



Highlights in

Horticulture

Baker County

November 2015

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Dear Extension Friends,

Thank you to everyone who supported our horticulture program by purchasing strawberry plants and daffodil bulbs! We have many good projects planned for the coming years. If you haven't had a chance to make a purchase, there are still several daffodil varieties left—see page 3 for details. Also, please take a moment to complete our newsletter survey below. The feedback provided helps us to improve our newsletter for readers.

Best Regards,

Alicia

Alicia R. Lamborn
Horticulture Extension Agent
Baker County Extension Service



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

Newsletter Survey

We want your feedback regarding our monthly newsletter! To show our appreciation, we are giving away a gift basket to one lucky participant. Enter to win by completing the survey online at: <http://goo.gl/forms/4Zcvxl9UV4> or scan the QR Code below with your smartphone. Survey expires Friday, November 13th at 5pm.

Gift basket includes: 1) UF/IFAS Tote, 2) Florida Friendly Landscaping Handbook with Plant Guide, 3) Outdoor Water Saving Kit, 4) UF/IFAS Insect Field Guide, 5) a Vegetable Seed Variety Pack, 6) a 4-H Day Camp Voucher, and 7) two 4-H Cups.



New Master Gardener Volunteer In Baker County

Congratulations to Ruth Keeney!

Ruth completed an intense 4-week Master Gardener training course and graduated from the program on September 14th.



Master Gardeners complete 50+ hours of college level horticultural training topics. They are then committed to 75 hours of volunteer service to the Extension office during their first year, helping to educate others in the community.

Plant of the Month: Swamp Sunflower

This Florida native sunflower grows in low wet areas throughout the state, but also performs well in drier landscapes. It is sometimes called Narrow-leaf Sunflower, which describes its long, narrow leaves that are rough like sandpaper. However, the plant is better known for its tall stems that display profuse numbers of golden yellow flowers in late summer and fall. It is root hardy in areas across the southeastern United States, and spreads by underground rhizomes to form large clumps.



The Swamp Sunflower reaches up to 6 feet tall when blooming and flowers attract bees and butterflies to the garden. Since clumps may become quite wide over time, plants should be spaced 3-5 feet and given plenty of room to grow. When root masses become too large, they can be divided in spring or autumn and shared with friends.

Like other sunflowers, this plant performs best in full sun. Plants grown in partial shade will not produce as many flowers, will become leggy and may fall over without support. As its name implies, the Swamp Sunflower thrives in moist areas, but will also thrive in well-drained garden soils if watered during dry spells. You can cut the plant back in early June to make it bushier when it blooms later in the year. Then cut back the dead stems after flowering to maintain a neater appearance.



The Swamp Sunflower can be found blooming in the Extension Office Butterfly Demonstration Garden this month.

Photos by Alicia Lamborn

Winter Annuals

Keep the garden colorful this winter with annuals that enjoy the chilly weather.

Hardy cool-season annuals to plant in November:

- Alyssum
- Calendula
- Delphinium
- Dianthus
- Dusty Miller
- Foxglove
- Hollyhock
- Ornamental Cabbage/Kale
- Pansy
- Petunia
- Shasta Daisy
- Snapdragon



Preparing the bed:

- Remove grass and weeds by hand, use herbicides, or smother with black plastic or thick newspaper
- For herbicides, a post-emergent can be applied 2-3 weeks before planting; a pre-emergent can be used prior to planting (do not use if seeding).
- Loosen the soil to a depth of 6" or more.
- Amend the area with at least 3" of organic compost to provide a slow release of nutrients and increase water and nutrient holding capacity.
- pH should be between 5.5 to 7.0

Fertilizing:

- Many options – slow release products (Osmocote, Nutricote, Dynamite, etc.), organic fertilizers (bone meal, blood meal, etc.), and general purpose fertilizers (10-10-10, 16-4-8, etc.)
- Controlled-release fertilizers (such as Osmocote and Dynamite) and organic fertilizers can be applied at the labeled rate and incorporated into the top 6" of soil at planting.
- General purpose fertilizers should be broadcast (top-dressed) after planting but before applying mulch. For 10-10-10, you need about 1 pound of fertilizer per 100 square feet of bed.
- Repeat applications will depend on products, weather and plants.
- Container plants will need higher phosphorous levels (consider using a 10-10-10 instead of 16-4-8).

Newly Designated Invasive Plants

In north Florida, several commonly used landscaping plants have been reclassified as invasive species by the UF/IFAS Assessment of Nonnative Plants in Florida's Natural Areas. These species are no longer considered Florida-Friendly and should not be used.

- ◆ Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)
- ◆ Trailing Lantana (*Lantana montevidensis*)
- ◆ Tiger Grass (*Thysanolaena latifolia*)
- ◆ Japanese Ardisia (*Ardisia japonica*)

Non-native invasive plant species pose a significant threat to Florida's natural areas. The UF/IFAS Assessment uses literature-based risk assessment tools to predict the invasion risk of both nonnative species that occur in the state as well as species proposed for introduction.



Purple Trailing Lantana is no longer recommended for Florida gardens.

Whether you have a plant in your yard growing out of control, or you're wondering what's safe to plant, the University of Florida has developed a searchable website and database to help Floridians assess problem—or just plain puzzling—non-native plants. The website features more than 800 species and has search and filtering options, more than 1500 photos, links to distribution maps, information on where the plant is native, and growth forms—trees, vines, herbs or shrubs.

For example, results can be narrowed to vines that are safe to plant in North Florida. Scrolling through all the photos only takes a few minutes. The website shows a “caution,” “invasive not recommended,” or “prohibited” for species that pose the greatest ecological threats. About 70 percent of the species in the database are not a problem, and in some cases may even be beneficial. A simple search will tell you when and where it's safe to use plants such as Japanese holly and canna lily.

Check out the UF/IFAS Assessment website at <http://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Daffodil Bulb Fundraiser

The Baker County Master Gardeners are raising money for educational activities and youth gardening programs by selling daffodil bulbs which should be planted in fall for blooms January—March.

The following varieties are still available for purchase and are just \$3 for a bag of 3 bulbs. In addition, the Master Gardeners are giving away free daffodil bulbs with purchase! Don't miss out—stop by the Extension Office today or call the office at (904) 259-3520.

Autumn Colors — Autumn Colors is a group of daffodils; colors range from white to dark yellow; white, yellow or orange-red cups are often frilled; 8-30 fragrant flowers per stem; height and bloom time varies. **We are receiving a mix—order several bulbs for a delightful surprise!**



Ceylon — Strong yellow flower—has orange cup with a red rim. Good in partial shade. Tall, strong bloomer. Flower color does not fade. 14-16” **Mid-February**

Monal — Strong overlapping petals with large, deep orange straight cup. Needs good drainage. Tolerates afternoon shade. 16-18” **March**



Carlton — Large yellow flower with a sweet fragrance rather like vanilla. This flower should be the backbone of your daffodil bed. Circa 1927 16-18” **February**



Erilcheer — This double white has up to 15 flowers per stem and is exceptionally fragrant. This has been a very reliable repeat bloomer at the Extension Office. 10-12” **February**



Paperwhites — Several white flowers per stem. Strong fragrance. Plant in the garden or in a pot; easy to force indoors also. 12-16”

It's Time To Change Your Clocks

As you go around the house changing the time on your clocks, don't forget one very important clock—your irrigation system timer!

With the change in weather, irrigation systems should be turned OFF completely and used only if needed since plants need less water during the cooler months.

While some irrigation controllers may look complex, most aren't complicated to operate. If you don't know the first thing about operating your irrigation clock, look for instructions on the timer itself or pull out the instruction booklet. You can also find your manufacturer's instructions online and may even find simple how-to videos.



We all know water is a limited resource and should be used wisely, but we often overwater our landscapes unintentionally. Overwatering does more than deplete the water supply; it also makes plants more prone to disease and pests. By choosing and operating a watering system correctly, you can reduce water bills, decrease plant problems, and lower maintenance requirements.

Watering restrictions restrict residents in our area to watering only one day per week from November to March. Homes with addresses that end in an odd number may water on Saturdays, and homes with addresses that end in an even number may water on Sundays. Non-residential properties may water only on Tuesdays.

HOWEVER, even if it is your assigned day to irrigate—that doesn't mean you should irrigate. Many established plants can survive on rainfall alone and scheduled watering only wastes money and water. Don't let the calendar tell you when to water—look to your plants for telltale signs of thirst and turn on your irrigation system manually instead of allowing the automatic controller to run on a set schedule.



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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).