

The Baker Bulletin

**NEW!
VERSION**



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

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



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[Baker County Garden Spot](#)

[Baker County 4-H](#)

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Programs & Events

FREE personal finance webinars (approved for 1 AFC® CEU). All webinars are 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. EST.

- Jan 23 Free Income Tax Software & Filing - Tax filers with adjusted gross income up to \$79,000 can access free online tax filing software for their tax returns. (AGI does not include tax deferred income.) We will demonstrate how the software works and answer common tax filing questions. [Register here.](#)
- Feb 1 Federal Income Tax Updates - Important tax law changes for this tax filing season. [Register here.](#)
- Feb 6 Birds in Your Backyard-Maxville Library Life Lit : Tuesday, February 6. 6:00p.m. -7:00 p.m. Multipurpose Room. Brush up on your bird identification skills and learn what find of birds you can expect to see around your home and garden. [Register here.](#)
- Feb 8 Federal Income Tax Deductions and Credits - We will discuss tax deductions and credits. [Register here.](#)
- Feb 15 What's Your Tax Rate? - Participants will learn how to calculate their personal income tax rates. Topics include tax brackets, effective tax rates, and capital gains rates. [Register here.](#)



Florida's Native Flora & Fauna

By Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent

In our first issue for 2024, we are highlighting resources related to Florida's native flora and fauna - requested by our readers! Next month, we'll continue featuring Florida's native species so you can learn to recognize, appreciate, and help protect them.

Where can I purchase native plants?

Search for retail native nurseries across FL:
<http://www.plantrealflorida.org>

Other opportunities include Florida Native Plant Society chapter plant sales and UF/IFAS Master Gardener plant sales!

Gardening for FL Native Fauna

[Native Plants that Benefit Native Wildlife](#)

[Attracting Native Bees To Your Landscape](#)

[Florida Bee Gardens Website](#)

[Landscaping Backyards for Wildlife](#)

Where can I learn more about native plants and how to propagate them?

[Native Plants - An Overview](#)

[The Florida Native Plant Society](#)

[UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions](#)

[Ask IFAS](#)

[Common Native Wildflowers of N. Florida](#)

Native edible & natural remedy plants?

[Florida's Edible Wild Plants](#)

[Florida Ethnobotany](#)

[50 Common Native Plants Important In Florida's Ethnobotanical History](#)

[Yaupon Holly Culture for Tea Production](#)

[Florida's Medicinal Garden Plants: Skullcap](#)

Invasive Plants & Replacing Plants with Natives

[IFAS Assessment of Non-native Plants in FL](#)

[Plant This, Not That](#)

[AlterNatives](#)

[Get Inspired - Visit a Garden with Good Native Plant Displays](#)

Pests and ways to deal with them

[Landscape Pest Management](#)

[Natural Products for Managing Pests](#)

[Wildflowers Susceptible to Deer Damage](#)

[Invasive Plant Management IPM](#)

[Herbicides to Kill Invasive Trees](#)



By Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent

Gardening in Clay Soils

Landscapes around new construction often have surface soils that are high in clay. This happens when topsoil is removed to build a foundation and the newly exposed subsoil (high in clay) becomes the surface material. The original topsoil should be replaced when construction is over, but often this does not happen.

Soils with high clay content (>30%) create planting and maintenance challenges for gardeners. But with a few simple practices, you can gradually improve the structure and health of your clay soil, making it more suitable for a wider range of plants.

1. Incorporate Organic Matter: The best amendment for clay soils is organic matter. Add organic compost, well-decomposed stable manure, or blends containing green waste, bark, peat moss, manure, etc. to improve the soil's structure.

2. Avoid Adding Sand: Do not add sand to clay soils as it can lead to a concrete-like soil structure.

3. Work the Soil Properly: When topsoil or organic matter is added to clay soil, it should be thoroughly mixed in. A general rule of thumb is to apply 1 inch of compost and till into the top 4-6 inches of soil (4 cubic yards per 1000 sq ft.).

4. Raise the Beds: If drainage is a concern, consider creating raised beds to improve water movement and prevent waterlogged conditions.



5. Water Slowly & Less Often: Irrigation water penetrates clay slowly, so applying water at a slow rate over a longer period will help avoid runoff. Once saturated, it takes a long time to dry out. Because aeration is vitally important for root growth, microbes and good soil chemistry, clay soils need to dry out before applying more irrigation water.

6. Soil Testing: Have the soil tested to determine its pH and nutrient levels, and adjust accordingly based on the test results. Because clay soil retains most nutrients very well, generally gardeners do not need to add fertilizer as frequently.

7. Avoid Compaction: Minimize walking, tilling, or using heavy equipment over wet clay soils to prevent compaction, which can worsen drainage issues.

8. Select Plants Carefully: Consider plants tolerant of waterlogging, compaction, or poor aeration. A few species that fit this category are Cypress, Cottonwood, River Birch, Red Maple, FL Gama Grass, Canna Lily, African Iris, and Swamp Sunflower.



BARNYARD BULLETIN

By Alicia Halbritter, Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent

Growing Hops at Home

Are you a fan of hoppy beers like the India Pale Ale (IPA)? That classic bitter taste comes from hops flowers! Hops has been used to brew American beer since the early European settlers landed in New England, in 1628 improved varieties were brought in from Europe and the hops industry truly began.

Today, the hops industry is mainly focused in the Pacific Northwest, but home brewers are able to grow hops in all 50 states. With careful planning, you can easily produce all the hops you need to brew your own beer!

Firstly, like any start to planting, you'll need to prepare the soil for your hops plants. Hops thrives in a loamy, well-draining soil with a pH between 6.0 and 7.5. You may need to lime your soil to raise the pH, so be sure to conduct a soil test before you begin. Florida soil is already quite sandy so you may not need to add any in order to improve drainage, but your site's ability to hold water will give you insight on this.

Next, you'll need to build a trellis system for your hops to climb. Most home brewers will use a metal or wood framework to support the weight of the vines, and replace string "trellises" annually for the vines to climb. These are easily cut down to harvest and replaced each year. Your trellis system needs to be at least 10 feet tall, but typically 15-18 feet works best for yields.

Once you've prepared the soil and built your trellis you are ready to plant! There are a number of hops varieties suitable for growth in Florida. Currently, UF is growing Comet, Nugget, Willamette, Zeus, Cascade, and Galena. Each have their own pros & cons so make sure to pick one that works for you by doing your research.

Purchase your plants early to ensure they are planted by March or April for the first growing season.

Plants will need fertilizer throughout the growing season, reference your soil test for fertilizer recommendations. Hops also requires a lot of water. Drip irrigation systems are best to prevent diseases like downy or powdery mildew.

Once flowers form and develop, you will need to cut the vines down, hand pick the cones, and use them for beer! Hops can be brewed fresh or dehydrated and stored for later use.



LUCKY CLOVER CHRONICLE

By Shaina Spann, 4-H Youth Development Agent



Happy New Year

Who wants to embrace the new year with 4-H?! There are so many ways that youth can be involved with the 4-H. Through traditional clubs like Livestock or Cloverbuddies, 4-H In School programming, summer camps, special interest clubs like Coop to Plate, or individual projects; there's something for everyone!

Additionally, there are competitions like the Insectathon, Public Speaking, Talent, Horseback Riding, Animal Sciences Judging (Hippology, Meats, Poultry, etc...) , Consumer Choices Judging and more!

However, for the Baker County 4-H Program to grow we need volunteers. Please reach out if you or someone you know would be interested in volunteering.

We are looking for volunteers in the following areas:

- Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Mathematics (STEAM)
- Healthy Living
- Sports
- Livestock Animals
- Horse



Check out our Livestock [Google Site!](#)

4-H Club Meetings & Events

- January 8- Cloverbuddies, 4pm, 4-H Classroom
- January 23- Livestock Club, 6pm, Ag Center Auditorium
- February 3- Insectathon, Gainesville
- February 5- Cloverbuddies, 4pm, 4-H Classroom
- February 6- 4-H Day at the Capitol, Tallahassee
- February 27- Livestock Club, 6pm Ag Center Auditorium

REMIND APP

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

Information for showing livestock animals in the 2024 year.

The livestock year is about to begin!

Meetings are the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6pm in the Ag. Center Auditorium.

Requirements for being able to show an animal are:

- Be enrolled for the 4-H year by March 30.
- Turn in Animal Project Commitment Form by May 31.
- Turn in 4-H Project Record after the fair.
- Attend 70% or 6 out of 9 meetings, January through September.
- New Members should attend the Mandatory Parent Meeting April 11, location TBD.

These are the minimum requirements. Youth that do not adhere to these requirements will not be eligible to show at the fair. If a Project Record is not turned in after the fair, the member will not be eligible to show in the following year's fair.

CLOVER

Did you know that 4-H has an online course platform? It's called CLOVER. There are activities and courses 4-Hers can take! When signing up, enter the code 831101 to join Baker County!

2024

EXTENSION TIDBITS

Braised Florida Cabbage, Potatoes and Sausage

Ingredients

1 pound small Florida potatoes, diced or quartered
1/2 head Florida cabbage, chopped
1 pound smoked Florida sausage, cut into 1-inch pieces
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup vegetable broth
2 tablespoons fresh herbs (such as rosemary, thyme, parsley), chopped fine
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
Oil for cooking
Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste



Directions

Preheat large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Sear smoked sausage until brown then remove and set aside. Without wiping pan, add 1 teaspoon oil and 1 tablespoon butter. Add garlic and potatoes and sauté for 5 minutes or until some caramelization occurs. Add cabbage, seared sausage and broth. Mix to combine, cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer for 30 minutes or until fork tender. Serve immediately.

<https://www.followfreshfromflorida.com/recipes/braised-florida-cabbage-potatoes-and-sausage>

New Year's Day Superstitions

<https://addapinch.com/new-years-day-superstitions/>

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1. Do not wash clothes or dishes on New Year's Day, as you'll be washing away a loved one in the new year.
2. Do not take anything out of the house on New Year's Day.
3. Your first visitor influences your entire year. Your first visitor, called the lucky bird, in the new year would influence the entire year ahead. The lucky bird should be a tall, dark-haired man. He'll bring you good luck. It should never be a blonde or red-haired man and absolutely should never be a woman. Never reach outside the door to greet him, as in doing so, you would have exited before he entered.
4. Pay your bills on New Year's Eve. Do not loan anything or spend any money on New Year's Day. Be sure to pay your bills before ringing in the new year. Write any checks and settle any debts you can before welcoming another year. Be sure not to loan anything or spend money on New Year's Day as it guarantees you'll be doling out money all year.
5. Work just a little, but not a lot. Spend just a little bit of time on your work. Make sure you do something you can successfully accomplish related to your work. Be sure not to spend too much time working though, as that is very unlucky.

Do you follow any of these?

Resolution to Get Healthy in 2024?

If a goal for yourself or your family is to get healthy in the new year please reach out to Shaina Spann, 4-H Agent. We are looking to put together a family centered healthy living group! This will include physical activity along with tools like meal preparation and mindset change. Please call 904-259-3520 or email slbennett@ufl.edu to be added to the list!

