

Highlights in

Horticulture

Baker County

April 2015

Dear Extension Friends,

With the arrival of spring, everyone seems to be in the mood for spring planting. Please join us on April 18th for the 7th Annual Spring Garden Festival and protect your investment by following the tips for landscape plant establishment on page 3.

Best Regards,

Alicia

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<https://www.facebook.com/UFIFASBakerCountyGardenSpot>

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Upcoming Gardening Classes & Events

- April 18 **7th Annual Spring Garden Festival, 9:00am to 2:00pm, Baker County Extension Office, Macclenny.**
- May 1 **Florida-Friendly Landscaping: Digging Deeper into Your Lawn, 2:00pm to 4:00pm, Baker County Extension Office, Macclenny, FL.** This event includes a class on basic lawn care, a personalized yard visit to discuss lawn problems (Baker County residents only), a soil test with consultation, and a follow up evaluation. This class is limited to 15 people; \$10 registration fee reserves your seat. Call 904-259-3520 for more information.
- May 1 **Master Gardener Volunteer Training Course Applications Due.** Classes will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9am to 1pm, June 2nd to July 16th at the Baker County Extension Office, Macclenny, FL. Florida Master Gardeners are professionally trained volunteers who share unbiased, research-based gardening information with the community. The purpose of this course is to train a core of horticultural volunteers for UF/IFAS Extension to assist the county agent in delivering information to residents on how to design, plant, and care for their plants and landscapes in an Florida-Friendly way. If you enjoy volunteering and sharing knowledge with others, applications for this program are being accepted through **May 1st**. Applications are available online at: http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu/Horticulture/master_gardener.html

Plant These Herbs

SPRING

CORIANDER
Annual, use seeds as needed

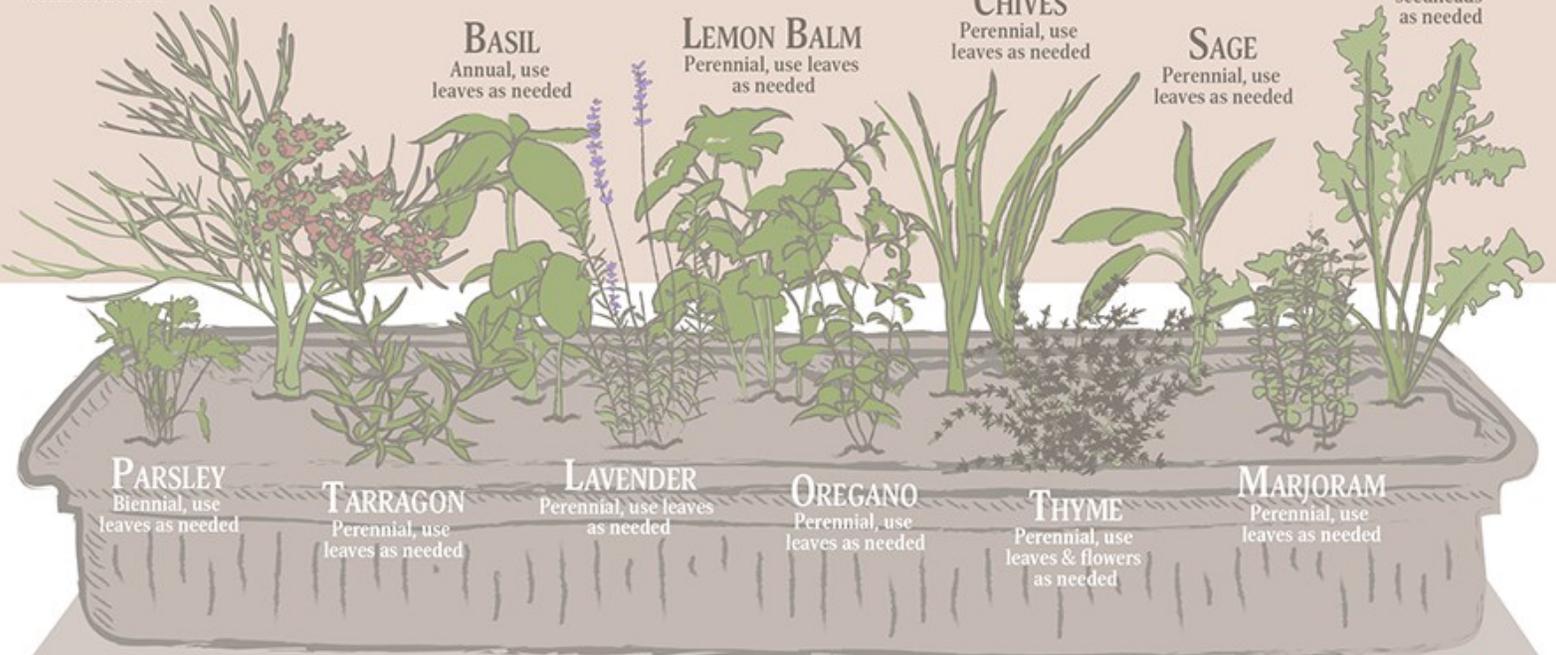
BASIL
Annual, use leaves as needed

LEMON BALM
Perennial, use leaves as needed

CHIVES
Perennial, use leaves as needed

SAGE
Perennial, use leaves as needed

DILL
Annual, use seedheads as needed



PARSLEY
Biennial, use leaves as needed

TARRAGON
Perennial, use leaves as needed

LAVENDER
Perennial, use leaves as needed

OREGANO
Perennial, use leaves as needed

THYME
Perennial, use leaves & flowers as needed

MARJORAM
Perennial, use leaves as needed

For more information, please visit
GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu

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Gardening SOLUTIONS

Herbs are grown for their special flavor and aroma which greatly improve the taste or smell of certain foods. Their small size makes them great for growing in containers but they can also be incorporated into vegetable gardens or flower gardens. In general, most herbs will grow under the same conditions as vegetables regarding sunlight and soil. With their shallow root systems, adding organic matter is also particularly beneficial. It is important to note that a few herbs require special consideration. Sage, rosemary, and thyme require a well-drained, slightly moist soil, whereas parsley, chervil, and mint grow best on soils retaining considerable moisture.

Basil — A pleasant-smelling plant with a spicy taste; many types available—leaves may be large, small, green or purple.

Coriander — Grown mainly for its aromatic seeds which should be stored in a dry, airtight container. The fresh foliage of coriander is also used in cooking, where it is referred to as "cilantro."

Dill — An erect, strong-smelling, fennel-like plant reaching a height of 4 feet; gives dill pickles their name.

Lemon Balm — A lemon-scented herb in the mint family that provides flavor and aroma to drinks, salads, other dishes.

Marjoram — There are three kinds: sweet marjoram (*Origanum marjorana*), pot marjoram (*O. onites*), and wild marjoram (*O. vulgare*) (see Oregano). Sweet and pot marjoram are the ones usually grown in herb gardens.

Oregano — There are two main types: Mexican (*Lippia graveolens*) and European (*Origanum vulgare*). The latter is also called wild marjoram. The two types are dissimilar in taste, but alike in usage. The European is much milder.

Sage — A hardy perennial herb with grayish green leaves; also an attractive plant for the landscape.

Tarragon — Fresh leaves may be used, or dry them rapidly away from light so they will not turn dark. Store in tight jars to preserve the licorice aroma.

Thyme — To use, remove the top one-third portion of the plant when in full bloom and spread on newspaper in a well-ventilated room to dry. Then, strip the leaves and flowering tops from the stem and store in tightly closed containers.

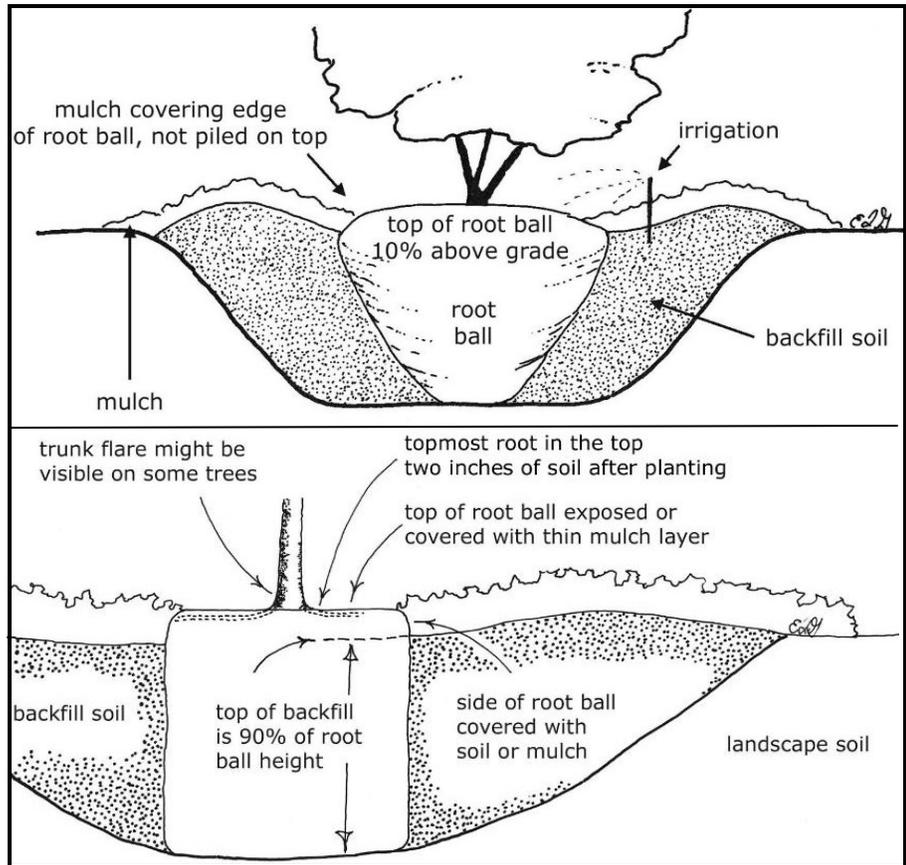
Landscape Plant Establishment

Planting: When planting trees and shrubs, locate the top-most root by removing excess soil from the top of the root ball and cut any circling roots. Dig your hole 2-3 times as wide as the root ball, but shallower than the height of the root ball so that a small portion sits above grade. This will allow roots to easily grow into the loosened surrounding soil but will also ensure that the plant is not set too deep (which can cause problems later). In poorly drained soils, position the top of the root ball 10% or more above the surrounding landscape soil.

Mulch: Apply a 3-inch mulch layer around the plant to discourage weeds and retain moisture, with only a thin layer over the root ball.

Fertilizer: It is usually best to wait 4-6 weeks before applying any fertilizer. This is because too much soluble nitrogen (from a quick release fertilizer or slow-release fertilizer applied incorrectly) can burn the roots of newly installed trees and shrubs, causing damage or even death. In addition, adding even a slow-release fertilizer at the correct rate has not been associated with either improved survival or increased growth after planting. Instead, focus on irrigation which is far more important for establishment than fertilizer.

Irrigation: An established plant has developed a root system that can keep it alive without supplemental irrigation. Supplying water in the correct quantity and frequency is important for establishment, and applying less water more frequently tends to be more important than applying large quantities of water less often. When irrigating, apply water to the root ball and not the surrounding soil. For trees, apply 1.5 to 3 gallons of water per inch of trunk diameter. For 3-gallon shrubs, apply only 1 gallon of water each time you water. Small trees, shrubs, and perennials (less than one inch in diameter) will require even less water at any one time. Check your hose's flow rate by timing how long it takes to fill a one-gallon watering can so you'll know exactly how much water you are applying.



The following table can be used as guide for getting your landscape plants established:

Trunk Diameter	Irrigation Schedule for Vigor	Irrigation Schedule for Survival	Establishment Period
Trees, < 2 inches	Daily for 2 weeks, every other day for 2 months, then weekly until established	Twice per week for 2-3 months	4-8 months
Trees, 2-4 inches	Daily for 1 month, every other day for 3 months, then weekly until established	Twice per week for 3-4 months	8-15 months
Trees, > 4 inches	Daily for 6 weeks, every other day for 5 months, then weekly until established	Twice per week for 4-5 months	+15 months
Shrubs, 3-gallon container	Every 2-4 days until established	Every 8 days	4-7 months

Good Bug , Bad Bug: Stink Bugs!

Stink bugs can be a vegetable gardener's worst enemy, but most people are surprised to learn that some species of stink bugs are actually beneficial. Making a effort to learn the good guys from the bad guys will ensure that no time and money is wasted trying to manage a bug that is actually helping you by preying on other pests.

Predaceous Stink Bugs

These bugs are insect predators which makes them beneficial. They are usually oval-shaped and can be identified by the spines projecting on the shoulders. They also have short, stout beaks. Caterpillars are their primary prey.



- Clockwise from top left:
- *The Florida Predatory Stink Bug
 - *The Spined Soldier Bug
 - *The Spined Soldier Bug (with prey)
 - *The Giant Strong-Nosed Stink Bug



Plant-Feeding Stink Bugs

These bugs are usually shield-shaped and tend to have rounded shoulders. The Leaffooted Bug has a longer, slender body shape but has distinct projections on the hind legs that resemble leaves. All are pests of vegetables and fruits, causing discoloration and deformities from feeding.



- Clockwise from top left:
- *The Brown Stink Bug
 - *The Green Stink Bug
 - *The Leaffooted Bug

Note: All photos depict adult bugs; nymphs (young stink bugs) may look drastically different depending on the species.



Baker County Extension Service

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For Extension Programs offered around the state, see the IFAS Extension Web Calendar at <http://calendar.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar/index.htm>.

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 ten (10) 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).