbrite.com> or call Reyna Speckman at (863)735-1314, ext. 206.
-  **June 9 UF/IFAS Tri-County Biofuel Symposium, 8:30am—4pm, UF/IFAS Flagler County Extension Office, 150 Sawgrass Rd., Bunnell, FL.** This workshop will focus on biofuel options from timber and crop resources in the area of Flagler, Putnam and St. Johns counties. Registration is \$15, lunch included. For additional information, contact Sharon Treen (386)437-7464 or streen@ufl.edu. Full details of the program can be found at: <http://www.floridaenergy.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/Biofuel-Symposium-2011-Registration.pdf>
-  **June 13 Vegetable Garden Pest Management Class, 6pm—7pm, UF/IFAS Baker County Agricultural Center, 1025 W. Macclenny Ave., Macclenny, FL.** Topics include dealing with pests such as weeds, insects, diseases and nematodes in the vegetable garden. There is no cost to attend, but please register by contacting the Baker County Extension Office at (904)259-3520 by June 9 to confirm attendance. We must have at least 10 people registered to hold the class, so sign up today!
-  **June 15 Urban Farming Workshop, 9am—3pm, UF/IFAS Orange County Extension Education Center, 6021 South Conway Rd. Orlando, FL.** Program topics include successful techniques for alternative small farms and market gardens in or near urban centers. Details can be found online at <http://orange.ifas.ufl.edu>. For further information, please contact Darla Wilkes at (407)254-9202 or darla.wilkes@ocfl.net.
-  **June 16 Managing Risk for Beef Cattle Production, 6:30pm—8:30pm, UF/IFAS Baker County Agricultural Center, 1025 W. Macclenny Ave., Macclenny, FL.** This seminar will be broadcast via the Polycom system. Topics include market trends and outlook for 2011, overview of the SE Cattle Advisor website and using decision aids to manage risk. There is no cost to attend, but please register by contacting the Baker County Extension Office at (904)259-3520 by June 13 to confirm attendance. We need at least 10 people registered to hold the class.
-  **June 16 Lee County Tree Farming and Healthy Trees Workshop, Division of Forestry Office in Fort Myers, FL.** This workshop will focus on creating a forest system that is pro-active and fits the land. Topics include management plans, tree crops to consider, creating a fire safe forest, silvicultural BMPs and food plot options. Registration is \$15 prior to the workshop (by check) and \$20 if paid on the day of the workshop. For additional information please contact Michael Weston at (239)690-3500, ext. 118 or email him at Michael.Weston@freshfromflorida.com.

4-H Events for April



- June 10—Registrations for Camp Cherry Lake Due
June 11—Camp Cherry Lake Counselor Training—Contact the Extension Office for details
June 14—Camp Cherry Lake Camper Orientation—6:00pm—Ag Center Classroom
June 23—Livestock Club Meeting—6:00pm—Ag Center Classroom
June 27 to July 1—Camp Cherry Lake—Please see 4-H page for details

The Clover Chronicle

By:

*Michael Davis,
Extension Director*

4-H CAMP CHERRY LAKE—June 10th Registration Deadline

The theme is “The Myth, The Legend, The Camp” Baker will be camping with Madison and Nassau counties again this year, **The week of June 27th - July 1st** . It promises to be a ton of fun. Kayak and Canoeing; Swimming, Environmental Education topics, Archery, and Photography are a few of the classes to choose from. Night time camp fires, singing, and line dancing galore.

Camp is \$200.00 to cover all the expenses, plus canteen, T-Shirt and bus travel. We have devised a budget system to help you with the costs of camp. Make checks to Baker County 4-H.

Sponsorships and donations are also accepted if you would like to help sponsor a child in need. Contact the Baker County Extension Office for additional details.



**More Than You Ever
Imagined!**



Tiger in the Trunk Campaign

The Tiger in the Trunk campaign was undertaken last fall and winter by the Baker County 4-H Program. The purpose of the program is to provide stuffed animal tigers to Officers of the Baker County Sheriff's Department to be given to children in crisis. Children are especially vulnerable during a crisis situation and the idea is that the officer responding to the crisis can give the Tiger in the Trunk as a gift to the child as a small measure of comfort and hope.

This program was completed in cooperation with Avon through their local representative, Kaycee Heinz. Approximately half of the total cost of the 29 tigers being donated was raised by the HorsePower and Archery 4-H Clubs of Baker County. Avon donated the remainder of the cost. We would like to thank all of the individuals that donated money to the cause and to all of the effort put into this program by the 4-H youth.



Weed Species Spotlight - Showy Crotalaria

Showy Crotalaria, or rattlebox, (*Crotalaria spectabilis*) is an herbaceous annual plant that can reach heights of 4 to 5 ft. This plant has been used previously as a soil builder because of its nitrogen-fixing and nematode-reducing attributes, but is now considered a weed in many agricultural practices. Leaves are alternating on the stems and typically 4 to 7 in. long. Flowers are yellow and pea-shaped while the seed pods are smooth and long. Seed pods are light green in color when young, but turn nearly black when the seeds are ripe. The plant is considered toxic to livestock at all stages of growth.

Control: If Crotalaria was an issue in a field last year, spraying in early summer with 2,4D at 3 pts./ac. will help in control. Mature plants should be spot sprayed with either Remedy or Pasturegard at 3 pts./ac.

Showy Crotalaria, or Rattlebox
(*Crotalaria spectabilis*)

Image Source: (left) John D. Byrd, Mississippi State University, Bugwood.org, (right) Wendy VanDyk Evans, Bugwood.org

Source: Toxicity of Poultry to Common Weed Seeds, PS-55, Animal Sciences Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. First published February 2001. B. L. Damron and J. P. Jacob.



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 at a new location this year: 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 E. Macclenny Ave. The Market will run from March 5 until November 19, 2011.



Baker County Extension Service

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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).



Summer Lawn Care



Mowing: Don't get behind on your mowing once the rain returns. Allowing the grass to get overgrown and then giving it a severe cutting can be very stressful to your lawn. In any case, never remove more than one third of the leaf blade at any one time. Mow at the highest recommended mowing height for your grass species, and if your grass seems stressed, increase the mowing height even further. Grass clippings act as a natural fertilizer when left on the ground, returning nutrients that can be used by the turf for new growth. If piles of grass form on the ground (caused by infrequent mowing) then raking and removing the grass is acceptable to reduce thatch and disease problems. Just be sure to recycle the clippings on site by using them as mulch or adding them to the compost pile.

Fertilizing: Sometimes turfgrass begins to turn yellow during the summer because of lack of nitrogen fertilizer. However, fertilizing with nitrogen in summer is not recommended since this encourages excess growth, disease and insect problems. However, if you would like to green up the lawn during summer, you can apply an iron source such as iron sulfate (2 ounces per 3-5 gallons of water per 1000 square feet) or a chelated iron source. The effect is only temporary (two to four weeks) so repeat applications are necessary for summer-long color, but you can green up your lawn without the added mowing.



Does the curb in front of your house look like this after you mow?

Lawn clippings left on hard surfaces contribute to nutrient pollution in our lakes, rivers, streams and oceans, causing fish kills and other problems.

Please remember to sweep or blow those clippings back onto the lawn, or better yet, avoid putting them there in the first place by facing the mower away from hard surfaces.