

Highlights in

Horticulture

Baker County

October 2016

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Dear Extension Friends,

Fall is finally here, giving gardeners a much needed break from the heat! We hope you will take advantage of our Master Gardener Program's fall fundraiser which offers daffodil bulbs and strawberry plants at very reasonable prices. Both are planted in October and November for flowers and fruit starting in winter and continuing into spring. See page 3 for details.

Best Regards,

Alicia

Alicia R. Lamborn
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Use Wood Ashes in the Garden Wisely

You may have heard that wood ashes can be used as a source of potassium for plants. But since wood ashes also increase the soil pH and require other precautions, they should be used in the garden wisely. If your soil is acid and low in potassium, wood ash can be beneficial to most garden plants, although there are exceptions (listed below).

The fertilizer value and liming effect of wood ash depends on whether you burn hardwoods (e.g. oak) or softwoods (e.g. pine). Wood ash analyses generally run from 4-10% potassium and from 1-2% phosphorus. Compared to softwood ashes, hardwood ashes contain higher percentages of nutrients and have more of a liming effect on soil. Although hardwood ash is only about half as effective as lime for raising soil pH, it should still be used with caution. While some sources recommend a yearly application rate of 25-50 lbs. of ash per 1,000 square feet, other sources say apply no more than 10-15 lbs. of ash per 1,000 square feet per year.



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WHAT TO PLANT IN NORTH FLORIDA



OCTOBER

FLOWERS

Alyssum Baby's Breath
Calendula Dianthus
Dusty Miller
Foxglove Geranium
Hollyhock
Ornamental Cabbage/Kale
Pansy Petunia
Snapdragon
Verbena Viola

VEGETABLES

Arugula Beets
Broccoli Brussels Sprouts
Cabbage Carrots
Cauliflower Celery
Chinese Cabbage
Collards Endive/Escarole
Kale Kohlrabi
Lettuce Mustard
Onions, bunching & bulbing
Radish Spinach
Strawberries
Swiss Chard Turnips

PLANT SELECTION & FERTILIZING TIPS

Choose adapted varieties with resistance or tolerance to nematodes and common diseases.

Purchase healthy transplants that are free of insects and disease symptoms (such as leaf spots or blights).

Avoid vegetable transplants that are already flowering. Consider growing your own transplants from seed.

Controlled-release fertilizers provide a continuous nutrient supply over an extended period of time. For best results, apply at the labeled rate or based on your soil test results.

RESOURCES :

Gardening with Annuals in Florida
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/files/MG/MG31900.pdf>

Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/files/VH/VH02100.pdf>

Use Wood Ashes Wisely

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Either way, regular soil testing is suggested to monitor changes in soil pH and avoid toxic levels of ash. Some gardeners add small amounts to the compost pile, and then add the composted soil to the garden with good results.

The following advice is offered from Dan Sullivan, soil scientist with the OSU Extension Service, for using wood ashes a soil or compost amendment:

- ◆ Protect yourself when applying wood ash. Use the same precautions you would use when handling household bleach, another strongly alkaline material. Wear eye protection and gloves. Depending on the fineness of the ash, you may want to wear a dust mask.
- ◆ Do not use ash from burning trash, cardboard, coal or pressure-treated, painted or stained wood. These substances contain trace elements, harmful to many plants when applied in excessive amounts. For example, the glue in cardboard boxes and paper bags contains boron, an element toxic to many plant species at levels slightly higher than that required for normal growth.
- ◆ Do not use ash on alkaline soils or on acid-loving plants such as blueberries and azaleas.
- ◆ Do not apply wood ash to a potato patch as wood ashes may favor the development of potato scab.
- ◆ Do not apply ash to newly germinated seeds, as ash contains too many salts for seedlings.
- ◆ Do not add ash with nitrogen fertilizers such as ammonium sulfate (21-0-0-24S), urea (46-0-0) or ammonium nitrate (34-0-0). These fertilizers produce ammonia gas when placed in contact with high pH materials such as wood ash.

References:

Savonen, C. (2007). *Wood ash can be helpful in yard if used with caution*. Oregon State University, <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/node/39/print>
Traunfeld, J. and Nibali, E. (2013). *Soil Amendments and Fertilizers*. University of Maryland, HG42.

Fall Fundraiser

Daffodil Bulbs — \$3 (5 bulbs)



Cragford

Short plant with 2-4 white ruffled petals and a small orange cup. Fragrant. 14" February



Double Campenelli

Bright petite flower with rose shaped center. Needs full sun. Very fragrant. Pre 1900. 10-12" Early February

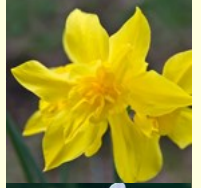


Gigantic Star

Large yellow flowers. Likes full sun and well-drained soil. 18-24" Late February

2-3 small bright golden yellow flowers. Excellent fragrance. Wister award winner. 12-14" February

Quail



Silver Chimes

All white with 8-12 large fragrant florets to a stem. Multiplies well. 16" Mid-March



Waterperry

2 flowers per stem, apricot colored cups. Needs partial shade and moderate water. 12" Early March



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STRAWBERRY PLANT FUNDRAISER

'Camino Real' Strawberries

- Released by University of California
- Plants are small and compact
- Fruiting begins in late winter
- Good per-plant yields
- Large fruit with very good flavor

10 plants - \$5

50 plants - \$20

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Decorate for Halloween with these Ghoulish Plants



Feed me, Seymour

While it's not the man-eating plant portrayed in Little Shop of Horrors, the Venus flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*) can be useful for disposing of a pest or two. Just keep him on the table and your guests won't be the only ones enjoying a snack. The jaw-like traps of this carnivorous plant will close around any insect prey that lingers too long and touches one of the trigger hairs. This plant is best grown indoors in bright light. If grown outdoors, protect it from freezing temperatures.

Photo credit: flytrapcare.com

Bat-Faced Cuphea

The Bat-Faced Cuphea (*Cuphea llavea*) is a plant that produces a dark purple flower with red lobes resembling the face of a big-eared bat. Reaching 1-2 feet tall and wide, the plant makes a nice addition to the yard where it tolerates heat and drought. Besides attracting the attention of your little goblins, it also attracts hummingbirds and butterflies with its blooms from spring through fall.



Photo credit: Shaina Spann



The Witch's Broom

While you can purchase plants formed from a witch's broom, you may also find one in your yard. A witch's broom is an unusually dense and compact cluster of twigs and foliage. The mass of shoots comes from a common point, giving the growth a broom-like appearance. Witches' brooms can be caused by mites, viruses, fungi, mistletoes, insects, and nematodes, but can also be caused by a genetic mutation in the plant. Although some may consider a witches' broom to be unsightly, others find them highly desirable. That's because these "mutant brooms" and their new genetic makeup can lead to new plant cultivars.

A witch's broom on a sand pine in Ocala National Forest. Photo credit: Niels Proctor



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