



## The Baker Bulletin

A  
Baker County  
Extension  
Service Monthly  
Newsletter

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Dear Extension Friends,

Thank you for your continued support of the UF/IFAS Extension Baker County Office. This month we have an article on the Cacao Tree and also management tips for your grazing areas. Please also note the information for our Spring Garden Festival on page 2, along with a USDA Microloan announcement on page 3. Additional program information can be found on page 5. Finally, it is also time to renew your newsletter subscription, if you have not already done so. Please see page 8 of the newsletter for more details or visit our website at <http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu>. As always, if we can help you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Davis  
Director / Agriculture Agent  
UF/IFAS Extension Baker County

**UF** UNIVERSITY of  
**FLORIDA**  
IFAS Extension  
*Baker County Extension*

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4-H Agent



# Highlights in Horticulture

By:  
*Alicia Lamborn,*  
*Horticulture Agent*

## **A Valentine's Day Plant: The Cacao or Chocolate Tree**

Valentine's Day may be the one day that you allow yourself to indulge in chocolate treats without any guilt. But have you ever thought about where chocolate comes from?

Cacao, or cocoa, is an ancient crop having been harvested and used by the indigenous people of Central and South America for thousands of years. It was introduced to Europe during the 16th century, but it wasn't until the early 1800s that solid chocolate was manufactured. Then, the invention of milk-chocolate by the Swiss in 1876 led to the world-wide multi-billion-dollar chocolate processing industry. Cocoa is now grown in 58 countries and on more than 17 million acres world-wide and is worth in excess of \$4 billion to the world's economy annually.

Cocoa are small trees (25-30 feet) with few branches. At the tips of the branches are rather large leaves (up to 24 inches long by 4 inches wide) attached by a long petiole or leaf stem that allows the leaf to swivel to catch sunlight. The cocoa tree produces flowers on the older branches and trunk. A special tissue called the cushion produces up to 5 small flowers and the cushion may flower repeatedly.



After pollination the fruit that follows is called a pod. The pod takes 5 to 7 months or more to fully develop. It may be green or red, turning yellow when ripe. It has a thick peel and may be 4 to 13 inches long with a round or cylindrical shape. Pods contain 20 to 60 seeds and seeds are covered with a mucilage that tastes sweet. After seeds are extracted, the sweet mucilage can be consumed and the seeds can be processed to make chocolate.



Want a chocolate tree for Valentine's Day instead of a bouquet of roses? Cocoa plants are best adapted to hot, humid tropical environments with year round temperatures above 68°F, no freezing temperatures, and regular rainfall. So unless you are willing to move to a more tropical location, you can keep dreaming.

**An Endangered Treat:** Our increasing demand for chocolate combined with a decrease in supply due to drought, disease, and changes in farming practices have people calling the world's most delectable treat "endangered". But before you run out and begin stockpiling candy bars, there are reports that top chocolate companies are helping to train farmers in sustainable production and working with scientists to battle crop disease in order to save the delicious confection. For now though, I recommend you savor every bite!

UF/IFAS Extension Baker County  
*presents*

8th annual  
**Spring  
Garden Festival**

Saturday, April 2, 2016  
9 am - 2 pm

**IN THE ARBORETUM & GARDENS**  
1025 W. Macclenny Ave  
Macclenny Ag Center

plant  
SALE

KIDS  
Activities

gardening  
EXHIBITS

Florida-Friendly  
Landscaping  
ADVICE

FREE  
ENTRY

The Foundation for the Gator Nation  
An Equal Opportunity Institution

Interested in becoming a **vendor** for this event?  
Call (904) 259-3520 or Email: [alamborn@ufl.edu](mailto:alamborn@ufl.edu)



Photo credits: [www.fruitlovers.com](http://www.fruitlovers.com)  
and [Wikipedia.org](http://Wikipedia.org)



United States Department of Agriculture

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## USDA Expands Microloans to Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property

Adapted from USDA Release No. 0015.16. Contact person for this release: Isabel Benemelis (202)720-7809

To view the original Release, please visit: <http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAO/bulletins/13110af>

*Producers, Including Beginning and Underserved Farmers, Have a New Option to Gain Access to Land*

Washington, Jan. 19, 2016—Agriculture Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will begin offering farm ownership microloans, creating a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property. These microloans will be especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-size farming operations.

Many producers, especially new and underserved farmers, tell us that access to land is one of the biggest challenges they face in establishing and growing their farming operation,” said Harden. “USDA is making it easier for new farmers to hit the ground running and get access to the land that they need to establish their farms or improve their property.”

The microloan program, which celebrates its third anniversary this week, has been hugely successful, providing more than 16,800 low-interest loans, totaling over \$373 million to producers across the country. Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment, and living expenses since 2013. Seventy percent of loans have gone to new farmers.

Now, microloans will be available to also help with farm land and building purchases, and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers, and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

This microloan announcement is another USDA resource to America’s farmers and ranchers to utilize, especially as [new and beginning farmers and ranchers](#) look for the assistance they need to get started. To learn more about the FSA microloan program visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans), or contact your local FSA office. To find your nearest office location, please visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

# February 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 	3	4	5	6
7	8 	9 	10	11 	12	13
14	15	16 	17	18 	19	20
21	22	23 	24	25 	26	27 Baker County Hazardous Waste Collection Event
28	29	March 1	2	3	4 	5

Upcoming Programs are marked with a Program Area Symbol. Please match these symbols with the list on the following page for more information about the program.



4-H



Horticulture



Agriculture

# Upcoming Programs & Events

Programs will be held at the Baker County Extension Office (Agricultural Center) unless otherwise noted.

**Feb 18 Strawberry Pest Management Workshop, 8:30am to 5:00pm, Bradford County Extension Office, 2266 North Temple Avenue, Starke, FL 32091.** This workshop will cover topics including: 1) Weed Management Update, 2) Thrips, Spider Mite & Beetle Update, 3) Spotted Winged Drosophila Update, 4) The Strawberry Advisory System, 5) Insect Identification, and 6) Field Demonstrations of Insect Scouting, Herbicide Trials and a Weather Station. Additionally, there will be 6 pesticide CEUs available for those with a restricted pesticide license. Registration cost is \$15 per individual to cover lunch and course materials. Please RSVP and register by February 15, 2016. Additional details can be obtained by contacting the Bradford County Extension Service at 904-966-6224 or by visiting <http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu/documents/2016StrawberryIPMWorkshop.pdf>

## Master Gardener Lunch - n - Learn

Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup> 11am – 2pm

Join the County Horticulture Agent and Master Gardeners during your lunch break to learn about gardening!

**Where: Baker County Extension Office (Ag Center)  
1025 W. Macclenny Ave Macclenny, FL**

### Demonstrations

- Container Gardening
- DIY Tower Gardens
- Trap Crops

### Free Stuff

- Gardening Information
- Answers to Your Questions
- Bring Plants/Insects for ID
- Vegetable Seed Give-away

**Lunch – n – Learn:** Sit down for lunch in the classroom and enjoy a free class



For more info: call 904-259-3520

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

Facebook: UF IFAS Baker County Garden Spot



### 4-H Club Meetings & Events:

**All County 4-H Club** — 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month at 6pm in the 4-H classroom

**Livestock Club** — 4th Tuesday of each month at 6pm in Auditorium

**Cloverleaf Cloggers** — Every Tuesday at 8pm at Fabulous Footworks

**New Club! Baker Creation Explorers**—3rd Thursday of the month at 4:30pm in the 4-H Classroom.

**County Council**—Ages 10 & up. Meets 2nd Monday of the month at 6pm in the 4-H Classroom.

## Baker County Hazardous Waste Collection Event

Collection of household hazardous wastes such as pesticides, paint thinners, used oil, electronics, paints, and others.

**WHEN—Saturday, 2/27/2016**

**WHERE—Baker County Courthouse**

**55 N. 3rd St., Macclenny, FL 32063**

**TIME—9:00am to 3:00pm**

*Free to residents. A small fee applies for businesses.*

# Lucky Clover Chronicle

By:

Shaina Spann,  
4-H Agent

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## Events

### February

- 03- 4-H Day at the Capitol, Tallahassee
- 04-15- Florida State Fair, Tampa
- 16- Auction Planning Meeting, 6:30pm

### March

- 01- Legislature Registration Opens
- 18- Forest Ecology Contest Reg. CLOSSES
- 18- STEM Fair, Auditorium
- 19- County Events, Auditorium 10am
- 21- MAD Monday; Healthy Living 7pm  
<http://florida4h.org/madmonday/>

### April

- 9-14- National 4-H Conference
- 15-17- Third Executive Board, senior 4-H'ers, Camp Cherry Lake
- 30- District Events, TBA

### May

- 2- 4-H Legislature Reg. CLOSSES
- 16- Auction Items DUE
- 20-22- Intermediate State
- 21- 4-H Auction

**The mandatory Livestock Animal Orientation Meeting is April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 From 6:30pm-7:30pm in the Auditorium. If you do not attend this meeting you cannot participate in a livestock project.**



Happy Valentine's Day!



## How to Participate in a Livestock Project:

- Youth ages 8 and older wanting to show animals (commercial beef, horse, market steer and swine, pullets, rabbits, goats and poultry) in the fair will be required to earn a minimum of 15 points.
- Youth 5-7 need a minimum of 10 points.
- These points will be earned by participating in club, county, district, and state level 4-H events & activities. This system has been developed to help 4-H youth become well rounded program participants.
- Complete a 4-H animal specific project book (not the fair record book). (5 points)
- Attend 75% of club meetings. (4 points)
- Attend mandatory meetings.
- Commitment Form turned in.

### Example of points earned:

Holiday Bake Off (2 points) and Party (1 point)- total of 3 points  
Summer Day Camp- 2 points  
Present a photo at County Events- 1 point  
Help with the 4-H Auction- 1 point  
Attend meetings- 4 points  
Complete project book- 5 points  
Total points earned: 16 —Ready to exhibit an animal!!

### Livestock Commitment Forms are due:

**May 31st, 2016 by 5:00pm**  
**You can turn them in at ANY time, the earlier the better!**

### Birthdays for February:

Wishing you all a **Happy Birthday!**  
08- Chloe Rungruang  
09- Molly Walters  
10- Keelie Turk  
14- Mrs. Shaina  
19- Matthew Turner



Download our App to

**Baker County** 

Find us on   
<https://www.facebook.com/bakerco4h/>



## Getting Ready for Springtime: Grazing Management

**W**ith spring green up potentially just around the corner, now is the time for cattle managers to come up with their grazing plan for the coming growing season. Grazing management can be thought of as the manipulation of livestock grazing to achieve a desired result, namely the continued health of your animals and the continued health of your pastures. Typical decisions that are involved when deciding on a grazing management plan include: 1) the type of forage that is to be grazed, 2) the type of animal(s) that will be placed into the grazing area, 3) the nutritive requirements of the grazing animals, 4) input costs associated with the plan (including fencing, gates, fertilization, and weed control), and 5) the potential return on investment. The information below can help you with making some of these decisions for your property and your animals.



**WHAT FORAGES TO GRAZE?** Deciding what forages to graze depends on: 1) previous establishment of the pasture, 2) the soil requirements of the forage, and 3) the amount of nutrition that it will provide to the animal(s). Make sure to choose what is best for your area. The most common warm grasses in North Florida are bahia and bermuda.

**HOW CLOSE TO GRAZE?** When deciding how close to graze forage, managers will typically look at one of two things: 1) pasture height or 2) stocking rate. Which one of these factors that you will use will depend on your setup. Either of these scenarios can work, but you should always remember that during cool or dry weather pastures tend to be overgrazed and that during warm or wet weather, pastures tend to be undergrazed. It is also important to remember that the type of forage that you are using may determine the pasture grazing height. Tall grasses that elevate their leaves can be grazed to a taller height than low growing grasses. It is also important to remember that stems are less nutritious than leaves, so keep this in mind if you are using pasture height to determine when to move your animals to another grazing area.

**HOW OFTEN TO GRAZE?** When considering how often to graze, there are two options available to the cattle manager: 1) continuous grazing (stocking) or 2) rotational grazing (stocking). Continuous grazing is the unrestricted, continuous access to the pasture area by the livestock. In these cases, the livestock decide how close to graze. Continuous grazing also does not allow for a rest time for the forage area. This can be very detrimental to the pasture if a high stocking rate is used. However, this type of grazing has lower input costs and results in fewer management decisions. Rotational grazing uses two or more areas, or paddocks, that are grazed in sequence. This allows for new growth during the rest period. Using rotational grazing is more management intensive, but can allow for increased longevity of a forage area and potential increased stocking rates. Rotational grazing does have a higher input costs when compared to continuous grazing because of the need for fencing and gates.

**SUMMARY** - Grazing management is an important tool to use to get the best efficiencies out of your forage area. It is important to keep both the plant and the animal nutritive requirements in mind when deciding on a grazing management system to use. It is also important to keep in mind the costs of inputs such as fencing and the time that you will need to set aside for management of the herd. A good grazing management plan is one tool that can help you get the most out of your pasture and your herd. For additional information, please visit <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> or contact your local County Extension Agent.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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).

## FINAL REQUEST

If you would like to remain on the **Baker Bulletin** mailing list in **2016**, please complete the form below and mail it or bring it to our office. **Highlights in Horticulture** and **Feathered Facts** will continue to be produced individually and distributed electronically through email. You may also renew any newsletter subscription by visiting our website at <http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu>.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **RACE** \_\_\_\_\_ **GENDER** \_\_\_\_\_

- I would like to receive *The Baker Bulletin* by email.
- I would like to receive *Highlights in Horticulture* by email.
- I would like to receive *Feathered Facts* by email.

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to our office or mail it to: Baker County Extension Service  
1025 W. Macclenny Ave.  
Macclenny, FL 32063