

# 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](#)

## January 2026



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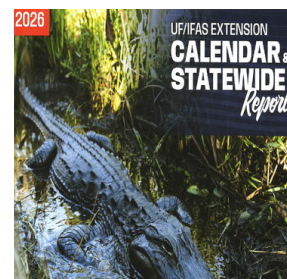
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## Programs & Events

Feb 12 Soil Health and Cover Crop Field Day - This hands-on event focuses on practices for improving soil health and integrating cover crops into North Florida agricultural systems. Register today: <https://bit.ly/3Z4y6Xq>

March 23 & 24 Starting a Successful Hydroponic Business Short Course - Get a hands-on introduction to the basics of hydroponic production and protected agriculture. This course fills up fast - register today: <https://bit.ly/44XEu6m>



Our 2026 Calendars  
are available!  
Be sure to stop by  
and get one!



## How to Tackle Winter Pruning Jobs

### Disinfect Those Pruning Tools:

Avoid transferring diseases by disinfecting your equipment after each use. Tools should be soaked for at least 5 minutes (or as directed on the product label) and rinsed with clean water or allowed to air dry before use. A longer soaking time is needed for pruning tool surfaces that are not smooth. If you are pruning a diseased plant, use multiple tools and disinfect between each cut. See: <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/media/sfylifasufledu/baker/docs/pdf/horticulture/DisinfectingPruningTools.pdf>

### Available Disinfecting Products:

- Household bleach (ex: Clorox): 25% solution
- Pine oil cleaner (ex. Pine-Sol): 25% solution
- Rubbing alcohol (70% isopropyl): 50% solution
- Denatured ethanol (95%): 50% solution
- Trisodium phosphate (Na<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>): 10% solution
- Quaternary ammonium salts: use as directed on label
- Household Disinfectants (Lysol, etc.): full strength

### Landscape Trees & Shrubs:

Pruning of landscape trees and shrubs can begin this month and continue through February while plants are dormant. Improve plant health by removing dead, diseased, or injured branches. Improve structure by removing or reducing rubbing limbs and tree branches with included bark. For overly tall shrubs, heading and thinning may both be necessary. Cut each branch to different lengths with hand pruners to maintain a neat informal shrub with a natural shape. See: Pruning Landscape Trees and Shrubs (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg087>) For crape myrtles, remove seed pods, crossing branches and small twiggy growth to improve appearance and form of the plant, if desired. Hard pruning, however, is not required. See: Crape myrtle Pruning (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep399>)

### Fruit Orchard Crops:

Without pruning, some fruiting plants become dense, twiggy, and nonproductive. Pruning largely involves thinning to increase light and air flow within the canopy, and keeping trees to a manageable height by topping (usually recommend in summer after fruit harvest).

**Blueberries:** Starting when plants are 4-5 years old, remove about ¼ of the oldest canes from the base each year to stimulate new, more productive canes.

**Grapes:** Prune last year's growth to leave spurs with 2-4 buds. See: <https://bit.ly/44XHgbN>

**Stone fruit:** Old fruiting branches and young water sprouts should be removed from the center portion of the canopy. Also remove secondary laterals that are competing with the scaffold branches and any suckers growing from the base of the tree. See:

<https://bit.ly/4qaSEJY>



## BARNYARD BULLETIN

By Alicia Halbritter, Agriculture Agent



# Prepping Spring Pastures

Majority of Florida pastures rely on perennial warm season grasses for the bulk of their annual forage yield. Although January seems early to start preparing for spring pastures, it is the perfect time to make sure you have everything you need to spring into the perfect pasture. Here are a few key features to consider now:



### Soil Testing

Plants require 17 nutrients for optimum growth. Soil tests are an inexpensive and easy way to tell exactly what needs to be added to soil to allow for plant growth. The UF Soils Lab can provide a complete analysis and the appropriate recommendations to perfect your soil for just \$10. Take approximately 4-5 cores at about 4-6 inches depth for each acre. Mix soil, allow to dry, and send to UF for testing. [Find UF Soil Tests Here.](#)



### Liming

The soil test will indicate if lime needs to be added to the soil or not. Lime helps raise the pH of very acidic soils to satisfy the needs of our pasture grasses like bahia and bermuda which prefer a pH around 5.5-6.5. Liming also enhances fertilizer efficiency by impacting solubility of elements. Lime can take 6 months or more to complete adjust the soil pH, therefore it is necessary to apply this as soon as possible.



### Fertilizing

Fertilizing should be done after spring green up. Once you receive your soil test results, you should prepare to coordinate purchasing fertilizer during Spring & Summer. Typically fertilizer recommendations are split between 2 or 3 applications to prevent nutrient leaching from rain events.



### Weed Management

Weed management is best done proactively rather than reactively. Some annual weeds may be managed best with a pre-emergent herbicide which should be applied before seeds begin germinating. Other perennial weeds may be more appropriately managed with post-emergent herbicides but will be more easily controlled the earlier in the growing season they are sprayed.



# LUCKY CLOVER CHRONICLE

By Shaina Spann, 4-H Youth Development Agent



## Livestock in 2026

### Ready to enroll for 2026?

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 9/1/25) can exhibit chickens and rabbits. Youth ages 8-18 (as of 9/1/25) can exhibit chickens, rabbits, goats (meat & dairy), exhibit and sell cows (breeding & market), and swine (market only). Be sure to attend the January meeting (01/27/26 @ 6pm) to learn more about how all of this works!

### How can I be successful in 4-H for the livestock year?

The mandatory requirements for exhibiting an animal at the fair are:

- Be enrolled in 4-H.
- Turn in Commitment Forms by March 31st.
- Attend 6 out of 9 club meetings from January through September.
- Turn in the 4-H project report two weeks after the fair.
- NEW MEMBERS Attend Mandatory Parent/Exhibitor Livestock Animal Orientation conducted by the 4-H Office. All other members are encouraged to participate.
- Re-enroll for the 4-H year (begins September 1st) to show their project at the fair to be covered by 4-H insurance.

Since these are the only requirements there isn't much leniency. It is imperative that when committing to a project it you follow through and take into consideration other extra-curricular activities.

### Market Animal Requirements

- Fair record book completion - Due Monday of the Fair at the Fairgrounds.
- Market Animals: Thank-you letters - Due to the 4-H/Extension Office by the date determined by the fair.
- Attend the Fair Association's Livestock Meeting. This meeting will be held on the date determined by the Fair Livestock Committee. A parent is required to attend with youth member.

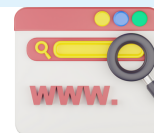
### 4-H Club Meetings & Events

Jan 05- Cloverbuddies, 4-H Classroom, 4pm

Jan 15- STEAM Explorers, 4-H Classroom, 4:30pm

Jan 27- Baker's Acres, Auditorium, 10:30am

Jan 27- Livestock Club, Auditorium, 6pm



Check out our  
Livestock Google Site!

**Register for a 4-H  
In School  
program here!**

**HAPPY  
NEW YEAR!**

### REMIND APP

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