

# Extension Connection

## Extension Notes

### Spring Has Sprung!

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Although not quite ready for the sweltering summers ahead, many folks are looking forward to packing away their cool-weather wardrobe and slipping into shorts and flip-flops.

Spring ushers in a new growing season, and articles on palm care (pp. 2-3), renovating your landscape the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ way (pp. 4-5), and the Spring Gardening Calendar (p.19), provide key tips which will help your green thumb thrive.

A new growing season also provides a great opportunity to implement best management practices for pasture grasses. Our article on pp.6-7, provides valuable information on how to optimize soil health and maximize forage production.

Spring also symbolizes new beginnings. A focus on new beginnings often involves New Year’s resolutions which include either saving money and/or eating healthy. Our article on pp. 8-9, provides tips which will help you do **both!**

Although our 4-H Positive Youth Development Extension program is busy year-round, spring is when we celebrate all the youth who participate in the 4-H Public Speaking Contest. Because public speaking is ranked amongst some of the most common phobias, the 4-H youth featured on pp. 10-11, deserve heartiest congratulations.

Our regular feature ‘Nature Naturally’ (pp.12-13), highlights plants and animals native to Florida, and includes cool resources for bird ID, as well as various frog calls!

In case you missed our award-winning booth at the County Fair, be sure to check out our upcoming events and classes (details on pp.14-18).

On page 20 we say a bittersweet ‘until we meet again’ to the inimitable Betsy King, our Extension Office Coordinator and the glue that has held our office together for 12 years!

Last, but certainly not least, thanks for your continued support of the UF/IFAS Extension mission in Citrus County. We’re here to help you find “solutions for your life.”

Your Citrus County Extension Team!



# UF/IFAS Extension

Solutions for Your Life

## URBAN HORTICULTURE

### Foolproof Palm Care: Pindo Palm

#### Marguerite Beckford, Director and Horticulture Agent



Palms swaying in the breeze are typically associated with a tropical or subtropical climate but in the plant world, palms have a unique characteristic; because many of them grow with an elevated canopy similar to trees, in lay-terms, palms are usually regarded as trees, but in the strict botanic sense, palms are not classified as trees. Consequently, palms will also often have unique growth requirements.

When it comes to landscape palms, Pindo palms (*Butia capitata*) are remarkable in that they are one of the few cold-hardy palms, tolerating temperatures below freezing, without the customary 'freezer burn' typically seen on other palm species after a cold-snap. In addition to its distinctive appearance with feathery, blue-grey fronds, Pindo palm fruit can be used to make jelly, and mature Pindo palms have been known to hybridize with the Queen palm (*Syagrus romanzoffiana*), producing 'mule' palms.

#### ***Planting Site***

Pindo palms grow up to 15 ft. wide having a solitary growth habit, and like most palms, do best when grown in full sun, on well-drained soils. At maturity, Pindo palms grow to be between 15 to 25 ft. tall, and while not as tall as many other palm species which can get to be 30 to 70 ft., it is still important to ensure that Pindo palms are not planted in the way of overhead utility lines.

#### ***Nutrient requirements***

As is common in many palm species, Pindo palms can experience potassium deficiency, evident by translucent yellow spots on frond leaflets. Using fertilizers specifically formulated for palms is recommended for preventing or treating nutrient deficiencies.

(Continued on page 3)

# UF/IFAS Extension

## Solutions for Your Life

### URBAN HORTICULTURE

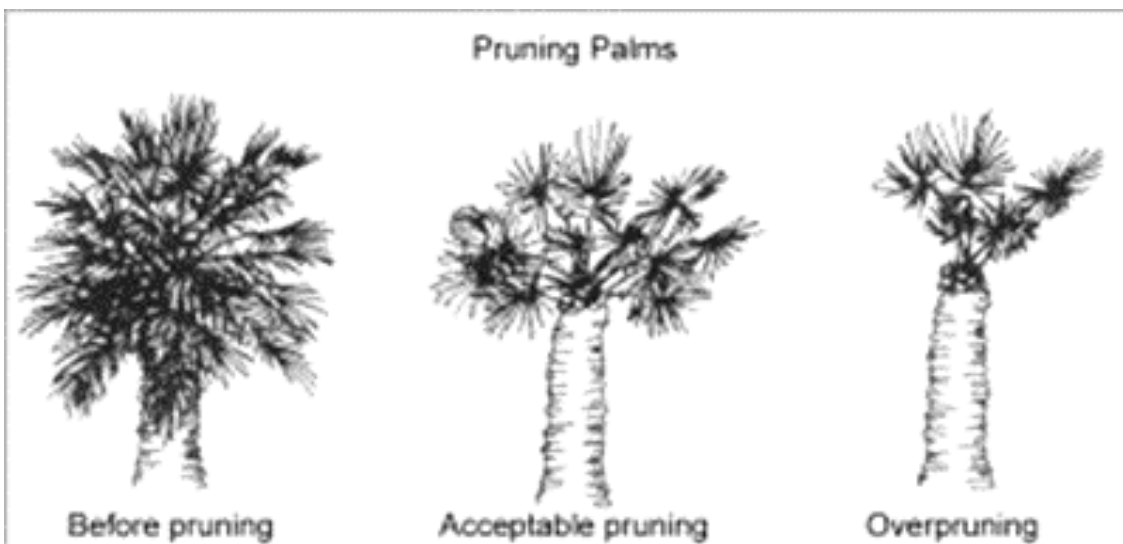
(continued from page 2) PINDO PALMS

#### ***Pests and diseases***

Pindo palms are relatively pest and disease free, with the occasional occurrence of *Ganoderma zonatum* mushroom conks at the base of the trunk. *Ganoderma* can affect all palm species, so it is important to avoid injuring the trunk during routine landscape maintenance, as trunk injuries make palms more susceptible to diseases.

#### ***Pruning***

Due to their unique nutritional requirements, when pruning palms, green fronds should never be removed, because many palms recycle nutrients from the older outer fronds, to the newer inner fronds. When pruning palms, only spent flower stalks, immature fruit, and brown fronds should be removed. Over-pruned palms are more susceptible to nutrient deficiencies, pests and diseases.



Learn more about Pindo palm care at UF/IFAS Extension:



# Florida-Friendly Landscaping™

## Florida-Friendly Roadmap

### Renovating a Central Florida Landscape

Steven Davis, FFL Program Coordinator



Essential to a successful Central Florida Landscape is selection of the proper plant material, including turfgrass and their proper placement in landscape. Right plant, right place is the first Florida Friendly Landscaping™ principle and an important choice when landscaping in Florida's sandy soils. A Florida landscape's tolerance of hot, humid and sandy soil environment takes a toll on gardens. Efficient use of supplemental irrigation is the second FFL principle, but climbing to number one as more citizens consume water.

Florida landscapes over time need renovation or additional gardens added for a purpose or pleasure. How can I renovate, expand or repair garden spaces, while adhering to Citrus County Water Conservation measures?

1. Hand watering of garden plants is not restricted. Don't count on your irrigation system to establish landscape plants. Consider irrigation systems as a supplemental source of water for plants between rain events. Resume weekly watering after the plants are thoroughly hand watered several weeks and rooted into the soil.
2. Utilize slightly amended garden soil with a greater water holding capacity when planting.
3. Select drought tolerant plants, when possible, to reduce high water using lawn spaces. Converting these lawn spaces to Florida Friendly Landscaping™ spaces saves money. HOA restrictions may also apply.
4. Low volume irrigation emitters (Drip or microsprays) can be used as needed without restriction. Conversion of existing zones to low volume distribution can be easily accomplished in appropriate areas. Targeting water to needy plants and soil in gallons per hour, rather than gallons per minute.
5. Variances to the county water restrictions can be obtained when renovating your landscape under certain conditions.

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Florida-Friendly Landscaping™

## Florida-Friendly Roadmap



(continued from page 4) *RENOVATING LANDSCAPE*

### Citrus County Ordinance

*New Plant Material shall be irrigated as follows:*

*Any New Plant Material may be irrigated during a 60-day establishment period for the purpose of maintaining plant health and encouraging root growth. From day 1 through day 30 of this establishment period, irrigation may occur on any day of the week. From day 31 through day 60 of this establishment period, irrigation is limited to one application on each of three specified days, except as otherwise provided herein. The three allowable days shall be as follows: Even Numbered Addresses may provide establishment period irrigation on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday and Odd Numbered Addresses may provide establishment period irrigation on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. Cemeteries and other properties two acres or greater are permitted to use an alternative schedule to provide three days of establishment irrigation per week from day 31 through day 60 so long as a written schedule of establishment period watering is maintained at the property. From day 31 through day 60, properties with no discernable address, such as common areas and rights of way, are permitted to provide establishment period irrigation on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday.*

*This establishment period begins the day the New Plant Material is installed, and is limited to areas containing New Plant Material only. An entire zone of an automatic Irrigation system may only be used for establishment period watering if the zone in question is for an area that contains at least 50% New Plant Material. If a zone contains less than 50% New Plant Material, or if the New Plant Material is in an area that will typically not be watered by an Irrigation system, only the New Plant Material is eligible for this 60-day exemption. Spot Treatment, Hand Watering, or any appropriate method which isolates and waters only the New Plant Material may be used.*

*Landscape may be watered using Low-Volume Irrigation methods on an as-needed basis instead of being restricted to certain days or times.*

*Landscape may continue to be irrigated on an as-needed basis without regard to the normally allowable watering days or times after the establishment period ends if Low-Volume Irrigation technology is used, pursuant to paragraph F.A.C. Ch. 40D-22.201(3)(d).*

Appropriate placement of additional hose bibs on pressurized irrigation lines can provide better access to water on larger properties for convenient hand watering. Hand watering or flooding root balls is necessary for plant establishment. Turn the hose bib completely off when hand watering is completed. Pick the season for successful renovations with rainy season closer to summer. Traditional overhead irrigation is a supplement to natural rainfall, but never a substitute. Plant your gardens wisely, spend time efficiently applying water by hand to establish your garden and then utilize your irrigation system to maintain your investment once established.

## Grazing for a Greener Future: Well-Managed Pastures and Soil Carbon Sequestration

Caetano (Ky) Sales, Agriculture/Natural Resources Agent



A healthy ecosystem depends on soil carbon, a crucial component of good soil. The carbon stored in the soil is essential for preserving soil structure, water retention, and fertility. The storage of carbon in the soil by properly managed pastures can greatly slow the rate of climate change.



When pastures are correctly maintained, soil carbon levels rise, improving the health and productivity of the soil. Most of the carbon in soil comes from grasses and other plants that use photosynthesis to take up carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The carbon that plants contain is stored in the soil once they die.

How pastures are managed can dramatically influence the quantity of carbon stored in the soil. Overgrazing pastures and compacted soil depletes organic matter and lower soil carbon levels. The soil's carbon is released

back into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide when pastures are overgrazed or the soil deteriorates. In order to maintain soil structure, water retention, and nutrient cycling, organic matter is crucial. High amounts of soil organic matter, the decomposed plant matter contained in the soil, are characteristic of well-managed pastures.

On the other hand, the soil is safeguarded from overgrazing and soil compaction when pastures are maintained responsibly. The best management practice of rotational grazing is where livestock is regularly moved throughout the pasture to allow the grasses to rest and recover. This method increases soil organic matter and enhances the soil's overall health by enabling the plants to store more carbon in the soil.



*(Continued on page 7)*

(continued from page 6) PASTURE MANAGEMENT



Sustainable grazing methods not only benefit the environment, but well-managed pastures can also benefit producers financially. Increased agricultural yields and higher-quality pasture for livestock are the results of productive soils. Also, using sustainable grazing techniques can lower the demand for chemical fertilizers and other inputs, saving farmers money.

In conclusion, robust soil carbon holdings and promoting sustainable

grazing techniques depend on well-managed pastures. Farmers may enhance soil health, decrease the quantity of carbon emitted into the atmosphere, and increase the amount of carbon retained in the soil by managing pastures sustainably. Sustainable grazing techniques can help farmers and the environment, ensuring a healthier and more sustainable future for all of us.

Learn more about grazing management by following this [LINK](#) to the Grazing Management Concepts and Practices publication from the University of Florida.

**[SS-AGR-92/AG160: Grazing Management Concepts and Practices \(ufl.edu\)](#)**

If you are interested in learning more about sustainable agriculture and supporting local producers, I invite you to join the Agricultural Alliance of Citrus County. This group of local producers, members of the Citrus County government, and industry professionals meet every second Monday of the month to discuss the latest challenges and updated topics in agriculture. By joining this community, you can connect with fellow farmers and industry leaders, stay up to date on the latest agricultural practices, and work together towards a more sustainable future for our county's agriculture. Let's come together and support local agriculture while prioritizing soil health and environmental sustainability. The next Ag Alliance meeting will be May 8th, 8am at the UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County office (3650 W Sovereign Path, Lecanto FL 34461).





## 10 Tips for Eating Healthy on a Budget

**Stephanie McMinds, Family & Consumer Sciences Agent**



Eating on a budget doesn't mean you have to sacrifice nutrition. With a little know-how and planning, you can enjoy nutritious foods without breaking the bank. By following these ten tips, you may be surprised at how much you can stretch your grocery budget.

### **1. Plan!**

Plan your meals for the week before you go grocery shopping. Include meals that "stretch" expensive items into more portions. You can stretch meals by making dishes that freeze well. Search online for delicious healthy recipes like soups and casseroles that are budget-friendly and easy meals to stretch. For example, make a large batch of vegetable soup or white bean chicken chili that can last throughout the week, or freeze the leftovers to have later. You'll also spend less time in the kitchen than if you make a different meal every night. Check your pantry to see what foods you already have and make a shopping list of what you need to buy.

### **2. Get the best price**

Look for sales and coupons in the local newspaper, online, and at the store. Inquire about a loyalty card for additional savings at the stores where you shop. Look for specials or sales on meat and seafood, which are frequently the most expensive items on your shopping list.

### **3. Shop with a list**

Once you've planned your meals for the week, create a shopping list with the ingredients you need. Having a shopping list makes shopping easier and faster, which helps you reduce impulse buys and take home only the items you need. It also helps you avoid extra trips to the grocery store to buy forgotten items.

### **4. Buy in bulk**

Purchasing foods in bulk is almost always less expensive. Large containers of low-fat yogurt and large bags of frozen vegetables are both good choices. Before you go shopping, make sure you have enough freezer space.

### **5. Buy in season**

Purchasing fruits and vegetables in season can reduce costs while increasing freshness! If you won't be using them all right away, buy some that still need to ripen.

*(Continued on page 9)*





(continued from page 8) *HEALTHY EATING ON A BUDGET*

## 6. Buy frozen or canned

When it comes to fruits and vegetables, frozen and canned alternatives to fresh produce can be healthy. Furthermore, they are less expensive and last longer. Many frozen vegetables and fruits come in resealable packaging, allowing you to use what you need and save the rest. This allows you to enjoy your favorites even when they are not in season.

When selecting canned options, choose those that come in water rather than syrup. Check the label for any added sugar or salt. You should avoid them. Also, avoid frozen options with added butter or cream sauces. Choose sauce-free options or look for packaging that says "lightly sauced" to avoid extra sugar, salt, and empty calories.



## 7. Grow a garden

Growing your own fruits and vegetables is a great way to save money and have fresh produce at your fingertips if you have the space. Many fruits, vegetables, and herbs can be grown in pots on patios or balconies if you don't have a yard.

Having a steady supply of fresh produce at home can help you save money at the grocery store. You may not be able to grow a "money tree" in your garden, but the extra money you'll be saving will make you feel like you did.

## 8. Cook once...eat all week!

On your day off, make a large batch of favorite recipes (double or triple the recipe). Freeze in separate containers. You won't have to spend money on take-out meals if you use them throughout the week.

## 9. Get creative with leftovers

Spice up your leftovers by repurposing them. Try leftover chicken in a stir-fry, on top of a garden salad, or in a chili. Remember that wasting food means wasting money!

## 10. Eating out

Restaurants can be pricey. Get the early bird special, eat lunch instead of dinner, or look for "2 for 1" deals to save money. Request water instead of ordering other beverages, which will increase your bill.



## Florida 4-H Youth Development

Head • Heart • Hands • Health



### Empowering Youth with 4-H Public Speaking

**Dr. Marnie Ward, 4-H Agent**



The room was still while the audience waited, and quiet tension filled the air. Judges sat expectantly, with pencil poised and their attention focused toward the podium on the stage. The first speaker cautiously stepped towards the front of the room and then he spoke. A voice filled with confidence, energy, and knowledge filled the room. The message? The impacts of medical advancements on today's healthcare and the potential for the future.

Nikhil Pasupuleti wowed the crowd and the judges, with his well-organized and powerfully delivered speech. His was the first speech at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade 4-H Public Speaking Contest on March 7<sup>th</sup> and by the end of the day his speech earned him first place at the contest. Nikhil had participated in the contest in 2022 as a fourth grade student. His father shared Nikhil's disappointment at not placing at the 2022 County Contest and how he had worked harder and practiced more this year. It all paid off for Nikhil and the smile on his face lit up the room.

The day was full of speeches that challenged the audience to think from a different perspective. Many poked fun at ordinary anecdotes, such as the speech by second place winner Grant Naruta. He talked about how hard it was to resist the temptation to try one more time in a game of chance. Jessica Neveau's speech portrayed the marvels of electronics and how they have changed and earned her third place in the contest. The honorable mention award went to Audriena Sapp with her speech that took the audience "Under the Sea".

4-H is the youth development program of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and Citrus County. The 4-H Public Speaking contest has a long history, and we look forward to having it continue far into the future. In Citrus County, 4-H has an active school enrichment program including 4-H Public Speaking, Agricultural Literacy, Embryology and our newest program – Junior Master Gardeners (JMG). 4-H programming is available to all youth ages 5-18 years old, with many of our members enrolled in one of the fifteen 4-H Clubs. These clubs provide youth the opportunities to work with trained, engaging adult volunteers in Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, Healthy Living, Citizenship and Leadership.

*(Continued on page 11)*



# Florida 4-H Youth Development

Head • Heart • Hands • Health



(continued from page 10) PUBLIC SPEAKING

In 2021, the Tropicana corporation made the decision to step away from sponsorship of the 4-H Public Speaking Contest. Local leaders from the Rotary Club of Crystal River and the Citrus County 4-H Foundation partnered to continue the 4-H Public Speaking Program in Citrus County schools. Since 2014, nearly 30,000 young people in Citrus County have participated in the program. Through the public speaking program, youth learn important life skills including planning, goal setting, communication, decision making and self-responsibility.

## 4-H Public Speaking Contest — Citrus County Winners 2023



**Left to Right:**

**First Place: Nikhil Pasupuleti “Medical Advancements”**

**Second Place: Grant Naruta “Scammers of Fun – Why We Can’t Resist”**

**Third Place: Jessica Neveau “Electronics Then and Now”**

**Honorable Mention: Audriena Sapp “Under the Sea”**

# Nature Naturally

## Native Plants & Animals

Florida is home to a rich diversity of plants and animals. A key factor in this diversity? Florida's climate. Average temperatures and rainfall vary from the panhandle to the keys allowing for differing plant adaptations. These same conditions are appealing to many non-native species, but this month native Florida plants and animals are the focus.

### Let's look at some of the animals native to Florida.

#### Reptiles and Amphibians

If you are into herpetology (the study of reptiles and amphibians), check out the Florida Museum of Natural History website here:

<https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/discover-herps/florida-amphibians-reptiles/>

This page has a link to "Frog Calls", so you can practice identifying the calls in your back yard.

#### Birds

Are you interested in practicing your Florida bird ID? Maybe you've been wondering what kind of brown bird has been flying through your backyard? Check out the bird watcher blog here:

<https://www.blog.catandturtle.net/backyard-bird-identification/>

#### Mammals

Florida's mammals come in all shapes and sizes; some in terrestrial (land-based) and some in aquatic (water) environments. The smallest mammals include mice and voles and the largest include bears and panthers. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has summarized information on many of these species. Check out their webpage for a deep dive into Florida mammals here:

<https://myfwc.com/conservation/value/fwgc/wildlife/mammals/>

### Let's look at some of the trees and plants native to Florida.

#### Trees

Can you identify the state tree of Florida? It's the Sabal Palm. You might also recognize it by the name "cabbage palm". This stately tree is found throughout Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. Its name comes from the fact that the heart of the tree can be eaten and some say it tastes just like cabbage. Learn more about the Sabal palm and other native Florida trees here:

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/trees/native-trees.html>

*(Continued on page 13)*

# Nature Naturally

(continued from page 12) NATIVES

## Plants

Native plants in Florida include the Beauty Berry, a variety of Azalea species, honeysuckle, milkweeds, and Coreopsis (tick seed). Many of these plants have uses beyond food for animals or nectar for insects. Have you ever eaten Beauty Berry jelly?

Adding native plants to your backyard attracts wildlife, but it also helps to protect Florida's unique native environments. Each of us can add more native plants to backyards and common areas. To learn more about visit the Florida Native Plant Society, click here:

<https://www.fnps.org/plants>

Native plants and animals are important to Florida ecosystems. These plants and trees provide food, nectar, and habitats for other native plant and animal species.

American Alligator (State Freshwater Reptile)

Largemouth Bass (State Freshwater fish)

Loggerhead Turtle (State Saltwater Reptile)

Atlantic sailfish (State Saltwater fish)

Northern Mockingbird (State Bird)

Orange Blossom (State Flower)

Florida Panther (State Animal)

Coreopsis (tickseed) (State Wildflower)

Zebra longwing (State Butterfly)

Sabal Palm (State Tree)

**Check out these links for coloring books and sheets of native plants and native animals.**

### Coloring Book of Native Plants

<https://www.fdacs.gov/ezs3download/download/91794/2595313/Media/Files/Plant-Industry-Files/Publications/DPI-Coloring-Books/Wildflower-Coloring-Book.pdf>

### Coloring Sheets of Native Animals

<https://www.floridastateparks.org/events/programs/critter-sheets>

## Gardening Seminars: hosted online and in-person - you choose

Register here for these free seminars: <https://ccufflprogram.eventbrite.com>



### “Managing Pests Wisely”

Tuesday Apr 4  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

### “Right Plant, Right Place”

Tuesday Apr 18  
2:00 - 3:30 pm

### “Drought Tolerant Plants”

Tuesday May 9  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

### “9 Florida-Friendly Principles”

Tuesday May 23  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

### “Lawns in Central Florida”

Tuesday Jun 6  
2:00 - 3:30 pm

### “Florida Friendly Fertilizing”

Tuesday Jun 20  
2:00 - 3:30 pm

## SAVE THE DATE

Saturday April 29, 2023  
10am - 1pm

Citrus County Extension Office  
3650 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto  
352-527-5700



Trained service animals only please



UF/IFAS Extension  
SolutionsForYourLife.com



APRIL, MAY, JUNE



### Monthly Extension Master Gardener Seminars

Programs offer an opportunity to explore timely garden topics at these seminars offered at each Citrus County Library. No registration required for in person seminars. All programs start at 1 pm, last approximately 1 hour, and are **free**.

**Virtual seminar:** pre-register on our Facebook page for the secure link.

**April: Florida Turf Grasses**

**May: Natural Disasters**

**June: Butterfly Gardening**

2nd Tuesday	Lakes Region Library	Inverness
2nd Wednesday	Central Ridge Library	Beverly Hills
3rd Wednesday	Floral City Library	Floral City
4th Monday	Coastal Region Library	Crystal River
4th Monday	<b>Virtual</b> - pre-register on our Facebook page!	
4th Tuesday	Homosassa Library	Homosassa

**Bring plant problems and questions for expert advice to the Extension office.**

**Trained Master Gardeners are available most days between 8am - 5pm.**

**Schedules can vary, so please call ahead (352-527-5700).**

**Additionally, challenges (pictures are helpful) can be emailed to:**

**IF-SVC-citrusmg@ad.ufl.edu**

## Citrus County Family & Consumer Sciences Upcoming Programs

- **April 29th - Earth Day Event at Citrus County Extension Office (10:00 AM-1:00 PM)**  
Free family-friendly event with numerous vendors, food trucks, and youth activities.
- **May 4th -First Time Homebuyer Series (6:00-8:00 PM)**  
HUD approved 4-week homebuyer education class is designed to help you better understand the entire home buying process.  
Cost: \$15.00 all materials included
- **May 8th - Cooking for 1 or 2 at Homosassa Public Library (1:30-3:00 PM)**  
Find out how to easily plan, shop for, and prepare meals for one or two. This free presentation will include a cooking demo.
- **May 15th -Pickling Class at Citrus County Canning Center (4:00-6:00 PM)**  
Learn the process of pickling safely with hands on participation pickling cucumbers.  
Cost: \$15 all supplies included
- **May 22nd - Grilling Food Safely at Central Ridge Library (1:00-2:30 PM)**  
Learn why food safety is important when grilling through this free program.  
This includes cooking to correct temperatures and food safety basics.
- **May 24th -Pickling Class at Citrus County Canning Center (10:00 AM-12:00 PM)**  
Learn the process of pickling safely with hands on participation pickling cucumbers.  
Cost: \$15 all supplies included
- **May 30th - Grilling Food Safely at Floral City Public Library (10:30 AM-12:00 PM)**  
Learn why food safety is important when grilling through this free program.  
This includes cooking to correct temperatures and food safety basics.
- **June 9th - Growing and Cooking with Herbs at Lakes Region Library (1:30-3:00 PM)**  
Through this free program discover flavorful culinary herbs well-suited for Citrus

For more information or to register for one of the programs above  
visit: <https://tinyurl.com/bdfpjt6v>



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# SUMMER DAY CAMPS

## Future Hero's Camp

June 20-23, 2023

Cost: \$65.00

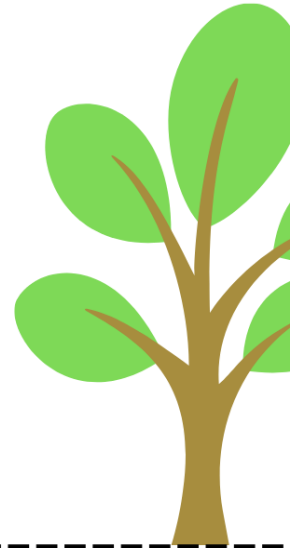
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Ages: 12-15

This camp is designed to explore career choices through interactive hands-on activities along with field trips to various locations. Campers will learn about a variety of careers and the knowledge and skills needed to make their dream a reality.

Camp will be held at the Central Ridge Community Center (77 Civic Cir, Beverly Hills)

Contact Parks and Recreation at 352-527-7540



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## Camp fit and fun

July 17-21, 2023

Cost: \$60.00

8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Ages: 8-12

Youth learn the FUNdamentals of sports, explore healthy snacking, and learn the importance of exercise and staying hydrated.

Camp will be held at the Citrus County Canning Center (3405 W Southern St, Lecanto)

Campers will need: Lunch Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, sunscreen & bug spray, comfortable clothes (school appropriate), and closed toed shoes.

To register visit:

<https://2023campfitandfun.eventbrite.com>

or call 352-527-5700



# Earth Day Event 2023

Saturday April 29 10am - 1pm

## Conserve, Recycle, Sustain

**FREE  
EVENT**

**Citrus County Extension Office**

**3650 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto**

**352-527-5700**

**RAIN  
or  
SHINE!**



**Food  
Trucks  
onsite**

-  Wildlife: Bees, Butterflies, Birds Insects, AND MORE
-  Florida-Friendly Landscaping™
-  “Trash to Treasure” recycled art contest display - Come vote for your favorite
-  Kid-friendly activities
-  “Ask a Master Gardener”
-  Storywalk through the Garden
-  Water Conservation Demos
-  Tree planting at 11:30am



**Trained service animals only**

**Bluebird Houses Available**

Sponsored by: **UF** | **IFAS Extension**  
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**CITRUS COUNTY**  
**CHRONICLE**  
[www.chronicleonline.com](http://www.chronicleonline.com)

## Spring Gardening Calendar

As temperatures warm plants begin to actively grow, flushing new growth and flower production. Early bloomers include: Redbud, Walter's Viburnum and azaleas with roadside wildflowers adding a low maintenance option to the color display. Creeping phlox, blanket flower and coreopsis all participate in the emergence of spring color.

**Creeping Phlox**



**Blanket Flower**



**Coreopsis**



### **Nitrogen containing fertilizer restriction**

April is a time to fertilize your plants if they are showing any signs of deficiency. Citrus County maintains a nitrogen fertilizer restriction during the cooler season, which ends April 1. The threat of late frost is over so application of nitrogen containing fertilizer poses little threat to emerging plants unless over applied.

### **Seasonal irrigation evaluation**

It is best to evaluate and repair automated irrigation systems prior to the arrival of hot summer weather. Efficient application of supplemental water is a priority for Central Florida landscapes.

- Check your irrigation controller so the correct time is indicated as daylight savings time has recently changed.
- Irrigation systems often run at night making evaluation difficult. Check your system monthly so that water when applied hits the garden space intended.
- Check your rain or moisture sensing device to make sure it functions to prevent application of supplemental water during a rain event.
- When renovating gardens consider drought tolerant plant materials for use in the landscape.
- Perform a "catch can test" to evaluate the amount of water applied by rotor and popup irrigation heads.

### **Seasonal scouting**

- It is best to regularly scout your landscape to identify and minimize damage from insect pests and weeds that invade our gardens. Early detection makes pest management less of a barrier to a successful landscape.
- Use caution with bug and weed control. Many insecticides and herbicides damage our plants when applied when temperatures become hot. Thoroughly read and understand labels for proper application.
- Avoid insecticide use when plants are flowering. Valuable pollinators, like honey bees, visit flowering plants to collect pollen and nectar potentially injuring the visiting colony.

## *Thank you and au revoir!*

Thanks Betsy, for all your years of service and everything you've done to support the UF/IFAS Citrus County Extension mission. Although you will be sorely missed, we understand - it's time to bury the alarm clock and retire. Happy trails!

