

Baker County Extension Service
1025 West Macclenny Avenue
Macclenny, FL 32063

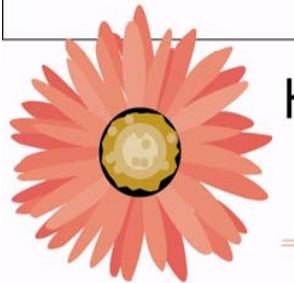
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IFAS EXTENSION



Highlights in

Horticulture

Baker County

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).

Upcoming Programs & Events: February & March

February 23rd — **Edible Landscaping** 5:30pm to 6:30pm at the Baker County Extension Office (Agriculture Center). Learn which fruit and vegetable varieties can be grown in the landscape to create a garden with good taste! Program is FREE; RSVP at 904-259-3520 or email alamborn@ufl.edu by Friday, February 19th at 5pm.



March 2nd & 3rd — **Palm Management in the Florida Landscape** 7:45am to 5pm each day at Harry P. Leu Gardens in Orlando. Palm specialists will be teaching on topics such as diagnosing palm problems, nutrient deficiencies, insects and diseases, fertilizer formulations and application techniques, and many more. Advanced registration fee of \$300 is due by February 15th (or until class is full). CEUs also available. For more information and to reserve your spot for "Palm School", contact Dr. Monica Elliot at 954-577-6315 or melliott@ufl.edu.



March 17th to 18th OR March 19th to 20th — **Starting a Successful Hydroponic Business**

Prospective and new growers interested in protected culture, hydroponics and products for local markets are encouraged to attend this in-depth training at the UF/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center –Suwannee Valley located at 8202 CR 417 in Live Oak. Registration for classroom and greenhouse sessions is \$295 per person and optional greenhouse tour is \$50 per person. Space is limited and seats are held only upon receipt of registration and payment. For more information or to receive a schedule and registration form, call 386-362-1725 ext. 101 or 104 or email khancock@ufl.edu or solus@ufl.edu. You may also stop by the Baker County Extension Office at 1025 W. Macclenny Ave, Macclenny to pick up a copy.



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

Dear Extension Friends,

January 2010

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Another year has flown by but some of us may be looking to start fresh in 2010. If you haven't made your new year's resolutions yet, consider committing to growing something new in the garden, or maybe a little extra for those in need, or commit to having a more environmentally-friendly landscape this year. My new year's resolution is to hold more hands-on programs that interest the community. This means I need your help to make suggestions and tell me what you want to learn! My door is always open.

Best Regards,

Alicia

Alicia R. Lamborn
Horticulture Extension Agent
Baker County Extension Service

Upcoming Programs & Events: January



January 10th to 17th — **National Invasive Species Awareness Week** Please help make our local efforts a success by participating in the invasive plant training (details below) and Air Potato Roundup on January 16th at one of twelve locations. For more information, call 904-823-2291 or email tgramajo@TNC.org.

January 12th — **Baker/Nassau Invasive Plant Training** 9am to 12pm at the Nassau Ag & Natural Resources Extension Office located at 543350 US Highway 1 in Callahan. Learn how to identify and control local invasive plants and receive free training materials. Program is FREE; public and private land managers are encouraged to attend. Please RSVP by calling Steve Gaul at 904-879-1019 or email sgaul@ufl.edu.

January 15th — **Florida's Arbor Day** Celebrate Florida's Arbor Day by planting a tree for all to enjoy! If you know a Baker County community youth group interested in planting a tree for Arbor Day, let us know by calling 904-259-3520!



January 26th — **Tree & Shrub Pruning** 5:30pm to 7pm at the Baker County Extension Office (Agriculture Center). This class will cover topics relating to structural pruning, pruning cuts, proper ways to prune palms and crape myrtles and shrub pruning. Program is FREE; RSVP at 904-259-3520 or email alamborn@ufl.edu by Monday, January 25th at 5pm. Class attendees can also attend a pruning workshop on Wednesday, January 27th at 2pm to practice skills taught during the class.

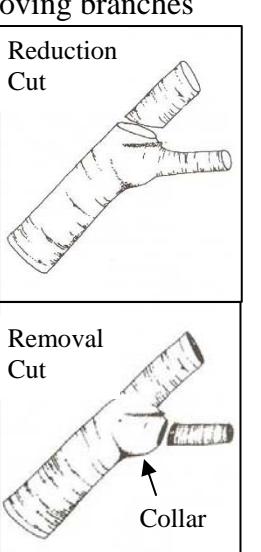
Lawns & Gardens

Lawns:

- Planting rye grass seed will fill in bare spots and green up brown lawns during winter, but will also require mowing and fertilizing.
- For those bare areas, you may want to instead consider preparing them to reseed or replant. To do this you will need to remove all weeds and then till or turn the soil and rake out the debris. A soil pH test will tell you if the acidity needs adjusting. Preparing the ground now will give you time to adjust the pH (as needed), determine which type of turfgrass is best suited to your site, and prepare to plant once the weather warms up in spring. When you are ready to seed, plug or sod, just rake the ground to remove any new debris and loosen the soil. For more information on preparing to plant, choosing a grass species, and more, contact our office or visit edis.ifas.ufl.edu to view our publications on lawns.

Gardens:

- Add color to your landscape by planting freeze resistant annuals like dianthus, pansies, petunias, and snapdragons.
- Get your annual pruning done this month (or early February). Most landscape trees and shrubs are dormant this time of year which minimizes the stress caused by removing large amounts of foliage.
 - Before starting, be sure you have clearly defined objectives for pruning. Randomly removing branches can affect the health and aesthetic value of the plant.
 - Remove branches in the correct manner and make good pruning cuts. In general, there are two types of pruning cuts that can be made. You can either shorten the length of a stem by pruning back to a smaller limb (reduction cut, shown right) or prune a branch back to the trunk or parent branch (removal cut, shown bottom right).
 - Never cut a stem to an indiscriminate length and never “top” a plant. “Topping” is an inappropriate technique (though common among crape myrtles) making heading cuts to reduce tree size but destroys tree architecture and initiates decay in the cut stem.
 - Never make a cut that is flush with the trunk. Instead, make a cut just outside the branch collar (the slightly swollen area at the base of a branch, shown right). If the branch does not have a defined collar then care should be taken to avoid cutting into this area. Just remember that a good pruning cut should be round instead of oval-shaped (oval usually means the collar has been removed).
 - Dead and diseased branches can be removed at any time of year as well as any hazardous limbs that need structural pruning.
 - When pruning trees of any size, you should always be sure to use the correct equipment and follow safety precautions. Also consider hiring a certified arborist to do the job for you.



(If you are interested in learning more about pruning, please plan to attend the class offered at the end of the month—see page 1 for more details.)

- Plant a tree for Florida's Arbor Day!
(Learn more on page 3.)

The Florida Maple (shown right) is a deciduous native tree, having beautiful fall color, fast growth and tolerates occasionally wet soils.

Planting deciduous trees (those that lose their leaves during winter) on the south side of your home will save you on energy costs by shading the home in summer and allowing sunlight to penetrate the canopy in winter, keeping your home warmer.



Celebrate Florida's Arbor Day



Arbor Day is a nationally-celebrated observance that promotes the benefits of trees in the urban environment and encourages tree planting and care. Arbor Day was the creation of Julius Sterling Morton of Nebraska, and first took place in 1872. Morton served as President Grover Cleveland's Secretary of Agriculture, improving agricultural techniques throughout the United States. Nearly one hundred years later, in 1970, President Richard Nixon proclaimed the last Friday in April as National Arbor Day. However, individual states conduct their own Arbor Day celebrations at various times of the year. Florida is first to celebrate Arbor Day each year (along with Louisiana), on the third Friday of January.

Florida celebrates Arbor Day in January because many trees are dormant (not actively growing) and lose less water through transpiration (evaporation of water from leaves) this time of year, making them easier to transplant without putting them through too much stress.

In celebration of Florida's Arbor Day, citizens are encouraged to do their part in helping to reduce air pollution, conserve energy, and beautify the State of Florida by planting trees. Join hundreds of others across Florida in protecting the environmental balance and beauty of the Sunshine State by planting a native or Florida-Friendly tree in honor of Florida's Arbor Day. If you don't have enough room to plant your own tree, consider planting a seed or tree seedling which you can later give to someone who does. Otherwise, just take a moment to appreciate the trees around you.

For a list of Florida-Friendly Trees for Baker County, visit our website and click on “Fact Sheets” under the Lawn and Garden section.

Arboretums and Parks of Interest:
Fairchild Oak @ Bulow Creek State Park (north of Ormond Beach)
Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens
Palm & Cycad Arboretum (on Beach Blvd in Jacksonville)
Treaty Oak @ Treaty Oak Park (on Prudential Dr. in Jacksonville)

Tree Planting Tips

- Do your homework! Be sure the tree species you have chosen will not out-grow the space.
- Before removing the tree from its container, remove soil from the top of the root-ball until the top-most root is within the top 2 inches of soil. This is the first step to prevent from planting too deep.
- Dig your planting hole 2-3 times the width of the root ball. This will loosen the soil and allow growing roots to push through the soil easier, making for faster establishment.
- Dig shallow. Your planting hole should be wider than it is deep. In fact, it is recommended that you leave the top 10% of the root ball sticking out above the backfill soil (see figure below). Planting a tree too deep in the ground is one of the biggest mistakes we make when planting trees so leaving a small portion above landscape grade is our second defense to avoid making this mistake.
- Remove as much burlap as possible from the root ball (if applicable).
- Cut circling roots. When you pull the tree out of its container, check for and cut roots circling around the root ball. This technique allows new tissue to grow from the cut ends and will prevent future root problems.
- Backfill should contain native soil only. Do not add organic compost to the planting hole. You can add compost to the entire planting area before planting, but it must be completely mixed with the native soil.
- Do not place backfill over the root ball, only around it.
- Use a hose to water the backfill as you add it to the planting hole. This will compact the soil around the tree and remove air pockets. Stepping on the backfill is not recommended.
- Use mulch to retain soil moisture (very important for establishment). A 2-3 inch layer after settling is recommended, but mulch should not be placed against the trunk.

