



Highlights in

*Horticulture*

Baker County

December 2016

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Dear Extension Friends,

The deadline to participate in our online newsletter survey has been extended! Please consider taking the survey today and let us know what you'd like to read about in the coming year! The information will be used for reporting purposes, while the comments and suggestions you provide will help us to improve the newsletter for you—the reader. From our Extension family to yours, please have a safe and happy holiday season!

Best Regards,

*Alicia*

Alicia R. Lamborn  
Horticulture Extension Agent

**Newsletter Survey**

We want your feedback regarding our monthly newsletter! To show our appreciation, we are giving away **two** prize packages that include a 40lb bag of organic fertilizer and an Amaryllis plant.

Enter to win by completing the survey online or scan the QR Code below with your smartphone:



<https://goo.gl/forms/d2uAb4SiXmSvC00v2>



# WHAT TO PLANT IN NORTH FLORIDA



## DECEMBER

### FLOWERS

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

### VEGETABLES

Arugula	Beets
Broccoli	Brussels Sprouts
Cabbage	Carrots
Celery	Chinese Cabbage
Collards	Kale
Kohlrabi	Mustard
Onions, bunching (green & shallots)	
Radish	Spinach
Swiss Chard	Turnips

## PEST MANAGEMENT & FERTILIZING TIPS

Most Florida soils benefit greatly from the addition of organic matter such as compost.

Protect bees and other pollinators. Apply insecticides late in the day when they are less active. Malathion, Carbaryl, and pyrethroids are especially harmful to bees.

If possible, select an insecticide that targets specific pests. Bt, for example, targets caterpillar pests.

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>

## Christmas Trees

Written by Mary Ann Ray,  
 Baker County Master Gardener Volunteer

Whether you call it a Christmas tree or holiday bush, the use of evergreen trees dates back centuries. However, Christmas trees have only been sold in the U.S. since about 1850.

An average of 35 million trees are produced each year and 95% are shipped or sold from tree farms. They are grown in every state of the U.S., taking 7 to 10 years to mature. In Florida, the main species of trees grown for this purpose are Red Cedars, Virginia Pines, Sand Pines, Spruce Pines, and Leyland Cypress.

When shopping for a tree, shake the tree to see if any green needles fall. Then break a few needles to check for fragrance. This will help you select a fresh tree that has been cut for only a short period of time. Just remember to also choose a tree that will fit in your stand.

If you aren't hand picking your tree directly from the field at the tree farm, then likely your tree has been cut for more than 1 hour, requiring a fresh cut to the base, made 1 to 3 inches from the original cut. Placing your tree immediately in the tree stand that holds 1 to 2 gallons of water will help it stay fresh through the holiday season. And don't forget to check your tree stand everyday and refill that water since a fresh tree may use more than a gallon a day.

Keeping your tree away from fireplaces, space heaters and heat vents will also help keep your tree fresh and avoid fire dangers.

After the holidays are over, recycle your tree if possible. Branches can be cut up and used as mulch in plant beds or added to a compost pile for further decomposition.



# Jujube

## *An Unusual Fruit for North Florida Gardens*

The Jujube (also called Chinese jujube or Chinese date) is an attractive tree with edible fruits that can be grown throughout Florida. This uncommon fruit has a unique, sweet flavor that you're sure to love.

The one-inch-long fruits start out green and turn red or mahogany once they're mature. They look somewhat like cherries but taste more like apples.

The trees are prized for their ornamental qualities. The gnarled branches grow in an interesting zig-zag pattern and have a somewhat weeping habit. Many have thorns, though thorn-less cultivars are available.

Chinese jujube can be planted in full sun or partial shade. It enjoys hot summers but will also tolerate cold winters. Depending on variety, this deciduous tree can reach anywhere from 15 to 40 feet in height with a spread of 10 to 30 feet. Most unpruned plants grow with several trunks and so it may require some pruning to maintain a single trunk.



The mottled gray/black bark is rough and shaggy. The one to two-inch-long leaves have a paler underside and sharp spines at the base of each leaf. Fall color is often a showy yellow, but not consistent. In spring, small clusters of yellow or white, fragrant blossoms appear, hidden in foliage between the leaf and stems.

The fruits are quite sweet and can be eaten fresh, candied, canned, or dried like dates. Even young, two-year-old trees are able to produce these delectable treats but be forewarned that these fruits can create quite a litter problem. Locate the tree so the fruit drops in a mulch bed or on the lawn, not on a sidewalk, patio or driveway.



Chinese jujube is drought tolerant once established, though fruiting will be heavier if it receives regular water. No pests or diseases are of major concern.

A jujube tree named 'Sugar Cane' has recently been planted in the Baker County Extension Office arboretum. 'Sugar Cane' is considered early ripening, with fruit ripening in August through September. Medium size fruit is round to elongated and extremely sweet, and juicy. If you'd like to "try before you buy" we hope to have fruit in the coming year available for taste testing!

# Upcoming Workshops & Events

**Jan 5** **Fruit Orchard Planting Workshop/Event, 9:00 am—12:00 pm, Baker County Extension Office, Arboretum and Gardens.** The Baker County Extension Office recently received a grant which will partially fund the installation of a teaching fruit orchard. Learn a little about site selection, proper planting techniques, basic care and first year pruning/training techniques of select fruit trees in a learn-by-doing setting while planting the orchard. Since the primary focus for this event will be the planting of the orchard, anyone willing to lend a hand with planting may participate in the event at no cost. A second workshop planned for January 20th will provide both classroom instruction and demonstrations in the orchard. For more information, please call (904) 259-3520.



**Jan 20** **Fruit Orchard Workshop: Planting & 1st Year Maintenance, 2:00 pm — 4:00 pm, Baker County Extension Office, Classroom and Arboretum.** The Baker County Extension Office recently received a grant which will partially fund the installation of a teaching fruit orchard. This workshop will cover general fruit tree selection, site selection, proper planting techniques, and 1st year basic care and pruning/training techniques of select fruit trees located in the new fruit orchard including blueberries, blackberries, peaches, nectarines, plums, persimmons and figs. Perfect for anyone planting fruits this season or thinking of planting fruits in the near future — this workshop will begin in the classroom followed by demonstrations in the fruit orchard. \$5 per person includes all materials; pre-registration and payment is due by Wednesday, January 18th. For more information, please call (904) 259-3520.

**Jan 27** **Strawberry Plant Sale, 9:00 am — 2:00 pm, Baker County Extension Office.** Master Gardener Volunteers will host a tent sale featuring potted strawberry plants with blooms and fruit, ready for your enjoyment. Choose from hanging baskets, 1-gallon and 3-gallon containers, and 5-gallon vertical garden strawberry buckets, all reasonably priced. For more information, please call (904) 259-3520.



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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).