

Highlights in

*Horticulture*

Baker County

October 2011

Dear Extension Friends,

The Master Gardeners would like to remind you to visit them at the Fair through October 8th. They will be staffing the Baker County Extension and Horticulture Booths and would love to share their knowledge of plants and gardening with you. They are also available Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the Extension Office, answering your gardening questions!

Best Regards,

*Alicia*

Alicia R. Lamborn  
Horticulture Extension Agent  
Baker County Extension Service

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*Fall Gardening Tips*

Landscapes: Create a display of fall and winter colors by planting masses of cold-hardy annuals including, pansies, petunias, ornamental cabbage, dianthus, and snapdragons. Bulbs such as amaryllis, calla lilies, daffodils and iris can also be planted in fall for late winter & spring color.

Vegetable Gardens: Plant cool-season vegetables this month such as beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard greens, onions, radish, and spinach. Some herbs thrive in cool weather including dill, fennel, parsley, sage, thyme, garlic, comfrey and coriander.

Weed Management: If needed, apply a pre-emergence herbicide to control annual weeds. A general rule of thumb for pre-emergence herbicide application in north Florida is to apply in early October (when nighttime temperatures drop to 55° to 60°F for several consecutive days) to control fall-germinating weeds. To obtain season-long control, an additional application should follow 6 to 9 weeks after the initial one. Always read and follow product label directions thoroughly. *Note: The first and best method of weed control begins with proper management practices that encourage a dense, thriving turf (these include proper fertilization, watering, and mowing at the correct height), and the use of mulch to suppress weeds in landscape beds.*



# Grow Your Own Strawberries!



**Strawberries should be planted during the months of October and November!**

**VARIETIES:** There are three varieties recommended for the home garden: ‘Camarosa’, ‘Festival’, and ‘Sweet Charlie’. All three produce attractive, flavorful berries suitable for eating fresh, canning or freezing, and are capable of producing 1 to 2 pints of fruit per plant over the season. During fall, the plants will continue to grow larger and put on new leaves, followed by flower formation and later fruit production in response to the shorter days and cooler nights of winter. The fruit is ready for harvest about a month after flowers are formed, and protecting plants from freezes will bring you early fruit (January).

**SITE:** Strawberries grow best in a location receiving at least 8 hours of direct sunlight per day. If a full sun location is not available, try to choose a spot that is sunny during the morning and early afternoon. The soil should be well drained and slightly acidic (pH 5.5-6.5). Most strawberry plants grown in Florida are planted in double rows on raised beds, but can also be grown in planter boxes, hanging baskets, barrels and in other types of containers. Raised beds (as compared to flat beds) create a well-drained soil environment and make hand harvesting easier.

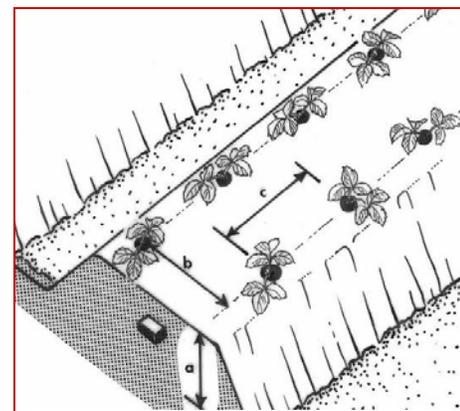
**FERTILIZER:** A fertilizer formula containing nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) is essential for successful strawberry growth and fruiting. A 10-5-10 or similar garden fertilizer with micronutrients (i.e. zinc, copper, iron, manganese and boron) and at least 30% to 50% slow release nitrogen is recommended. For each ten feet of row, incorporate 1 cup of the fertilizer evenly across the top of the bed with a rake and band 3 cups of fertilizer approximately 1 inch deep down the middle of the bed (above the drip line or soaker hose, if they have been placed in the bed). Applying fertilizer directly under plants will cause foliar wilting due to salt burn and placing fertilizer under the soaker hose will cause nutrient leaching and therefore nutrient deficiencies in your plants.

**MULCH:** Mulching is not necessary, but is recommended. While straw and other natural organic materials may be used, black polyethylene plastic mulch (1 to 1.5 mils-thick) has proven to work best, providing excellent weed control and keeping the fruit cleaner. If plastic is used, cover the top and sides of the beds just before planting. Soil can be placed on the edges to hold it in place and holes can be cut at the proper intervals for plants to be inserted.

**PLANTING:** Now you’re ready to plant! Bareroot plants are the most common type of transplant available, just make sure they are planted at the correct depth—deep enough so roots aren’t exposed, but not so deep that the crown is covered. This will ensure your plants get off to a good start.

**WATERING:** Overhead irrigation will fill in the soil around the roots and keep the tops from drying out until the roots can get established. Once established, a drip irrigation line can be used. When plants are small, one to two short watering per week should be sufficient. Later in the season, when plants are larger and weather is warmer, two or three longer watering per week will be needed.

**FREEZE PROTECTION:** Strawberry flowers and fruit can be damaged by freezing temperatures, while the leaves and crowns of the plants usually do not sustain any permanent damage unless they are exposed to air temperatures in the low 20s. The most practical method for the Florida gardener to protect flowers from freeze damage may be to cover plants with old sheets or blankets or a commercial polypropylene row cover during the afternoon preceding an expected freeze. The covering should be anchored down on all sides to prevent wind from blowing it off the plants. If you do lose flowers and early fruit due to a freeze, a later crop will develop.



**Raised bed design:**

a=7-9 in. b=12 in. c=12-18 in.

**Would you like to grow strawberries? The Master Gardeners are selling plants (order form on page 3) and would like to show you all the ways you can grow them during the Horticulture Open House & Strawberry Festival on Saturday, October 22nd (details on page 4).**



# Fruit & Nut Calendar: October



The following fruit trees require attention this month. All fertilizer recommendations are for optimum growth of fruit trees. It is important to remember that you always have the option of applying less fertilizer, but the amount of fertilizer should not exceed these recommendations.

## Blueberries:

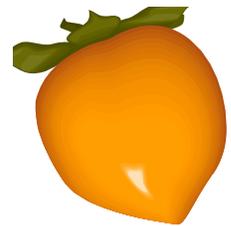
Year 1: Fertilize using 1 ounce (2 TB) per plant of 12-4-8 with 2% magnesium (Mg). If plants are mulched heavily, use 1.5 ounces (3 TB) per plant instead.. Spread fertilizer evenly over a circle 2 feet in diameter with the plant in the center.

Year 2: Fertilize using 2 ounces (4 TB) per plant of 12-4-8 with 2% magnesium (Mg). Spread fertilizer evenly over a circle 3 feet in diameter with the plant in the center.

Year 3+: Fertilize using 3 ounces (6 TB) per plant of 12-4-8 with 2% magnesium (Mg). Spread fertilizer evenly over a 4 foot diameter circle, or broadcast in a continuous band 3 to 4 feet wide, centered on the plant row.

*Note: These are general guidelines and should be adjusted based on plant performance. Slightly more fertilizer may be required if plants are heavily mulched. However, more often than not, cultivated blueberries suffer more from over-fertilization than from lack of fertilization. Use ammoniacal nitrogen or nitrogen from urea or organic sources, rather than from nitrate sources. Chlorine levels should be low, preferably below 2%. Special formulations such as "blueberry special" and "camellia-azalea" fertilizers are available in Florida and meet these requirements.*

Persimmons: Late season cultivars are ready to harvest starting this month and into November. In general, crops can remain on the tree a month after marketable color develops, becoming softer with greater colors and sugar.



*To access our Fruit & Nut Calendar, visit our website and look under 'Gardening Information'*

## STRAWBERRY PLANT ORDER FORM

'Festival' Plants per bundle	Cost	No. of Bundles	Total
10 plants	\$5.00		
50 plants	\$20.00		
	<b>(Pay @ Pickup) Total</b>		

Customer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**You may call (904) 259-3520 to place an order by phone or...**

**Mail to:**

Strawberry Fundraiser  
Baker County Extension  
1025 W. Macclenny Ave.  
Macclenny, FL 32063

**Fax to:**

904-259-9034  
Attention: Strawberry Fundraiser

- All purchases come with planting and growing instructions.
- Funds will be used to support Master Gardener projects, educational activities and youth gardening programs in Baker County.
- DO NOT SEND MONEY – YOU WILL PAY AT PICK-UP
- Plants are subject to availability. Pre-orders are reserved but unclaimed orders will be re-sold.



The Baker County Extension Service  
& Master Gardeners present...

# *Horticulture Open House & Strawberry Festival*

*Saturday, October 22nd  
8:00 am — 12:00 noon*

*Located behind the Ag Center @ 1025 W. Macclenny Ave (Hwy 90) in Macclenny*

Fall is the perfect time for planting strawberries and the Master Gardeners want to teach you to be successful at growing your own!

## **The Open House includes:**

### **Strawberry Demonstrations**

Strawberry Barrels  
Grow Boxes  
Hanging Baskets  
Grow Bags  
Stackable Towers



### **Arboretum Tours**

Learn about Florida's  
unique tree species  
(and enjoy some fall color?)

### **Greenhouse Tours**

See what we have growing in the  
greenhouse!

**Hope to see you there!**



**Baker County Extension Service**

1025 West Macclenny Avenue  
Macclenny, FL 32063



Phone: (904) 259-3520

Email: [alamborn@ufl.edu](mailto:alamborn@ufl.edu)

Website: <http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu>

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 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).