



# Baker County Extension Service Monthly Newsletter

July 2011

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Dear Extension Friends,

Summer has arrived with a vengeance in Northeast Florida with high temperatures (including very high heat indexes) and little to no rainfall. The Statewide KB drought index is near 600 (0 = very moist, 800 = extremely dry). Please keep an eye out for the potential for wildfires, and please keep those fighting the fires in your thoughts as they help the county and state get through this trying time. Baker County is currently under a burn ban (including fireworks). As always, if we can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Davis  
County Extension Director / Ag Agent  
Baker County Extension Service



## Contact Information—Baker County Extension Service

1025 W. Macclenny Ave., Macclenny, FL 32063  
Phone: (904) 259-3520, FAX: (904) 259-9034  
Email: baker@ifas.ufl.edu

**Michael Davis, Ph.D.**

Agriculture Agent



**Alicia Lamborn**

Horticulture Agent



**Melanie Thomas**

Family & Consumer Sciences Agent



**Michael Davis, Ph.D.**

Interim 4-H Agent



# Highlights in Horticulture

By:

Alicia Lamborn,  
Horticulture Agent

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## Ask Alicia: Your Vegetable Gardening Questions Answered

*We had a good turnout for the Vegetable Gardening class last month and participants were full of great questions! And since we all deal with the same problems from time to time, I thought it best to share their questions with you. If you have a gardening question, don't be afraid to ask...we are here to help!*

**Q: What is the best way to prevent peas from being stung?**

A: The Cowpea curculio (a beetle) can be a problem in Florida during the late spring. Although entire fields can occasionally be damaged during those months, it is not seen at any other time of the year. Crops affected by this pest include snap beans, peas, soybeans, lima beans, cotton, and strawberry, but it prefers black-eyed pea, crowder pea, and long bean. The weevils spend the winter months in weeds or crop debris. Upon leaving overwintering sites, adult females puncture bean pods to feed and to lay their eggs in developing seeds, leaving unsightly brown spots on the pods and seeds. Once the larvae hatch, they too feed on the seeds for one to three weeks then bore exit holes into the sides of the pod and drop to the ground, where they pupate in the soil. About ten days later, the next generation of adults emerges.



Because the adult rarely flies, but reaches its host plant principally by walking, crop rotation is beneficial. In other words, avoid planting your peas in the same spot every year. Tilling the plot and destroying weeds and other host plants, along with crop residue, will also help manage this pest by destroying overwintering beetles. Chemical sprays can also be used to target the adult beetles, but growers are encouraged to attempt to manage this pest without the use of chemicals since multiple applications are required both prior to pod development and during pod growth, and insecticide resistance has become a problem for some chemicals. For more information, visit <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in380>

**Q: Since nematodes attack weeds, does keeping your okra plot clean of weeds actually make nematode damage worse?**

A: Root-knot nematodes (microscopic worms that attack plant roots) can be especially problematic for okra, among other plants. And since these nematodes attack a variety of weeds also, one might conclude that leaving the weeds to grow with the okra might reduce damage to the desirable crop. However, nematodes are relatively immobile so those that are near the okra roots will move into the roots. Those that are away from the okra roots and near a weed would remain dormant if the weed was not a host, or would enter the weed roots if it was a host.



The root-knot nematode feeds on plant roots, causing knots or galls to form in the plant tissue.

Because the presence of weeds is not likely to reduce damage to the okra, weed removal is recommended since weeds compete with crops for light, water, and nutrients which all contribute to the health of the crop (the healthier the crop, the more nematode damage the crop can withstand). Weed removal becomes especially important when the okra season is over. If some weed hosts remain around (many broadleaf weeds can host root-knot nematodes) then the nematodes could continue to survive and reproduce on them. The best plan is to rotate crops and move the okra plots around each year, if possible. Other nematode management strategies include the use of organic matter when preparing the soil, growing nematode resistant vegetable varieties, transplanting into the garden instead of direct seeding, and solarizing the soil during the late summer months. One management strategy alone will not result in fewer damage, but the combination of all strategies will allow growers to produce plants of acceptable quality and yield. For more information on managing nematodes, visit <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ng005> and <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in856> or stop by our office for free information.

Continued on Page 6

# Living Well in Baker County

By:

Melanie Thomas,  
FCS Agent

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## Money Matters: Money Saving Homemade Laundry Soap

Are you looking to save money AND save the environment?

Many of you may have already started saving money by making your own laundry soap. If you haven't yet, you may want to look into trying this money saving, earth-friendly recipe! I know, I know, you don't have time to waste playing around with "experimental" things that don't work, but I promise this process is simple, easy, EXTREMELY cost effective and it really does clean your clothes!

The making of the laundry soap takes approximately 30 minutes and each batch yields 66 loads of laundry. A cost analysis shows that each batch costs 73¢ cents—that equals ONE cent per load! Have you done the cost analysis on your store bought laundry detergent? I'm guessing your cost is anywhere between 10¢ and 25¢ per load. Now, doesn't ONE cent sound better? I personally have been using this homemade laundry soap since October 2010 after attending a conference with one of my fellow FCS agents. Cathy Rogers, FCS Agent in the Suwannee County Extension office, introduced me to the homemade laundry soap idea and I can assure you, I will never go back to buying laundry detergent.

Cathy and I both have given samples out to MANY individuals and families. I asked everyone to please give me their honest opinion on how they like it and so far I've only heard positive statements. I even had one lady tell me that she has been using this recipe for years due to the cleaning abilities alone. She was a wife of a construction worker and the mother to five very active boys who love to get dirty and play ball. Her testimony alone sold me!

Take a look at the below recipe for your NEW homemade laundry detergent.

**Ingredients:** 1 bar Ivory® OR 1/3 bar Fels Naptha® soap  
1/2 cup Arm & Hammer® washing soda  
1/2 cup Twenty Mule Team® borax powder  
2 gallons of water in gallon jugs

**Directions:** Grate the bar-soap into a cooking pot with 6 cups of hot water. Heat and stir until the soap melts. Add the washing soda and borax and stir until dissolved. Remove from heat. Pour 4 cups hot water into a clean bucket. Add the soap mixture from the pot. Stir. Add the remaining water and stir. Let the mixture sit for about 24 hours. It will gel slightly. This is a low-sudsing soap which removes dirt & odor. Great for front-loading washers. Shake before using.

Use 1/2 cup or less per load.

Publix, Live Oak Prices (2010)

20 Mule Team Borax® \$3.99. 1/2 C = 36 batches

@ .11 each

Arm & Hammer® Washing Soda \$2.29. 1/2 C= 12 batches

@ .19 each

Ivory® Soap \$1.29/3 bars or Fels Naptha® \$.99/bar (use 1 full bar of Ivory® or 1/3 bar of FN) = 3 batches

@ .43 Ivory® or .33 Fels Naptha®

.11

.19

+.43

.73/batch

One batch = 66 loads

**Each load costs about one cent!**

\* I have purchased all of the above ingredients at Publix. I have been told in recent weeks that some stores are catching on to the new trend and are now packaging all of the products together for one low price. The Fels Naptha® may be the one item difficult for some to find. It is typically located in the laundry detergent aisle on the top shelf and is sold in a single package.



# July 2011

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	28 	29	30 
31						

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.



# Upcoming Programs & Events

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

- July 7 Longleaf Pine Forest Management Shortcourse, 9:00am—12:00pm, Trenton Community Center, 214 SE 3rd Avenue, Trenton, FL 32693.** This workshop will cover the establishment of longleaf pine on old field sites and on cutover sites. Topics include: site prep, planting techniques, management techniques and establishment of native grasses. For more information, please contact Greg Marshall, Senior Forester—Division of Forestry (352) 463-3138 or gregory.marshall@freshfromflorida.com.
- July 12 WFREC Shade House Production Twilight Field Day, UF/IFAS West Florida Research and Education Center Research Facility, Jay, FL.** For more information please contact Robin Vickers at (850) 983-5216 ext. 113 or rvickers@ufl.edu.
- July 15—17 2011 Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference, Osceola Heritage Park, Kissimmee, FL.** Hosted by the University of Florida / IFAS and Florida A&M University. Additional information about this conference including agenda, registration, program and sponsors can be found at [http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/agenda\\_glance.html](http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/agenda_glance.html)
- July 21 13th Regional Hay Field Day, W.D. Andrews Farm, 5102 SW 76th Place, Lake Butler, FL 32054.** Educational topics, demonstrations and tabled displays will include information on:
- Pasture Herbicide Update
  - Economic Outlook for Hay Production
  - Alternative fertilizers
  - Hay quality
  - Best management practices
  - Disease detection in the field
  - Equipment demonstrations
- Registration is \$5.00 per person and will be on-site beginning at 8:30am on July 21. Please contact the Baker County Extension Service to register by July 18. Additional information can be found at the Baker County Extension Service office or on our website.
- July 30 WFREC 2011 Wildlife Expo, East Milton Recreation Center, Milton, FL.** For more information, please contact Robin Vickers at (850) 983-5216 ext. 113 or rvickers@ufl.edu
- Aug. 12 Food Preservation Class, 9:30am—12:00pm, Baker County Extension Service.** This program will emphasize the proper techniques in canning foods safely. Registration is \$20.00 per person and is due by Tuesday, August 9. For more information, please contact the Baker County Extension Service. Seating for the class is limited.



## 4-H Events for July



June 27 to July 1—Camp Cherry Lake

July 2—Livestock Club Weigh-In—8:00am to 10:00am, Contact BJ for additional details.

July 28—Livestock Club Meeting—6:00pm—Classroom

# The Clover Chronicle

By:

Michael Davis,  
Extension Director

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## Quick News and Notes:

- From BJ Wilkerson, Livestock Club - There is a new rule concerning pigs at the Labor Day Classic: Pigs that are coming from Florida will NOT need a health paper. They will also not need to be from a validated herd or be bled. This should come as good news to those of you who plan on showing as it will reduce your costs. Contact BJ if you have additional questions concerning this rule change.
- Many of the Baker 4-H Youth will be at Camp Cherry Lake from June 27—July 1. We will have some pictures and hopefully some video to share from the camp in the not too distant future.
- If you have news pertaining to Baker County 4-H, please share. Contact Michael Davis for more details.



**More Than You Ever  
Imagined!**



## Ask Alicia: Your Vegetable Gardening Questions Answered

...continued from page 2

### Q: What is the best practice for storing seeds for next year?

A: You can store left-over seeds in their original packets in a cool, dry place. A tightly sealed jar placed in the refrigerator at 50°F works well. Most garden vegetable seeds may be stored in the freezer, but storage is generally no better than in the refrigerator. But be careful—seeds must be very dry before freezing, or the seeds can be killed. If saving harvested seed, be sure they are clean and dry before storing. The table above indicates the storage life of several vegetable seeds.

Seed Storage Life		
Short-lived	Medium-lived	Long-lived
Onion	Beans	Cucumber
Corn	Carrot	Radish
Okra	Peas	Eggplant
Parsnip	Tomato	Squash

### Q: I was told that tomato fruit will not set when temperatures get too high. Is this true?

A: Tomato fruit set is affected by both high day and nighttime temperatures. When daytime temperatures are above 90 degrees and the nighttime temperatures are above 70 degrees the number of tomato flowers and fruit set will be reduced. Some commercially grown varieties have been bred to withstand these higher temperatures. You may be able to get some of these heat-set varieties from your garden center. However; they generally have less flavor than most home garden varieties.



### Q: What about growing in partial shade for late squash, cucumbers, and early greens?

A: Based on their work with shade over vegetables, the North Florida Research and Education Center in Live Oak has found that 30-40% shading is enough to extend the season for some vegetables that can't take the extreme heat in full sun certain times of the year. In other words, shading your crop may allow growers to plant earlier in fall and/or keep plants growing longer during spring and into summer. Shade cloths are available from greenhouse supply companies, but before purchasing, growers should consider their options for mounting the shade cloth above the crops. A permanent structure works well if you are able to install & remove the shade cloth once the weather changes, otherwise a transportable frame may be the way to go.

## Weed Species Spotlight - Sedges

Yellow Nutsedge (*Cyperus esculentus* L.) is an erect perennial sedge with unbranched stems which are solid and triangular in cross section. The plant frequently reaches heights of 27 to 35 in. Fruit color ranges from light tan to dark brown.

Purple Nutsedge (*Cyperus rotundus* L.) is a smooth, erect perennial sedge with a fibrous root system that is extensively branched. The plant is typically 14—16 in. tall (smaller than Yellow Nutsedge), but can reach heights of 40 in. in moist, fertile soils. Seed heads range in color from red to purplish-brown.

Control: Use Outrider at 1.33 ounces per acre for sedge control in established bermudagrass and bahiagrass pastures. It is effective on a wide variety of sedge species while causing little to no grass damage.

Yellow Nutsedge  
*Cyperus esculentus* L.



Purple Nutsedge  
*Cyperus rotundus* L.



Image Source: Charles T. Bryson, USDA  
Agricultural Research Service, Bug-  
wood.org

Source: Weeds in Florida, SP 37, Florida Coop-  
erative Extension Service, Institute of Food and  
Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida,  
Publication Date: May 1991. Revised: Decem-  
ber 2004. Reviewed: February 2009. David W. Hall, Vernon V. Vandiver, and Jason A. Ferrell.

## Baker County Farmers Market

The Baker County Farmers Market is open for the season! Please come out and support local growers, producers and craft-makers at the Baker County Farmers Market. The Market is at Memorial Park (next to the football stadium). There will be many attractions throughout the year including live entertainment and animal adoptions. If you are interested in booth space at the Farmers Market, please contact the Baker County Chamber of Commerce at (904) 259-6433 or visit the Chamber at their office at 20 E. Macclenny Ave. The Market will run from March 5 until November 19, 2011.



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

Phone: (904) 259-3520  
FAX: (904) 259-9034  
Email: michael.davis@ufl.edu  
Website: <http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu>

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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).



## 13<sup>th</sup> Regional Hay Field Day

Thursday, July 21, 2011

9:00am—3:00pm

at W.D. Andrews Farm

5102 SW 76<sup>th</sup> Place, Lake Butler, FL 32054



Educational Topics, demonstrations and tabled displays include:

- Pasture herbicide update
- Economic outlook for hay production
- Alternative fertilizers
- Hay quality
- Best management practices
- Disease detection in the field

Registration for the field day is on-site and will begin at 8:30am on the day of the event. Registration cost is \$5.00 per person.

**Please contact the Baker County Extension Service to register by July 18.**

More information can be found at the Baker County Extension Service or on our website.