



The Baker Bulletin

A
Baker County
Extension
Service Monthly
Newsletter

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LAWNS GROWING IN SHADE HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS

ESTIMATING PASTURE & HAY FIELDS

BAKER COUNTY IN TALLAHASSEE

**NATIVE FLORA AND FAUNA:
FAKAHATCHEE GRASS & GREEN ANOLE**

**FLORIDA EGGPLANT, TOMATO &
MOZZARELLA MELT**

WE NEED FLOWER POT DONATIONS!

The UF/IFAS Extension Office is available to help you with your farming, gardening, landscaping, and 4-H youth development needs by providing educational programming, free consultations and information. Contact us at:

UF/IFAS Extension Baker County

1025 W. Macclenny Ave. Macclenny, FL 32063

Phone: (904) 259-3520

Email: baker@ifas.ufl.edu

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

County Agents

Alicia Lamborn Horticulture Agent

Shaina Spann 4-H Youth Development Agent

Alicia Halbritter Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent



Programs & Events

- May 18 **Grape Field Day**, May 18, 9:00 am – 3:30 pm. Attention growers! A new bactericide was recently labeled against Peirce's disease, the main limitation of growing common grapes in FL. The morning workshop includes an injection demonstration of this new product. Free! Please RSVP by May 12th. [Register here.](#)
- May 19 **Introductory Tractor Driving & Safety Course**, May 19, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. Designed for beginning drivers. Includes hands-on instruction with tractors and implements of all sizes. \$75 [Register here.](#)
- June 2 **Bulb Chipping Workshop**, June 2, 10:00 am – 11:30 pm, Baker County Extension Office. Learn how to reproduce your favorite flowering bulbs more economically. In this class, we'll review propagation methods and provide materials for you to practice chipping bulbs. When finished, you'll take home multiple chips of both amaryllis and lycoris bulbs that will one day brighten your flower beds. \$20 [Register here](#) or at the Baker County Extension Office. Call 259-3520 for more information.
- Online **Growing Blueberries & Blackberries** (Self-Paced Course – Free!) [Register here.](#)
- Online **Selling Backyard Poultry Products** (Self-Paced, Online Course) [Register here.](#)
- Online **Backyard Chicken Class** (Self-Paced, Online Course) [Register here.](#)

Highlights in Horticulture

By:
Alicia Lamborn,
Horticulture Agent



Lawns Growing in Shade Have Different Needs

If portions of your lawn are shaded by trees, you may have noticed that your grass doesn't perform as well in these shaded areas. This is because most turfgrass species require full sun (8+ hours) for optimum growth. In densely shaded areas, an alternative shade-loving groundcover, such as Mondo Grass, is recommended. But for areas with light to moderate shade, planting a shade tolerant grass type and altering your maintenance habits may be enough to help these shaded areas thrive.



Shade tolerant turf species:

- St. Augustinegrass dwarf cultivars
- Zoysiagrass cultivars
- Centipedegrass

When it comes to turfgrass, good shade tolerance is a relative thing since no grass will do well in deep shade or if there are not enough hours of sunlight available. Even shade tolerant grasses need at least 4-6 hours of sunlight daily, and afternoon sun appears to be more important than morning sun in determining the number of hours needed.

If you think planting shade tolerant turf will help, use sod or plugs to fill bare areas of the lawn with a shade tolerant turf species. The dwarf varieties of St. Augustinegrass, including 'Sapphire', 'Delmar,' 'Seville' and 'Captiva', have shown to have the best shade tolerance. Zoysiagrass cultivars (e.g., 'Empire') and Centipedegrass are also good choices, although checking your soil pH is necessary for Centipede as it requires acidic soils.

If you're not ready to start replacing the lawn, try altering your maintenance habits as follows:

- ◆ **Remove shade sources** or trim branches to allow more light to reach the ground.
- ◆ **Reduce vehicle and foot traffic** (or any other stressors) in shaded areas.
- ◆ **Reduce irrigation** in shaded areas.
- ◆ **Reduce fertilization**—promoting shoot growth with high fertility will further stress the grass. Fertilizer cannot compensate for inadequate light. It is not a substitute for photosynthesis.
- ◆ **Increase mowing height**—more shoot tissue for photosynthesis will help turf perform better.

While many of us have the exact opposite instinct (increase irrigation and fertilization), following these recommendations has proven to be highly effective.

Barnyard Bulletin

By:
Alicia Halbritter,
Agriculture Agent



Estimating Pasture & Hay Yields

Forage is the primary feed source for our livestock. It's important to know how much forage your pasture is producing, or checking your hay fields to determine when to harvest.

Making a Ring

- You will need 3 materials to make the forage yield ring, 2 U-bolts, thick gauge but bendable wire, and wire cutters.
- Measure the wire to 8 feet and 5 inches and cut here.
- Using the U-bolts, create a circle with a circumference of 7 feet and 4.76 inches, overlapping some of the wire. This will give you an area of 1/10,000 of an acre for your calculations.



Collecting Samples

1. Toss your ring randomly in the field.
2. Measure the forage height within the ring using a yard stick. Record the height and sample number, repeating these steps 6-10 times.
3. Dry the samples as you would a forage moisture test (<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag181>)
4. Determine the average weight in ounces from all of the samples combined.
5. Convert ounces to pounds by dividing by 16.
6. Determine the pounds of forage dry matter per acre by multiplying by 10,000.
7. If sampling a hay field, you will need to add approximately 15% moisture back to your sample.

See examples here: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/AG369>



Using the Information

What does dry matter per acre really mean? This calculation is important to complete so you can understand the amount of forage available to graze in your pasture. The amount of forage in a pasture determines how many animals can graze there since we know approximately how much dry matter an animal needs per day. Of course, forage amount alone does not ensure forage quality. Managing grazing lands is extremely important to the longevity of an operation and reducing supplemental feedstuffs.

Improving Yield

If you're not satisfied with the yield in your pastures/hay field there are a few things you can do to improve it:

1. Annual soil testing & fertilizing/liming based on results.
2. Plant improved forage varieties.
3. Reduce grazing intensity
4. Plant cool season forages to prevent overgrazing during the winter

Need more information on Florida forages?

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/agriculture/forages/>



Baker County in Tallahassee

April 19 nine 4-H members, attended 4-H Day at the Capitol. Members visited the Supreme Court, Old Capitol, the Capitol Building, and met with Florida Senator Jennifer Bradley as well as Baker County's own Florida Representative Robert Charles "Chuck" Brannan III. We were able to see books from the 1500's, learn how Tallahassee became our state's capitol, educate our legislators on what they do in 4-H, and have a Chick-Fil-A lunch.



Pictured top row L to R: Florida Supreme Court; Meeting with Senator Jennifer Bradley; In front of the Old Capitol building.

Participants: Brenna Hilson, Jessa Hilson, Sarah Surrency, Kash Addy, Waylon Fish, Cartwright Fish, Roman Lord, Eli Lord, Ezekiel Fouraker.

Pictured bottom row L to R: Old Representatives' Gallery; Rare Book Room in the Supreme Court; Meeting with Representative Brannan.



4-H Club Meetings & Events

- May 1st – 4pm, Cloverbuddies Club, 4-H Classroom
- May 23– 6pm, Livestock Club, Ag. Center Auditorium

Florida's Native Flora & Fauna

By: Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent

Featuring some of Florida's native flora (plant life) and fauna (animal life) so you can learn to recognize, appreciate, and protect native species. We'll also aim to dispel myths and provide tips for managing conflicts with wildlife.

Fakahatchee Grass

Fakahatchee Grass (*Tripsacum dactyloides*), also called Eastern Gamma Grass, is a native ornamental grass species that is noted for its showy flowers, benefit to wildlife, and low maintenance.

Reaching 4 feet tall and wide (up to 6 feet tall when flowering), this long-lived perennial produces yellow/orange/red flowers in spring through summer. Distinctive flower spikes rise above the leaves on slender stems. The grass provides cover for small mammals, birds, and reptiles, and is the larval host plant for three butterflies including the three-spotted skipper, clouded skipper, and Byssus skipper. Deer will also eat the seeds.



Fakahatchee grass foliage (above) and flowers (below).



Flower photo credit: Alicia Lamborn, UF/IFAS Extension Baker County

Growing in full sun or partial shade, this native is quite versatile in the landscape. It grows well in acidic to slightly alkaline soils and tolerates any soil texture, from clay to sand. Use it as a hedge, accent plant, background screen for a flower garden, or pond planting. Fakahatchee grass is moderately drought tolerant and is also tolerant of flooding. For best results, plant in moist or irrigated areas that have well-drained to moderately well-drained soil.

Overall, this plant is easy to grow and requires little maintenance. But if you're short on space, there's a dwarf Fakahatchee (*Tripsacum floridanum*) — also called Florida Gama Grass - that only grows to two to three feet tall.

Green Anole

Florida's native green anoles (pronounced "uh-noles"), *Anolis carolinensis*, are common lizards found throughout the southeastern US.

While they may be observed on the ground, they are generally considered arboreal (living in trees). Because they are common in urban/suburban areas, you are likely to see green anoles perched on fences, camouflaging themselves on tree trunks, or blending in with tall patio plants in search of a meal. Their prey consists of a wide variety of insects, spiders, and other invertebrates.



Depending on the environment, green anoles can either be green or brown. While they have the ability to change color, they are not true chameleons.



Although the green anole is the only anole species native to the U.S., several other species have been introduced in Florida including the ever-present Cuban brown anole. The green anole is most easily distinguished from the

similar brown anole (*Anolis sagrei*) by green or lightly patterned brown coloration and the pinkish throat fan which males display in territorial rivalries or when approaching a potential mate.

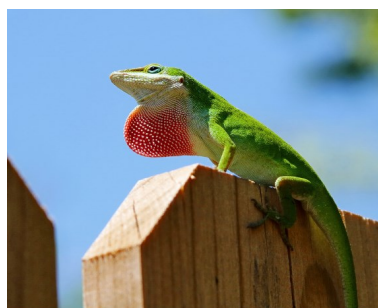


Photo credits: Canva

Extension Tidbits

Florida Eggplant, Tomato & Mozzarella Melt

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Florida eggplant sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 2 Florida tomatoes, sliced
- 1 pound fresh mozzarella, sliced
- Olive Oil
- 8 slices rustic bread or 4 rolls
- Sea salt & fresh ground pepper, to taste

PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly drizzle olive oil onto the sliced eggplant and season with salt and pepper. Place the eggplant on a cookie sheet and in the oven. Cook eggplant in the oven for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Remove the eggplant from the oven and turn the oven to broil. Lightly drizzle the bread with olive oil, and toast under the broiler. Remove the bread from the broiler when it is toasted. To assemble the sandwich layer the eggplant, tomato, and mozzarella. Place the sandwich back under the broiler to melt the cheese. Remove sandwich from oven and serve warm.

<https://www.followfreshfromflorida.com/recipes/florida-eggplant-tomato-and-mozzarella-melt>



We need flower pot donations!

Bring us your plastic nursery pots, clay pots, and hanging baskets and we will reuse them!

Drop off inside the office, at the front door, or place over the fence near the sidewalk.



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