



## The Baker Bulletin

A  
Baker County  
Extension  
Service Monthly  
Newsletter

### Baker County Extension Service

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Macclenny, FL 32063

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Email: [baker@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:baker@ifas.ufl.edu)

Hours: M—F 8:30am to 5:00pm  
(Closed Noon to 1:00pm for Lunch)

#### County Agents

**Alicia Lamborn**  
Horticulture Agent

**Shaina Spann**  
4-H Youth Development Agent

**Alicia Halbritter**  
Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent

Dear Extension Friends,

What do winter gardening, parasitic wasps, county events, fireweed and frozen gators have in common? They are all topics in this month's Extension newsletter! If you enjoy reading our newsletter and would like to request a topic, please drop us a line at [baker@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:baker@ifas.ufl.edu) and we'll do our best to cover it in a future issue. For now, stay warm...spring is just around the corner.

Sincerely,

Alicia Lamborn  
County Director / Horticulture Agent  
UF/IFAS Extension Baker County

[http://  
baker.ifas.ufl.edu](http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu)



[http://  
blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/bakerco](http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/bakerco)



[Baker County Garden Spot](#)  
[Baker County 4-H](#)



Search "Baker County  
4-H" in your app store

### Upcoming Classes & Events

- Feb 8** **Small Scale Mushroom Production**, 8:30 am—4:00 pm, North FL REC-Suwannee Valley. Topics include mushroom ID, shiitake log production, oyster bag production, and more. Register online at <http://www.mushroomproduction.eventbrite.com>
- Feb 11** **Tri-County Restricted Pesticide Applicator CEU Workshops**, 6:00 pm, Baker Co. Extension. Approved for: 2 CORE & 2 Private Applicator Ag or Ag Row Crop CEU's. Registration cost: \$5.00 at the door. Seating may be limited; please RSVP at (904) 259-3520 or email Alicia Halbritter at [alicia1221@ufl.edu](mailto:alicia1221@ufl.edu).
- Feb 12** **Beekeepers Meeting**, 7:00 pm, Union Co. Extension Office (35 NE 1st St, Lake Butler). Topic: When and how to replace your queen. For info, call (386) 496-2321.
- Feb 22** **Tomato Gardening**, 10:00 am, Baker County Extension Office. Topics include vegetable gardening basics, tomato variety selection, general care, tomato pruning techniques, and common tomato diseases and disorders. \$5 per person. Register in the office or online at: <https://tomatogardening.eventbrite.com>



**Pick up a FREE 2019 CALENDAR at the Baker County Extension Office!**

# Highlights in Horticulture

By:  
Alicia Lamborn,  
Horticulture Agent



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## February Gardening Tips

### Flowers

- Cut dead Canna Lily plants to the ground this month to reduce populations of the Canna Leafroller caterpillar. Disposing of the cut material with the overwintering pupae will reduce population levels of this insect in the spring.
- Looking to plant some bulbs? Try dahlia, crinum, and agapanthus. Provide adequate water for establishment and protect them from cold with mulch.

### Trees & Shrubs

- Prune azaleas when they have finished blooming to reduce their size and improve their form.
- Prune roses this month to remove damaged canes and improve the overall form. To prevent leaf spots and blights, rake the area beneath the bush to remove clippings and dead leaves. Then fertilize and apply a fresh layer of mulch. Blooming will begin 8–9 weeks after pruning.

### Lawns

- To prevent warm-season weeds, be ready to apply a preemergence weed killer (not a “weed and feed” fertilizer) when temperatures rise to 65–70°F for 4–5 days. Timing is important for good control and generally coincides with the blooming of azaleas and dogwoods, around March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Brown circles in the lawn could be a sign of large patch fungus (brown patch). This disease thrives with mild temperatures and moisture, especially in St. Augustine and Zoysia lawns. For more info: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/lh044>

### Vegetables

- Soil testing should be done this month if you are planting a spring vegetable garden. For \$7 you can learn your soil pH, lime requirement, and fertilizer requirements for the season.
- It's potato planting time! Look for seed potatoes at your local feed store or garden center, which are likely to be good varieties for Florida gardens and have not been treated to prevent sprouting like those in the grocery store.

### Fruits & Nuts

- For info on pruning and fertilizing in the orchard, see <http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/baker> or click [here](#).

### Wildlife

- Clean bird feeders every 2-3 weeks. For glass, ceramic and plastic (except hummingbird feeders), use a 10% bleach solution and dry completely before refilling. For wooden feeders, use hot soapy water.

## Wasps available to homeowners to fight Asian Citrus Psyllid

Homeowners with citrus trees in their yards can apply online to have disease-fighting wasps mailed at no cost for release.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is making the Asian Citrus Psyllid parasite *Tamarixia radiata* available for homeowners, in an attempt to stop the spread of Citrus Greening disease.

Florida residents can apply online to the department for these tiny disease-fighting wasps that hunt the Asian citrus psyllid, an invasive insect that spreads the fatal disease “citrus greening.” The psyllid carries the infection, which plugs the plant’s phloem, starves the tree and causes fruit to drop prematurely. *Tamarixia* feed on the pest and lay eggs inside young psyllids, killing them and, hopefully, the bacteria that cause the disease. The *Tamarixia* release program is one of several tools researchers and growers use to slow greening’s spread.

When you apply online to receive the wasps, the program will coordinate with the requestors for appropriate pickup dates and times from the Extension Office.

**Order your wasps now to be included in the next spring shipment. Apply online at:**

[www.FreshFromFlorida.com/TRA](http://www.FreshFromFlorida.com/TRA)



Parasitic wasps (pictured above) are now available to help combat Citrus Greening disease spread by the Asian Citrus Psyllid pest (pictured right).





## Why Do County Events?

County Events is a chance for members to showcase their talents and knowledge! I know that getting up in front of people to speak is difficult, but in the long run the experience is rewarding. There are so many occasions when adults are called on to speak, especially informally, to a small group. Having experience doing a 4-H speech or talent entry can set youth on a trajectory for successful public speaking events while in adulthood. In the beginning they may have to be forced to participate, but after a while it becomes easier and then they are a pro at speaking in front of groups!

County and district level presentations provide a valuable teaching and learning situation. They give Junior, Intermediate, and Senior participants an opportunity to practice making presentations, learn presentation techniques from observing others, receive constructive suggestions for improvement, and receive recognition for their efforts.

All 4-H events should foster a strong educational 4-H program by providing physical, mental, social, and emotional growth experiences for individual 4-H members. Events should give 4-H members positive, meaningful experiences in leadership and citizenship development.

Competitive events are a planned part of the 4-H curriculum, designed to allow youth to gain experience and develop skills in gathering, preparing, and presenting educational information. Presentations help them to enhance decision making capabilities, make public presentations, and develop good sportsmanship.

If you are interested in participating in County Events, please let Mrs. Shaina know! Categories for participation are as follows:

- Demonstration
- Illustrated Talk
- Photography
- Graphic Design
- Share-The-Fun (talent)



**County Events is March 16th at 10 am, location to be determined.**

**District Events is March 28th from 6-8pm in Alachua County.**

### Painting with a Clover

March 19th

**This will be our County Council Meeting for the month of March/April! Come paint, have fun, and see what County Council is about!**

**Time: 5-6pm**

**Cost: \$7 per person**

**Location: 4-H Classroom**

**Space is limited to 20!**

**Snack will be provided.**



**Bring  
A  
friend!**



**4-H Clubs  
Need Help!**



We need people to help teach subjects at club meetings. If you or someone you know is knowledgeable about chickens, rabbits, cows, or arts & crafts, please contact Shaina at the Extension Office at 259-3520.

### **4-H Club Meetings & Events**

- **Cloverleaf Cloggers**— Sanderson Community Center, Every Thursday 6-8pm
- **Livestock Club**— Sanderson Community Center, every 4th Tuesday at 6pm
- **County Council**— March 19th, 5-6pm, Baker County Extension Office, Wear painting clothes!
- **February 7— Pullet Workshop Duval, 6pm**
- **March 16— County Events, 10am**
- **March 23— Tractor Supply 4-H Discount Day**
- **March 28— District Events, Alachua, 6-8pm**

# Barnyard Bulletin

By:  
*Alicia Halbritter,*  
*Agriculture Agent*



## Frozen Gators



Us Florida Gators aren't the only ones freezing down here in the South! Alligators in a North Carolina 'Swamp Park' got their first taste of true winter in January when the water froze over. How is it that alligators can survive in a frozen lake?

### **Nose Out, Tail In**

When the water freezes, alligators have to make sure to do one thing, stick their nose out of the water. As long as the alligator can breathe, it can survive.

### **No Food=No Digestion**

Obviously, an alligator completely submerged with just his snout out of the water cannot eat. The gator must shut down its metabolism in order to not waste energy, until it is thawed out.

### **Quench Your Thirst**

Unlike animals who hibernate, frozen alligators don't go into a deep sleep. Alligators in this state can get away with not eating, but must continue drinking in order to ward off dehydration.

### **Sleepy Gators**

The gators, frozen in place, do a lot of sleeping. This helps lower energy levels and reduces their needs for food, water, and air.

### **Brumation**

The phenomena of frozen gators is explained by a process called Brumation. Brumation is basically the hibernation of cold-blooded animals (reptiles). The animal has the ability to stop digestion, lower their heart rate, and reduce other bodily functions in order to remain in a state of lower needs. For alligators, Brumation can last around 4-5 months but rarely do our gators experience the necessary conditions (cold temperatures) to last that long. Our frozen friends in North Carolina have already thawed out and returned to normal gator behavior in a matter of hours.

## Fireweed

Feeling a lasting burning sensation when you walk through the pasture? This time of year, you are likely battling a case of Fireweed.

Fireweed is a type of stinging nettle that is prominent from mid-winter to early summer. The weed is quite inconspicuous as it is a common green color, has a similar appearance to many of the non-stinging plants we see, and have small, rather unnoticed flowers.



Fireweed isn't just a skin irritant for us, it can cause major issues with our livestock as well. Fireweed is generally found in barren areas, on fence lines, around trees, or in feeding areas, this allows the opportunity for the plant to really take over where there is no competition. Although cattle are likely to avoid the plant, horses have been found to browse it. Ingesting the plant can cause difficulty swallowing, breathing, and eating, which in turn can have negative effects on our livestock. If young horses accidentally roll in Fireweed, they have the potential to be overdosed with the stinging toxin, which could be fatal.

Make sure to get out and scout your property today for this winter hazard. If you find Fireweed, determine the size of the infestation. A small amount of Fireweed can be controlled using a propane torch, whereas a larger infestation may require chemical control. It is important to note that mowing can spread the plant, and should be avoided at all costs.

- Chemical control options include:
- Remedy Ultra, 1 qt/acre
  - Pasturegard HL, 24 fl. oz./acre
  - GrazonNext HL, 24 fl. oz./acre

**Find more information at: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag252>**