

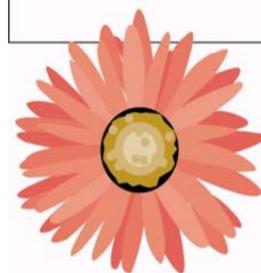
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Highlights in

Horticulture

Baker County

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Horticulture. You can
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 to our office OR renew
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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).

Dear Extension Friends,

I know most (if not all) of us are anxiously awaiting the arrival of Spring! We have had quite a cold winter this year, but hopefully you will find that not all has been lost to the cold. If you are looking to get outside and enjoy the Spring weather, be sure to check out the Farmer's Market on Saturday mornings (details below) and support our local farmers. We will also be celebrating Spring again this year at the Extension Office with the 2nd Annual Spring Garden Fest (more details on page 4). Hope to see you there!

March 2010

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Best Regards,

Alicia

Alicia R. Lamborn
 Horticulture Extension Agent
 Baker County Extension Service

Upcoming Programs & Events: March & April

March 15th — **Lawn Care Workshop** 5:30pm to 7:00pm at the Baker County Extension Office (Agriculture Center). Learn techniques for maintaining a healthy lawn all year long. \$2 registration fee for materials and refreshments is due by Friday, March 12th at 5 pm.



March 20th — **Rain Barrel Workshop** 10:00am to 11:00am at the Baker County Extension Office (Agriculture Center). Celebrate the first day of spring by installing a rain barrel that will save the rain for your plants and save you money! Learn how to build, install, and maintain a functional rain barrel for immediate use. All materials are provided for this "make and take" rain barrel workshop. \$35 fee for materials (per barrel) is due by Friday, March 5th at 5:00 pm.



Already have your own barrel? Just call 259-3520 to register and join the class for free!

April 22nd — **Earth Day Event** 3:00pm to 6:00pm. The City of Macclenny has partnered with the Baker County Extension Office for Earth Day 2010! Stop by the Agriculture Center to find out how you can make every day Earth Day by conserving water inside and outside your home and recycling in the garden. There will be lots of freebies for both adults and children, including a raffle for drought tolerant plants.



April 24th — **Spring Garden Fest** 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. The 2nd Annual Spring Garden Fest has something for everyone...plants for sale, gardening demonstrations, and children's activities.

Demonstrations include... Building your own compost bin for cheap!
 Raised Bed/Square Foot Gardening and more...

**Baker County Farmer's Market
 Coming Soon — Vendors Needed**

Baker County is working hard to open a new farmer's market for community members, tentatively set to open on April 3rd and open each Saturday from 8am to 1pm. The proposed location of the farmer's market is in the Crystal River Seafood restaurant parking lot on the west side of State Road 121 in Macclenny.



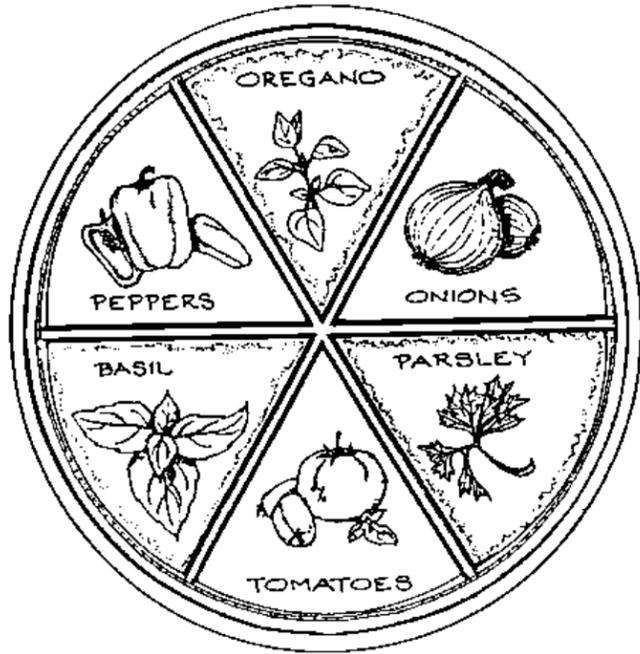
Vendors are needed to sell locally produced products that include but are not limited to: Fresh vegetables and fruits, nuts, honey, fresh and/or dried flowers, plants and other landscape products, herbs and products, soaps, jams/jellies, sauces and relishes, baked goods, canned goods, woodworking, jewelry, artwork, crafts and any handmade items. (All art or craft must be handmade or original items by the artist; all food products sold must be first quality.) Booth rental fees are \$10 per day or \$30 per month.

All growers and food vendors must provide and be in compliance with all City, County, State and Federal Regulations and supply the appropriate permits, certifications, registrations and licenses.

Vendor applications are available at the Baker County Chamber of Commerce and Baker County Extension Office (Agricultural Center). All questions, applications and required documentation must be submitted to the Baker County Chamber of Commerce, located at 20 East Macclenny Ave. in Macclenny, FL or call 904-259-6433.

Pizza Gardens: Grow Your Own Slice of Pizza Pie!

A fun way to introduce children to gardening is by planting a pizza garden. Let kids grow their own pizza ingredients and make dinner themselves! Pizza gardens include a variety of vegetables and herbs, and are often shaped like pizza pies.



Choose a site with at least six hours of sunlight and prepare it like you would for any vegetable garden.

For added fun, try making a circular bed, dividing it into six equal wedges. (Laying down pavers or stepping stones to separate the wedges will create nice clean lines and make it easier to harvest plants growing in the center.)

You'll plant three vegetables and three herbs, one for each wedge. For vegetables, plant tomatoes, peppers and onions. For herbs, plant basil, oregano and parsley. Experiment with different varieties to see which flavors you like best.

Water your pizza garden regularly and add mulch to keep the weeds out and moisture in. In a few months your pizza garden will be both beautiful and edible!

Small Trees with a BIG Impact

If you don't have room for a large tree, consider planting a small flowering tree that will make a statement and have a big impact in your yard.

Fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*) — Florida native; slow growing to 12-20 feet in height, 10-15 feet wide; showy white flowers in spring; tolerates occasionally wet soil; attracts birds; will grow in shade or sun but flowers best in sun. (Pictured top right)



Saucer Magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangiana*) — Florida-Friendly; moderate growth to 20-25 feet high, 15-25 feet wide; many cultivars available; pink/white/lavender fragment flowers in late winter or early spring. (Pictured left)

Flatwoods Plum (*Prunus umbellata*) — Florida native; moderate growth to 12-20 feet high and wide; white flowers in spring attract butterflies; purple plums are edible and attract wildlife; best grown in partial sun. (Pictured right)



Rusty Blackhaw (*Viburnum rufidulum*) — Florida native; slow growing to 20-25 feet high and wide; produces large clusters of small white flowers in spring; small black fruit attracts birds; nice fall color (scarlet-purple); tolerates occasionally wet soils; grow in shade or sun but prefers sun. (Pictured left)

Check out the Florida-Friendly Plant Database at floridayards.org for more ideas on what to plant this spring!

Lawns & Gardens



Lawns:

- ◆ Freezing temperatures have turned lawns brown, but this is a normal part of winter dormancy. When the days become longer and temperatures warm up in spring, the growing points will become active, bringing green growth to the lawn once again.
- ◆ If you find that some areas of the lawn did not survive the cold this year, prepare to replant by removing all off the old grass, raking the area to loosen the soil and replacing the lawn before the weeds take hold. If large areas need replacing, you have the option of either laying sod or reseeding. If you only have small patches to fill, then consider using plugs that will grow and fill in the area naturally.
- ◆ It's best to wait until the end of March or early April to fertilize the lawn, after the last late freeze has passed and the grass has come out of winter dormancy.
- ◆ A soil test will determine which nutrients your lawn needs and in what amounts. If a soil test indicates that phosphorus is needed, you should apply a complete fertilizer (containing nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium) such as 16-4-8, 13-3-13, or similar recommended analysis. Otherwise, a 15-0-15, or similar fertilizer can be used.
- ◆ Consider using a controlled or slow-release fertilizer which releases some nitrogen right away and some slowly over time. This will give longer lasting results and help reduce nutrient leaching and pollution from storm water runoff. Just don't get discouraged and re-apply when you don't see a response. Response time can range from 60-90 days depending on the percentage of slow-release nitrogen in the product.
- ◆ If you applied a pre-emergent herbicide last month (such as a crabgrass preventer) to get a handle on those weeds, be sure to wait 60 days from the pre-emergent application before using a weed-n-feed product in spring. This will stretch your herbicide protection out and will prevent stress to your lawn.
- ◆ You can also get an early handle on those broadleaf weeds by hand pulling (as much as you can stand) and by spot treating with a three-way herbicide mixture such as Trimec, Ortho Weed-B-Gone, Spectracide Weed Stop or similar product. You may also use an atrazine product, except on bahiagrass. Repeat applications spaced ten to fourteen days apart may be necessary.
- ◆ Have your mower blades sharpened this month in preparation of spring mowing. Dull blades make jagged, uneven cuts, creating a larger surface area for water to be lost and thus making your lawn less drought tolerant.
- ◆ Calibrate and check irrigation systems to make sure they are ready for spring. Check for leaks and make sure the heads are not spraying the driveway or street. To calibrate, place containers such as tuna cans, coffee cans, or rain gauges around the yard. Run the system for 15 minutes to see how much water is collected in the containers, then determine how long it would take to apply 1/2 to 3/4 inch of water to the landscape.

Gardens:

- ◆ Vegetable gardens can be planted this month, along with annual and perennial seeds, or purchase transplants to get a jump on the season. Just be sure you have a way to protect them from late frosts and freezes. If you need advice on vegetable gardening, check out the *Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide* at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021> or stop by the office to pick up a free copy and receive one-on-one advice.
- ◆ Prune your azaleas, camellias, hydrangeas, and spirea after they finish blooming.
- ◆ Plants that suffered a lot of winter damage will also need pruning to reshape the canopy. This is best done after new growth has begun. This will ensure that you are only trimming off dead tissue.
- ◆ If you are planting containerized trees and shrubs, be sure to purchase healthy plants that are appropriate for the designated site. Consider planting low maintenance, drought tolerant species that will not require excessive watering during periods of drought.
- ◆ Be sure to group plants together based on watering needs. This will save you time and money, and make your plants happier.
- ◆ Fertilize spring flowering trees and shrubs after they finish blooming, if needed. Remember that any fertilizer you apply to your lawn is also used by your landscape plants since roots can extend far beyond the edge of the canopy.

