

# The Baker Bulletin



The UF/IFAS Extension Office is available to help you with your farming, gardening, landscaping, and 4-H youth development needs by providing educational programming, free consultations and information. Contact us at:

## UF/IFAS Extension Baker County

1025 W. Macclenny Ave. Macclenny, FL 32063

Phone: (904) 259-3520

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

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

## County Agents

Alicia Lamborn, Horticulture Agent

Shaina Spann, 4-H Youth Development Agent

Alicia Halbritter, Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent



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



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



[Agriculture in North Florida](#)

[Baker County Garden Spot](#)

[Baker County 4-H](#)

## February 2025



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## Programs & Events

- Feb 13** Please join us February 13th for the 2025 Soil Health & Cover Crop Field Day. See the last page for more info.
- Online** Florida-Friendly Landscaping - This free, self-paced, online course will guide you through the 9 principles to keep your yard and garden healthy using less time, money, and resources. Register here: <https://forms.gle/o87D5gYauQVQNO2s7>
- Online** City of Macclenny Sustainable Tree Planting Initiative - Check out this website for information on this important tree planting project starting very soon! <https://sites.google.com/ufl.edu/city-of-macclenny-tree-project/home>

## Announcements



Renovations began July 15, 2024. Please be patient with us during this time. The auditorium is not available for rentals while construction is underway.



# Florida's Native Flora & Fauna

By Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent



## Blue-eyed Grass

A member of the Iris family, Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*) is a native, herbaceous perennial found throughout the eastern United States as far north as Canada and as far west as Texas. Blue-eyed grass grows naturally in meadows, damp fields, open woods, moist pinelands, swamp edges, and grassy roadsides.

Growing in tufted, grass-like clumps that reach up to 1 foot tall and wide, blue-eyed grass produces star-shaped flowers on stalks that rise just above the leaves. The blue flowers appear in spring and have a yellow center or eye. Native sweat bees, bumble bees, bee flies, and syrphid flies are attracted to the nectar and pollen.

Blue-eyed grass plants will self-seed and can be divided after the bloom season every two to three years. Divide plants using a sharp-edged tool to cut clumps into smaller pieces. Pieces should then be planted in a moist location or container until roots are able to develop.

Although not commonly found in garden centers, this tidy plant can be a great addition when used as a border plant, groundcover, or naturalized in sunny areas.



## Box Turtles

There are 4 different box turtles found in Florida. The Eastern, Gulf Coast and three-toed box turtles are found in the Panhandle, and readily hybridize where subspecies groups meet. Florida box turtles are in the peninsula, southwest of the Suwannee River basin area. Box turtles prefer various forested areas but will use a variety of habitats such as pastures, grasslands, swamps, and freshwater marshes.

All box turtles have a high-domed and rounded shell, marginally hooked jaw and slightly webbed feet. Box turtles earned their name from their ability to hide from predators by contracting into their shell completely due to their hinged plastron which can almost fully close.

Box turtles have a broad diet and eat fruits, berries, seeds, mushrooms, plants and small prey such as insects, amphibians, worms, eggs, carrion and invertebrates.

Mating occurs year-round and peaks in the fall. Females lay 2-5 clutches per year, and like many other turtles, have temperature sex determination. Eggs incubated at cooler temperatures produce males while warmer temperatures produce females. Throughout their long life (reportedly 50+ years in the wild), a box turtle may live in the same one-mile squared area. Because this species has such a small home range they should never be relocated.

By Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent



## EDIBLES TO PLANT IN February



### Growing Tips:

**Kohlrabi:** Easy to grow. Red and green varieties exist. Use fresh or cooked. Leaves are edible. Harvest stems when 1.5 to 3 inches in diameter.

**Endive:** Excellent ingredient in tossed salads or can be cooked as greens. Bitterness can be reduced by blanching 2-3 weeks before harvest. Escarole (Batavian endive) is a broad-leaved selection.

|                               | North   | Central   | South   |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Easily Survives Transplanting | Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes | Arugula, Beets, Boniato, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Gingers, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Pepper, Swiss Chard, Sugarcane, Tomatillo, Tomatoes | Arugula, Chinese Cabbage, Eggplant, Endive, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Pepper, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes  |
| Transplant Carefully          | Celery, Mustard, Potatoes, Spinach  | Celery, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Spinach, Sweet Potatoes   | Amaranth, Calabaza, Celery, Long Squash, Luffa, Papaya, Passionfruit, Pineapple, Seminole Pumpkin, Spinach, Sweet Potatoes                            |
| Use Seeds                     | Cantaloupe, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Onions (bunching), Peas (English), Radish, Squash, Turnips, Watermelon  | Beans (bush, pole, lima), Cantaloupe, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Okra, Onion (bunching), Peas (English, Southern), Radish, Squash, Turnip, Watermelon  | Beans (bush, pole, lima), Cantaloupe, Carrots, Corn, Chayote, Cucumbers, Okra, Onion (bunching), Peas (English, Southern), Radish, Squash, Watermelon |



For more information, please visit [GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu](http://GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu)



## Florida-Friendly Landscaping Tips

### February

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) means using low-maintenance plants and environmentally sustainable practices to have a beautiful landscape or bountiful garden that saves you time, energy, and money.

#### RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE:

Did you know? Building materials such as concrete, stucco, brick, mortar, and plaster are strongly alkaline. These materials dissolve into surrounding soil, drastically changing the pH over time. For this reason, azaleas and other acid-loving plants should not be planted near the concrete foundation of a home or along sidewalks. Chronic leaf yellowing is often a sign of high pH problems.

#### FERTILIZE APPROPRIATELY:

A soil test can help you understand what nutrients are present in your soil. This is important for deciding what nutrients, if any, you should add. Soil testing is recommended every 1-3 years, even if plants are healthy and growing well. This is because pH and available nutrients change over time. If a more dramatic change has occurred since your last soil test, you can avoid plant decline by proactively adjusting your soil amendments and/or fertilizer applications accordingly.

#### MULCH:

Mulch benefits plants in many ways, but also adds beauty to the landscape by giving planting beds a neat and uniform appearance. Its color and texture can also complement plantings. If you find yourself replenishing mulch for color, be sure to rake out the old before adding new to maintain the recommended 2- to 3-inch depth. Adding more mulch can harm plants because mulch can block air exchange and water movement to the roots.

#### WATER EFFICIENTLY:

Make a rain barrel and water your plants for free instead of paying for water (or paying to run the well pump). They are easy and inexpensive to make and will provide a nearly endless supply of water when connected to a home's downspout.

#### ATTRACT WILDLIFE:

Clean bird baths as needed using soap and warm water or a 10% bleach solution if the bath is exceptionally dirty. For cement baths, use soap and warm water only (no chlorine). Empty and refill with water 1-2 times per week to keep water fresh and prevent algae build-up.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/>

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/baker/>



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## BARNYARD BULLETIN

By Alicia Halbritter,  
Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent

# Calf Vaccinations



Calf vaccinations are an important herd health management tool. This early intervention step helps calves get a healthy start to life and are easily integrated into other management tasks.

Working pens are not necessarily required for working calves, but they are helpful for streamlining activities and keeping people safe. However, calf work ups can be done in the field with the right equipment and safety precautions.

A tight, controlled breeding season makes calf work ups easy, as all calves can be worked at the same time. Calf vaccinations should be administered between 2 and 4 months old for the most effectiveness. At this point, the calf should be strong and active but maternal immunity is beginning to decline and therefore additional protections (vaccines) are needed. If calves are born sporadically throughout the year, it is more difficult to maintain accurate timing. In this case, calves can be worked in age groups or individually as needed.

Producers should work with their veterinarian to develop a herd health management plan which will include what vaccines (modified live, killed, or chemically altered) are appropriate, which dewormer to use, and if growth implants are advised. See the recommended calf work up options for guidance on developing your plan.

### **Minimum Calf Work Up: 2-4 months old**

- 8 way clostridium vaccine
- Deworm
- If Applicable:
  - Castrate bulls
  - Dehorn
  - Insert growth implant

### **Best Work Up Options: 2-4 months old**

- 8 way clostridium vaccine
- IBR, Pi3, BVD, BRSV vaccine combo
- Pasturella vaccine
- Deworm
- If Applicable:
  - Growth Implant
  - Castrate
  - Dehorn

### **& vaccine boosters given 3-4 weeks prior to weaning:**

- IBR, PI3, BVD, BRSV vaccine combo
- Pasturella vaccine
- Blackleg vaccine





# LUCKY CLOVER CHRONICLE

By Shaina Spann, 4-H Youth Development Agent



## 4-H in 2025

Yes, the 4-H year begins in September, but for livestock participants, their project year begins in January.

### Ready to enroll for 2025?

First, you need to go to <https://v2.4honline.com> and enroll.

- You'll create a family profile
- Then create individual profiles for each child; ages 5-7 are free, 8-18 are \$20.
- You will receive an email once the profile is approved.

### How can youth participate?

Youth ages 5-7 (as of 9/1/24) can exhibit chickens and rabbits. Youth ages 8-18 (as of 9/1/24) can exhibit chickens, rabbits, goats (meat & dairy), exhibit and sell cows (breeding & market), and swine (market only). Be sure to attend the January meeting (01/28/25 @ 6pm) to learn more about how all of this works!

### How can youth participate in public speaking events in 4-H?

At the club level, 4-H members can do a special activity or talk with club members. On the competitive side, members can do a demonstration, illustrated talk, a speech, or a talent for county-wide events. Public speaking is something that makes many people uncomfortable, but without practice it won't get any easier. Getting out of your comfort zone is important for personal growth.

### Why is it important for youth to do public speaking?

According to "Intelligent" a student life magazine, 53% of 789 surveyed employers said recent college graduates struggle with eye contact & communication skills and 47% said that candidates showed up for interviews dressed inappropriately. Twenty-one percent of employers have had interviewees refuse to turn their cameras on during an interview. Why is this significant? With the pandemic, youth and college students had not been interacting in person nor had they been participating in clubs, jobs, or internships. Essential skills like public speaking that teach how one should dress, look at an audience, and speak professionally were missed. It's imperative that 4-H youth learn these skills while they can receive constructive criticism and not lose out on a job opportunity.

From: <https://www.intelligent.com/nearly-4-in-10-employers-avoid-hiring-recent-college-grads-in-favor-of-older-workers/>

### 4-H Club Meetings & Events

- Feb 3 - Cloverbuddies, 4pm, Auditorium
- Feb 14- 4-H Day @ Daytona Speedway.
- Feb 25- Livestock Club, 6pm, Auditorium
- March 3- Cloverbuddies, 4pm, Auditorium
- March 25- 4-H Day at the Capitol, Tallahassee
- March 31- Commitment Forms Due

#### REMIND APP

text @bakerco4h to 81010 to be added to the 4-H Remind text group.



Check out our Livestock Google Site!



# EXTENSION TIDBITS

## Ingredients

- 4 ears fresh Florida sweet corn, husks removed
- 1 ½ cups Florida bell peppers (mixed colors), diced small
- ½ Florida jalapeno, seeds removed and diced fine
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped or hand torn
- ½ cup red onion, diced small
- ¾ cup mayonnaise, plain yogurt, or sour cream (plus more, if desired)
- 1 ½ fresh limes, juiced
- 2 cups Monterey jack cheese or pepper jack cheese, shredded
- A few dashes of Florida hot sauce, to taste
- 2 tablespoons Latin spice blend or taco seasoning
- Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

## Preparation

Preheat a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Carefully add the shucked corn to the preheated pan without oil. Cook the whole corn for 5 minutes while rotating occasionally until some light charring is formed on the kernels. Remove the corn from the pan and let cool to room temperature. When the corn is sufficiently cooled, carefully remove the kernels from the cob using a serrated knife. Add all ingredients, including the charred corn, to a medium-sized mixing bowl. Stir ingredients to combine. Taste and adjust seasoning with sea salt, fresh ground pepper and hot sauce. Keep corn dip cold until serving. Serve corn dip with tortilla chips and fresh Florida veggies for dipping.

<https://www.followfreshfromflorida.com/recipes/charred-florida-sweet-corn-dip>

## Charred Florida Sweet Corn Dip



Please join us February 13th for the 2025 Soil Health & Cover Crop Field Day

Eventbrite information and registration link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2025-soil-health-and-cover-crop-field-day-tickets-1112785163379>

**UF | IFAS Extension**  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

## 2025 Soil Health & Cover Crop Field Day

February 13, 2025      9:00AM – 3:00PM

8202 County Road 417, Live Oak, FL 32060

Join UF/IFAS research and extension experts to learn about cover crops, tillage, and building healthier soils.

An equal Opportunity Institution. The University of Florida is committed to providing universal access to all our events. For disability accommodations such as alternate formats of written material, please contact: [jcapasso@ufl.edu](mailto:jcapasso@ufl.edu) at least 1 week in advance.



Registration:

