



The Baker Bulletin

A
Baker County
Extension
Service Monthly
Newsletter

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Dear Extension Friends,

Thank you all for another wonderful year serving the great people of Baker County, FL. I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This issue includes information on protecting your plants during cold weather, feeding cattle over the cooler months and 4-H information. Please take a look at the announcement on the back page for information on a weight loss program that is being conducted here at the Extension Office. As always, if we can help you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

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

UF UNIVERSITY of
FLORIDA
IFAS Extension
Baker County Extension

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Highlights in Horticulture

By:
Alicia Lamborn,
Horticulture Agent

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Protecting Plants from Winter Weather

 If a freeze is predicted, water plants 24-48 hours before a freeze (unless it rains). Moist soil absorbs more solar radiation during the day than dry soil and will radiate heat during the night, keeping your plants warmer. Keep in mind however, that prolonged periods of saturated soil can cause root rot problems.



 Using overhead irrigation for freeze protection is not only tricky, but is extremely wasteful of our fresh drinking water. There is also a danger of root rot and breakage due to ice buildup on limbs. This method of cold protection is used commercially where it can be carefully controlled and is best left to professional growers.

 Covering cold sensitive plants with blankets or plastic to trap heat inside can work well, but it is often done incorrectly. If you decide to use this method, make sure your cover is long enough to reach the ground. You may also want to place rocks, bricks, or heavier flower pots around the edges to keep the wind from blowing the cover open. This is the only way to truly trap heat inside. You will also need to use a stake (cut bamboo sticks work well) to keep your cover from touching your plant. Some contact may be unavoidable, but too much can lead to a transfer of heat resulting in burnt, damaged foliage.

 Citrus fruit is damaged when temperatures stay at 28 degrees or less for 4 hours, so be sure to harvest ripe fruit (fruit won't ripen once picked) prior to a hard freeze. You will want to protect the graft union during a hard freeze to prevent damage, especially if you have young citrus. To do this, you can purchase pipe insulation and/or a special tree wrap product. Both are inexpensive and last for years. Just remember to remove your insulating wrap as soon as spring arrives and the threat of freezing temperatures is gone.

 Use your fallen oak leaves and pine straw to your advantage! These items are valuable for several reasons. They can be used as mulch to repel weeds and hold in moisture, but they can also be used to protect your plants during hard freezes. Many of our perennials die back to the ground in winter, only to grow back from the roots and crown the next spring. Piling leaves and straw on top of these crowns will help hold the heat in and protect the roots from damage during those hard freezes.

 Containerized plants can be pushed together and covered with an old sheet to conserve heat, or moved under a sheltering tree or eave where radiant heat will be trapped after dark.

 Keep in mind that many of our landscape plants don't need protecting from winter weather, even when the temperatures drop into the teens. In fact, cold damage can in some cases be worse when the covering is done improperly than if the plant hadn't been covered at all. If you're debating on the need to cover or protect a plant in your yard, the Extension Office can help you make an informed decision as to what will be best for the plant.

 If all of this covering and moving of plants sounds like a lot of work to you, remember that there are plenty of cold-hardy plants—trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and perennials—that are suited for surviving our cold winters without any help from us. When out shopping for new plants, just remember to select plants that are hardy in zone 8 (Baker County is zone 8B) and if you're not sure about a plant's hardiness zone, give us a call at the Extension Office. For lists of landscape plants suited for Baker County, see the *Florida-Friendly Landscaping: Plants for Baker County* series on our website: <http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu/Horticulture/fact%20sheets.html>

2015 Master Gardener Volunteer Training

The rapid urban growth in many areas of the United States coupled with increased interest in the environment and home gardening, have prompted ever-increasing numbers of homeowner questions to County Extension Service Agents. Many of these questions are seasonal in nature and relatively easy to answer assuming that one has horticultural training.

Baker County Master Gardeners are professionally trained volunteers who help respond to many of the everyday homeowner questions, thereby improving the efficiency of the Extension Service and allowing the Horticulture Extension Agent to focus on more technical and difficult problems and develop proactive programs for the community.

What do Master Gardeners do?

- Volunteer at the Extension Office, answering homeowner's plant questions
- Create and maintain educational displays and demonstration gardens
- Write gardening articles for the newsletter
- Speak to local groups about home gardening and give group tours of the Arboretum
- Work with youth gardening programs
- Work to grow a crop in our greenhouse
- Continue their gardening education through advanced trainings and educational field trips
- Staff plant clinics and Master Gardener booths at various county events to educate visitors and promote the Master Gardener Program.

Training dates have not yet been set and our goal is to provide training at the most convenient time of year for our trainees. Visit our office or website (link below) to submit an interest form. Once we receive your information, a program representative will contact you.

http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu/Horticulture/master_gardener.html



If you are interested in becoming a Baker County Master Gardener in 2015, we want to hear from you! Please provide the following information and you will be contacted by a program representative.

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

December 2014

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  Extension Office Closed	26	27
28	29	30	31	JAN 1 Extension Office Closed		

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.



4-H



Horticulture



Agriculture

Upcoming Programs & Events

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

- Dec. 5** **4-H Holiday Bake-Off and Party.** Please see the 4-H page in newsletter or contact Ms. Shaina for additional details.
- Dec. 11** **Small Flock Poultry Conference, 9:00am to 4:00pm, Brevard County Extension Office, 3695 Lake Drive, Cocoa, FL.** The educational program will include lectures, hands-on demonstrations and opportunities to network with other enthusiasts. Registration is \$40 per person and includes lunch, materials and refreshments. For additional information or to register, please call 321-633-1702, ext. 234 or visit http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar/2014_1211_SmallFlockPoultryConference.pdf.
- Dec. 12** **Forest Botanicals: Deep and Tangled Roots.** This is part of the Non-timber Forest Products Fall Webinar Series. For additional information or to register, please visit <https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/registrations/new?cid=sodq9sgrbjol>
- Jan. 16** **Hydroponics and Alternative Gardening Workshop, 10:00am to 11:30am, Baker County Extension Office, Macclenny, FL.** Join us for a presentation and demonstrations on hydroponic and alternative growing methods. Class space is limited. \$5 registration fee due by January 13th and includes a small take-home floating water garden ready to use in your own 5– gallon bucket.
- Jan. 23** **Hydroponics and Alternative Gardening Workshop, 2:00pm to 3:30pm, Baker County Extension Office, Macclenny, FL.** Join us for a presentation and demonstrations on hydroponic and alternative growing methods. Class space is limited. \$5 registration fee due by January 20th and includes a small take-home floating water garden ready to use in your own 5– gallon bucket.
- Feb. 20** **Growing Backyard Blueberries & Blackberries, 10:00am to 12:00pm, Baker County Extension Office, Macclenny, FL.** Topics include variety selection, preparing to plant, care and maintenance, and pest management. \$2 registration fee due by January 30th includes materials and light refreshments.
- Apr. 18** **Spring Garden Festival, 9:00am to 2:00pm, Baker County Extension Office, Macclenny, FL.** For vendor information, please contact our office at 904-259-3520.



4-H Club Meetings & Events:

All County 4-H Club — December 11 at 6pm

Livestock Club — No meeting

Cloverleaf Cloggers — **Tuesdays at 7pm**—
Fabulous Footworks.

4-H Holiday Party December 5th at 6pm
in the Ag Center Auditorium



Important Dates: January 2015

- 02– Livestock/Meats Judging Reg. DUE
- 2nd Exec. Board Reg. Due
- 09-10– Livestock/Meats Judging Clinic, UF
- 15– 4-H Association Meeting 6pm
- 16-18– 2nd Exec. Board Camp Ocala
- 19– Hog & Ham Workshop, UF
- 24– Union County Goat Show
- 26– STEM Fair Reg. DUE
- 30– County STEM Fair

Lucky Clover Chronicle

By:
Shaina Bennett,
4-H Agent

Why Holidays are celebrated in December



The first recorded date of Christmas being celebrated on December 25th was in 336AD, during the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine (he was the first Christian Roman Emperor). A few years later, Pope Julius I officially declared that the birth of Jesus would be celebrated on the 25th of December. A very early Christian tradition said that the day when Mary was told that she would have a very special baby, Jesus, was on March 25th. Nine months after the 25th March is the 25th December!

December 25th might have also been chosen because the Winter Solstice and the ancient Roman (pagan) midwinter festivals called 'Saturnalia' and 'Dies Natalis Solis Invicti' took place in December around this date. The Winter Solstice is the day where there is the shortest time between the sun rising and the sun setting. It happens on December 21st or 22nd. To pagans this meant that the winter was over and spring was coming and they had a festival to celebrate it and worshipped the sun for winning over the darkness of winter. Early Christians might have given this festival a new meaning - to celebrate the birth of the Son of God.



The Jewish festival of Lights, also known as Chanukkah, starts on the 25th day of Kislev (the month in the Hebrew calendar that occurs at around the same time as December) and is 8 days and nights. Hanukkah celebrates when the Maccabean Jews were able to re-dedicate and worship in their Temple, in Jerusalem, following many years of not being allowed to practice their religion.

Holiday Word Search



L H A R O N E M Y V A M T U N
 N E P B D N T I J Z E Y R B A
 L N D Y P V P Z B Q O C E A T
 F I O I P U P T N U L U E W I
 P A G R E J A C K F R O S T V
 P H E H N R B K G S F A K I I
 X H Z C T A D G E R M C L K T
 V X L L U S M I E T I H B K Y
 F A M I L Y K E S I A N H X S
 U V Y D I O B I N N Y A G Y P
 N G V I O G R O U T T M S B L
 I G U C L H B K D E S W K D F
 Y D X G C G K I E G H O N B H
 C M D K X A U M W H Q N I N Y
 X V O R H N Y M G A X S G B K

- CHRISTMAS
- COOKIES
- DREIDEL
- FAMILY
- HANUKKAH
- JACKFROST
- LIGHTS
- MENORAH
- NATIVITY
- ORNAMENTS
- SNOWMAN
- TREE

Events

December

- 05–Holiday Bake –Off 8-9am
- Holiday Party– 6pm
- 12– STEM Fair Workshop 10am-12pm
- 31– Livestock Contracts DUE

January

- 02– Lvstck/Meats Judging Reg. DUE
- 2nd Exec. Board Reg. Due (want more info on this? Call Ms. Shaina)
- 09-10– Lvstck/Meats Judging Clinic, UF
- 15– 4-H Association Meeting 6pm
- 16-18– 2nd Exec. Board Camp Ocala
- 19– Hog & Ham Workshop, UF
- 24– Union County Goat Show
- 26– STEM Fair Reg. DUE
- 30– County STEM Fair

February

- 07– 4-H Day at the State Fair
- 20– Hog & Ham forms DUE
- District STEM Fair Reg. DUE
- 27– District STEM Fair, Live Oak, FL



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Birthdays for December:

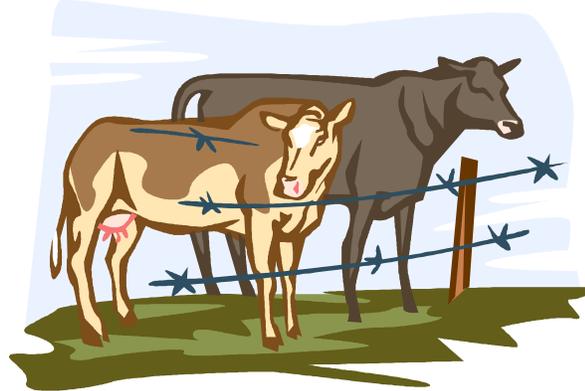
Wishing all of you a very **Happy Birthday!**

- 06– Carson Powell
- 07– Gracie Milton
- 09– Alex Stokes
- 16– Morgan Lagle
- 17– Kash Addy



Cattle Nutrition Over the Winter Months

Winter feeding of cattle can account for up to 50% of the total variable cost of producing weaned calves. Cattle that are in different developmental stages have differing nutritional needs throughout the year. Splitting the herd into groups that have similar nutritional requirements will help the producer meet the requirements and help to keep costs down by utilizing the most efficient feeding regimen. A general discussion of feeding these groups over the winter is presented below. There may also be constraints to splitting a herd, such as limited facilities and not every group that is mentioned below may be represented in your particular herd.



First and Second-Calf Heifers

Unlike mature cows, a heifer that is nursing her first or second calf is still growing herself. This additional growth along with the nutritional requirements for the calf require that these animals be placed on the highest quality feed that is available. Providing the adequate nutrition for these animals is essential for breeding later on and to encourage calf performance.

Replacement Heifers

Replacement heifers, including those that are bred and those that are open, should be a separate group within the herd. Those heifers that are going into their first winter within the new herd are at the low end of the social order within the herd. This can cause these animals to be crowded out of the feed area. Additionally, these cows tend to have a higher nutritional need than mature cows. Replacement heifers that are bred are similar to first- and second-calf heifers in that the quality of the feed needs to be such that she can continue her own growth along with that of the calf.

Mature/Dry/Pregnant Cows

If the body condition score of these animals indicate medium fleshing, then they will have the lowest nutritional requirements of the herd. Consequently, these cows can persist on lower quality feed such as: crop residue, mature standing grass or mature hay. For those mature cows that are pregnant, remember that the nutritional needs will increase during the last 1/3 of the pregnancy and will increase considerably after the calf is dropped. You should increase the quality of the feed when these times arrive.

Bulls

Bulls tend to be last on the mind when it comes to winter feeding. If you have a mature bull with a good body condition score, then his nutritional needs are not high. Feed these good bulls such that you keep their body condition score but do not try to fatten him up, as this is a waste of time and money.

Young Bulls

As with young heifers, the young bull must be fed well as he is still growing. Typically, a high quality forage along with some concentrate can be fed to these animals. If it is possible, separate the young bulls from the mature bulls to decrease potential feed loss and aggression.

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).



The UF Weight Management Program Is Now At Your Local Extension Office!



Looking for a way to lose weight and get healthier? You are not alone. More and more Americans are becoming overweight, increasing risk for certain health problems, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease.

The University of Florida is conducting a weight management program at the Baker County Extension Office in Macclenny. Eligible adults can participate in this no-cost healthy lifestyle program aiming to help participants lose weight, increase fitness, improve nutrition and manage stress. Sessions will be conducted by leaders with expertise in weight management, nutrition and physical fitness.

Compensation for travel to sessions will be provided.

Call toll-free now for more information: 1-877-273-5235