

Extension Connection

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"UF IFAS Extension Citrus County"



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Facebook

Extension Notes

BJ Jarvis, Extension Director

Expanding our delivery methods

COVID may have changed how we do things but it hasn't changed our commitment to you! As we move into the last quarter of the year, we in Extension are indeed thankful for our dedicated volunteers, staff and faculty who have continued to innovate to provide "Solutions For Your Life!"

If you are "Zoom-d out", I understand. We, too, would like nothing more than to be able to see you face to face like before. But at least we are able to offer information through our blogs, through Facebook, and of course phone and email (and Zoom too).

If you need answers to some challenges, please continue to think of Extension as your Go-To source for reliable info. We continue to make every effort to provide accurate, timely answers.

Stick with us, as we are still committed to serving you!

Sincerely, BJ



Pests and COVID

BJ Jarvis, Director and Horticulture Agent



COVID has been with us for about 6 months now, and one of the unexpected side effects has been an increase in pests in and around homes. When the professional publication PestWorld reported this, I was surprised. Aren't we home more to observe pests? Hasn't the trend to garden increased in the last half-year so pests could be addressed more quickly? It was a head-scratcher to me.



Thinking back, people are staying home more. They are going out to shop less. Home shopping and delivery services are through the roof. Boxes and boxes are being delivered and brought into the house. When we can find limited items, we may purchase in bulk... maybe stored in the garage where I have a few critters. OK, it's making more sense now.

In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued warnings in some cities about rodents becoming aggressive after restaurants were shuttered reducing access to food scraps they would have subsisted on pre-pandemic.

There are several steps to minimize unwanted visitors around the home:

- Avoid storing food or other indoor supplies in a shed or garage.
- Check all stored products, particularly those that are grain-based regularly for evidence of pests. Even sealed cereal or pasta boxes are easily entered by beetles and roaches. Some of these products may be best stored in sealed plastic-ware or in the refrigerator. Large bags of dog food and bird seed can also harbor unwanted pests.
- Discarding any infested pantry items is the most simple and chemical-free approach. This will starve them out. Boric acid and baits are also targeted and low toxicity methods.
- Outdoors we may be spotting more pests too. Pets that are used to being couch-potatoes are getting out more as we strive for a little exercise and scenery. Ticks and fleas are the most common home invaders brought in by pets. Check pets regularly for hitchhikers. Regular outdoor maintenance of scruffy areas will help to reduce pest populations.



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UF/IFAS Extension

Solutions for Your Life

URBAN HORTICULTURE

(continued from page 2) Household pests

- Being Florida-Friendly means using low-maintenance plants and environmentally sustainable practices. You can have a beautiful landscape that reduces the incidence of pests and could save time, energy and money. While outdoors, monitor landscape plants for unusual appearance, such as yellowing, sparse foliage, or growths on plants. Caught early, it is easier to control outdoor pest populations. Some pests typically found on plant tips may be easy to just snip off. Others may be more difficult to control.

This is called Integrated Pest Management or IPM. While being Florida-friendly starts with choosing the right plant for a garden spot, IPM starts with identifying exactly what the problem is before acting. Countless times, gardeners mistake a pest or nutritional problem for a disease. No amount of fungicide will kill a pest, so unless certain, connect with an Extension expert for proper identification. Then a safe and effective approach to pest management will be offered.

Never use outdoor pest control chemicals indoors. Whether indoors or outdoors, always follow label directions to increase effectiveness and safety. A little prevention and regular monitoring will reduce the number of pests in your life.

Get these critters and their food source out of your pantry.



Florida-Friendly Landscaping™

Florida-Friendly Roadmap



Growing Problems with Citrus Trees

Steven Davis, FFL Program Coordinator



People moving to Florida want two things, sunshine and citrus. Sunshine is abundant most of the time and appears on the horizon most every morning. Citrus is a more complicated story. Over the past several decades, citrus has been the target of several pathogens injuring both agricultural production and the desires of many Florida residents. Common garden pests, white fly and leaf minor among others are always present, but controllable. Other diseases like citrus canker and greening are more problematic.

Citrus canker, a bacterial disease, was introduced to Florida through contaminated root stock originating from Japan in 1912 infecting citrus plants in Monticello, Florida. Aided by the Florida Plant Quarantine Act 1912, the last canker infected tree was removed from Florida in 1927. This disease emerged again in the mid 1990's and in 2000 a statewide eradication program began with required removal of all infected trees.



Hurricanes in 2003-2004 spread canker throughout the state to previously unaffected areas. The eradication program ended in 2006 when eradication proved impractical. Tree removal is currently voluntary in Florida.

All plants have natural openings which open and close (stomates) in both leaves and fruits. During the first 90 days of growth as temperatures rise, stomates tend to be open enabling wind-blown bacteria to penetrate and infect the fruit. Pruning, among other injuries also provide an avenue for disease inoculation. Symptoms most commonly include leaf spotting and fruit rind blemishing but, when ideal conditions exist defoliation, fruit drop and general decline of the tree occurs more quickly. A corky pustule surrounded by a yellow halo will be evident on leaves and fruit, but a more accurate symptom is a water soaked area surrounding the lesion as a more definitive sign. Citrus varieties with early maturing fruit are more susceptible than late maturing cultivars. Trees with significant damaging insect populations are also more susceptible due to the abundant wounds they create along leaf and fruit surfaces. The bacterial ooze created when lesions come in contact with moisture is easily transported by splashing water, winds, as well as through harvesting equipment, clothing, tree/fruit transportation and grafting. Strong winds and hurricanes can move the pathogen great distances.

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Florida-Friendly Landscaping™

Florida-Friendly Roadmap

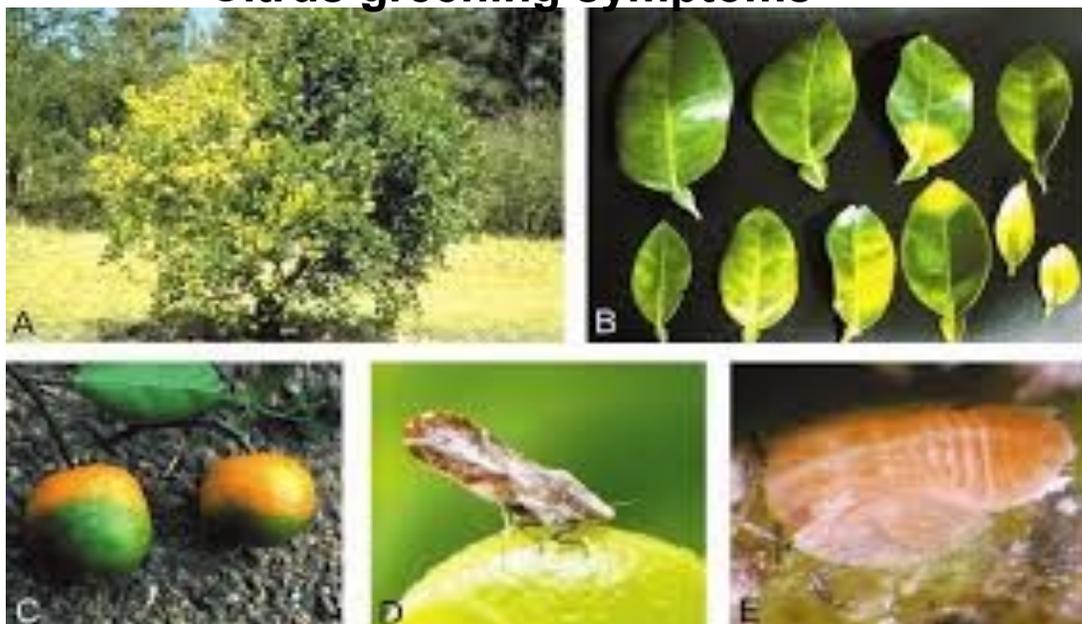


(continued from page 4) *Problems with Citrus*

More recently, citrus greening has become a catastrophic problem for citrus production. Huanglongbing (HLB), citrus greening is also a bacterial disease that moves from tree to tree with the aid of an insect vector. Accumulation of HLB bacteria clogs the vascular system of the citrus tree inhibiting the transport of water, nutrients and sugars throughout the plant. The Asian Citrus Psyllid is the insect vector that moves HLB bacteria from one infected tree to a healthy tree not far away. No successful treatment is currently available. The piercing mouthpart injects the bacteria into the tree inoculating the healthy tree for relatively slow decline.

If your residential citrus tree shows HLB symptoms it is best to destroy and remove the tree eliminating future contamination of other trees. Easy to spot symptoms include: mottled asymmetric leaf yellowing, lopsided small fruit, reverse fruit ripening (color inversion, ripening from the top down) and under-developed seeds in the fruit. After inoculation, it may take several years for symptoms to appear making this disease more difficult to diagnose and eradicate.

Citrus greening symptoms



Citrus Greening first appeared in Florida in 2005 and has since moved to Texas and California. Over the past decade the Florida Department of Agriculture and the University of Florida have led research on HLB, much of the research performed at the Citrus Research and Education Center (CREC) in Lake Alfred: <https://crec.ifas.ufl.edu/citrus-research/>. Controlling Asian citrus psyllid populations is a priority. Recently, a predatory wasp (*Taximaria radiata*) has been released and is an important ally in reducing bacteria carrying psyllid populations. Development of disease resistant varieties is also an important area of research. Valuable resources available through the University of Florida and Florida Department of Agriculture will keep you up to date on current research/practices combating this bacterial disease and the insect vector that transports it though out the state.

Food Plot Considerations for Managing White-tailed Deer

Clay Cooper, Agriculture Agent



Throughout Florida, white-tailed deer are the most economically important game species, yet in the 1700's unregulated deer hide trade and a deer-removal campaign caused historic populations to be reduced to 20,000. Then, after the Pittman-Robertson Act (1937) and eradication of the screw worm, deer populations began to increase. By 1985, 100,000 individuals were recorded and today an estimated stable population of 700,000 exists in Florida.

Prized by hunters and wildlife enthusiasts alike, white-tailed deer are often the focus of management for landowners, managers, and lessees who want to improve deer populations while maintaining other land uses such as agricultural and timber production. White-tailed deer have average annual home ranges of 1 mile for females and 2.5 miles for yearling and adult males, while the greatest dispersal is in yearling males, who can travel up to 6 miles from their natal areas. Given the land area utilized as a homing range for white-tailed deer, it is important that these lands are properly managed in order to provide sufficient habitat and provided enough resources to meet their nutritional needs.

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(continued from page 6) Food Plot Considerations

In order to do so, the establishment of food plots has become a popular white-tailed deer management practice. Although food plots should never be viewed as a substitute for properly managed, natural deer habitat, when used in combination with other habitat management techniques, their establishment on private and public lands has proven beneficial. In well managed habitats, food plots and supplemental plantings can compensate for seasonal fluctuations in food availability and the poor nutritional quality of natural forages. Depending on the availability and quality of native wildlife forages, deer food plots containing warm- and cool-season forages should comprise between 1 and 3 percent of the land area utilized by deer.

This fall if you are planning to implement food plots as part of your management practice here are a few considerations to keep in mind:

Location: Deer are unlikely to use food plots located a long distance from escape cover. Therefore, plots should be established near natural cover regularly frequented by deer. It is also important to consider water sources and wind direction if the plot is intended for hunting purposes.

Size: The average recommended size for food plots is 1-3 acres and no larger than 5. Deer are often reluctant to feed in the center of large food plots, therefore, several small plots are usually preferred over one large one.

Shape: When deciding on the shape of the plot, you want to consider creating natural edges. Long rectangular plots create more edge space compared to square or circular plots of the same size allowing for greater utilization. Deer are reluctant to utilize plots that create a further distance to natural cover.



For more information on wildlife management or the establishment of food plots, please contact our office (352) 527-5700.



Home Maintenance

Sarah Ellis, Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent



As temperatures fall and days become shorter, consider tackling some home maintenance projects to help keep your home in good condition. Items to address include:

Gutters: It is important to clean and inspect your gutters at least once a year.



Dead leaves and debris can clog your gutters and cause roof leaks or other damage. When cleaning gutters, visually inspect them to see if they are hanging securely. Check the downspouts to ensure water is being directed away from the home's foundation. Address any issues with erosion promptly.

Exterior: Inspect and clean the exterior of your home. Look to see if the paint is in good condition. Are there any signs of mold or rot? Clean and repair any damage and power wash the entire exterior. Power washing is an easy way to spruce up the outside of your home. Additionally, pressure wash sidewalks and outsides of gutters to remove debris, dirt and other things such as moss.



Windows and doors: Examine the windows and doors. Failing weather stripping and gaps where trim meets doors or windows mean higher heating and cooling costs. Additionally, moisture can seep into these areas causing mold or rot. Seal cracks or openings with caulk and replace worn or damaged weather stripping.

Landscape: Prune and trim trees and shrubs so that they do not scrape the home or trap moisture near the home. Make sure any plantings near the AC unit are trimmed away from the unit. Replace mulch as needed to minimize weed growth. Remove debris from lawn and mow.



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(continued from page 8) Home Maintenance

Outdoor lights: Inspect outdoor lights and replace any burned out bulbs and reset light timers if needed. Proper outdoor lighting not only makes your house more attractive at night, but also helps keep you and your guests safe.



Heating and AC unit: Clean and replace the filter for your heating/AC unit. Filters should be cleaned every 30 to 90 days depending on the home conditions. Clean filters improve the performance of the system, saving money and improving air quality indoors.

Smoke alarms: Once a year test your smoke alarms and check their age. This chore should only take a few minutes and could save you and your family's lives. To test your smoke alarm, push the button labeled "test." Batteries should be replaced once a year and it is recommended that the entire smoke alarm be replaced every 10 years. To determine when your smoke alarm was manufactured, remove it from the wall or ceiling and check the back of the alarm for a date. Replace the smoke alarm if the date is 10 years or older.



Addressing these items once a year will help keep your home safe and in good condition.



Florida 4-H Youth Development

Head • Heart • Hands • Health



Having Fun with Civics

Dr. Marnie Ward, 4-H Agent



The United States of America has been a democratic republic for over 200 years. The Constitution and laws of the United States established the rights and responsibilities of each citizen. Knowing and understanding those rights and responsibilities is an important part of citizenship. That is why civics is a component of grade school education across the United States. In Florida, young people learn:

- The history of politics and political parties
- The democratic process
- Public policy
- The mechanics of the political process



Educators and families can use a variety of tools to encourage young people to practice their civic skills.

- Citrus County Board of County Commission Meetings. Ask youth to review an upcoming meeting agenda (available on-line), attend the meeting (also available on-line) and then in three or four sentences describe some of the issues before the board and what the commissioners decided.
- Citrus County School Board meetings. Young people can attend these meetings (available on-line) and learn about their school board members. Ask them to summarize the names and roles of each school board member. How often does the school board meet? What is the purpose of the school board?
- Other local Board Meetings they might attend:
 - ◇ Mosquito Board
 - ◇ City Council
 - ◇ Southwest Florida Water Management District

It is never too early to discover more about the political process. Young people have a front row seat on the political process, as 2020 is an election year. Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor founded the website "iCivics", in 2009, as an interactive resource for teachers and families to engage the next generation of community leaders. For citizens not yet old enough to vote or anyone interested in a refresher on the political process, "iCivics" created **WIN THE WHITE HOUSE**. You can access the game here: <https://www.icivics.org/games/win-white-house>

In Citrus County 4-H clubs and programs, youth practice citizenship while learning about the needs of their communities, taking action for positive change, accepting and embracing differences, and promoting good health. Contact UF/IFAS Extension to learn more about our 4-H Youth Development programs.



Florida 4-H Youth Development

Head • Heart • Hands • Health



WORDLES

IT'S A WORD PUZZLE

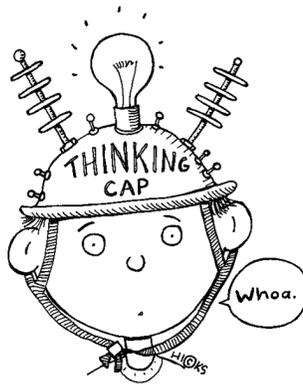
LET'S DO A COUPLE TO GET THE HANG OF IT

YOU SEE:

SIDE SIDE

ANSWER:

SIDE BY SIDE



YOU SEE:

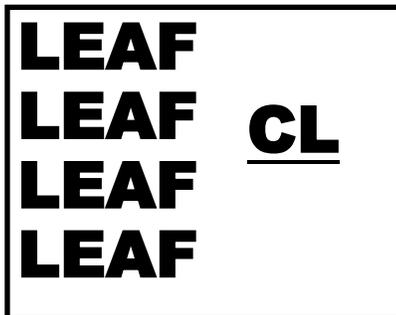
YOU/JUST/ME

ANSWER:

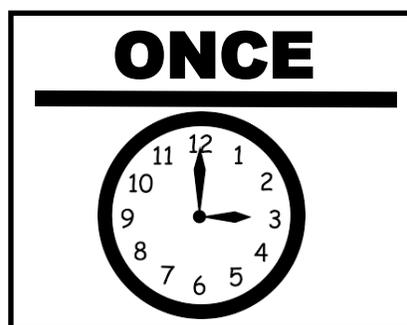
JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME

ENJOY THE WORDLES CHALLENGE

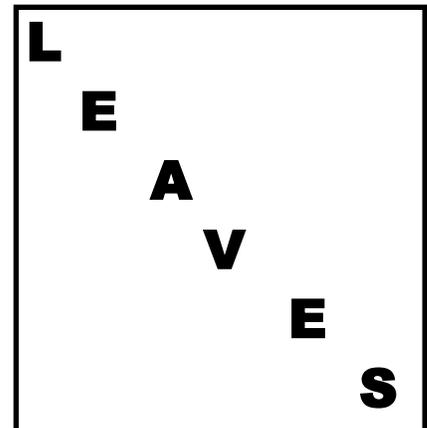
1



2



3



Answers on page 15

★ Until further notice, these will be virtual seminars.

Gardening Seminars

Contact Steven Davis at 527-5708 to pre-register for these free classes or go to:

<https://ccufflprogram.eventbrite.com>

"Create a Florida-Friendly Landscape"

Thursday Oct 1

6:00 - 8:00 pm

"9 Florida-Friendly Principles"

Tuesday Oct 6

2:00 - 4:00 pm

"Soils - the Garden Foundation"

Tuesday Oct 20

2:00 - 3:30 pm

"Managing Pests Wisely"

Tuesday Nov 3

2:00 - 4:00 pm

"9 Florida-Friendly Principles"

Tuesday Nov 17

2:00 - 4:00 pm

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM

"Soils in Florida Landscapes"

Tuesday Dec 8

2:00 - 3:30 pm

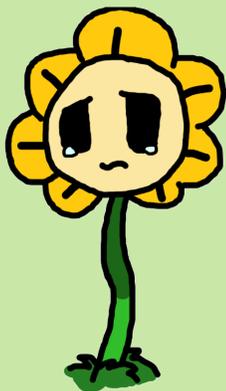
"Invasive Plants & Pests"

Tuesday Dec 22

2:00 - 3:30 pm

2020 Plant Sale Cancelled

Unfortunately due to the COVID pandemic, our annual plant sale has been cancelled. It is our plan to see you again at a plant sale in 2021. As always if you have gardening questions, we are still here to help. Here's how:



- **Call** our office at 352-527-5700
- **Email:** masterG1@citrusbocc.com You can also send photos to assist in a more confident diagnosis.
- **Visit:** wearing a mask, you are welcome to visit our weekday plant clinics at the Lecanto office

UF/IFAS Extension
SolutionsForYourLife.com

UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
IFAS Extension

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



citrus
LIBRARIES

★ Extension Master Gardener library programs will be virtual ★

Monthly seminars explore timely garden topics.
They last approximately 1 hour, are **free** and **pre-registration is required**.

Check back here <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/citrus/who-we-are/>
or our Facebook page for registration links.



October: Caring for House Plants

November: Plants of the Year

December: No Programs This Month

See you in 2021!

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:

MasterG2@citrusbocc.com

Unless otherwise noted, all classes will be held at the Citrus County Extension
Office classroom: 3650 W Sovereign Path, Lecanto, FL 34461

Food Manager's Training and Exam

★ Friday, November 13 8:30am - 5:00pm

Due to COVID, space is limited for this in person class

Go here to register online: <https://tinyurl.com/y676zats>

Cost for the course and exam is \$110. The purchase of the ServSafe® Manager Manual for \$55 is highly recommended and is available in English or Spanish. It is suggested that participants study the ServSafe® Manager 6th edition textbook prior to attending the class. For more information, call Sarah at the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Citrus County office in Lecanto at 352-527-5713.



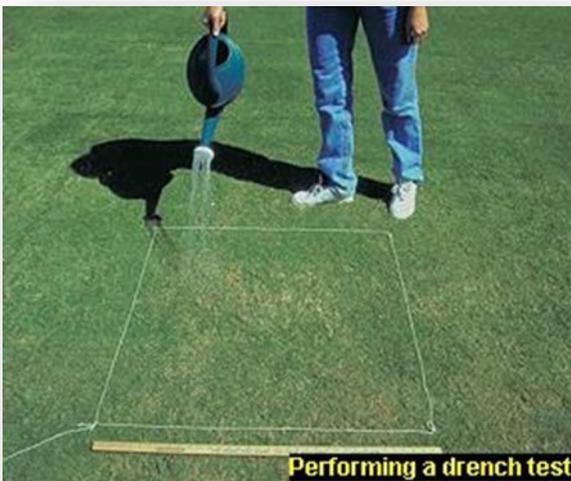
Fall Gardening Calendar

Camellia: Check for tea scale on plants (see photo). These tiny insects can be found on camellia and sometimes holly throughout our state. By fall, severe infestations including crawlers, immatures and maters will cluster together giving a fuzzy appearance. If isolated to a few leaves or a branch, simply prune off. A horticultural oil or horticultural soap can also reduce numbers. Repeat applications every 10-14 days (unless label directs otherwise). Oils and soaps are less toxic and therefore more environmentally friendly.

Tea scale on camellia leaf



Soil Sampling: Have soil pH analyzed, especially around acid-loving plants (blueberry, azalea, and camellia). Samples can be brought to the Extension office any weekday (samples are \$3 each for pH test). They will be tested the next Wednesday morning and recommendations given.



Lawns: St. Augustine lawns may have damaging chinch bug infestations. Most active when it's warm and especially along pavement, chinch bugs damage is generally more apparent as the summer months roll on. Check for these tiny critters by soapy drench test to flush them out. (Add 2-3 tablespoons of dish soap to a one-gallon bucket or watering can of water, then pour over 1 sq. yard of damaged turf). If more than 10 chinch bugs appear, action is recommended. Check out this IFAS publication for various management strategies:

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/LH/LH03600.pdf>

Wordle Answers: 1. *Four leaf clover* 2. *Once upon a time* 3. *Falling leaves*

(Continued on page 16)

(continued from page 15) FALL GARDENING

Fertilizing: It is too late in the year to fertilize most plants. As nighttime temps start to cool, plants are signaled to go into a normal winter dormancy. Fertilizer will encourage the plant to continue active growth, making it more susceptible to winter freezes. In fact, because plants do not take up fertilizer well in late fall and winter, there is a County ban on landscape fertilizer use from November 1 through March 31.



Strawberries: You may think of strawberries as a winter- spring crop, but this is the perfect time to plant strawberry plants for December through March production. Grown here as an annual, they can be planted in the ground or in a hanging pot for each harvesting.



Get prepared for cold weather:

Gather materials now for cold winter nights. Covers that reach all the way to the ground are essential to trap the relative heat coming out of the ground. It doesn't have to be "hot" under the covers (boxes, garbage cans, and any blanket/sheets) just a degree above freezing usually will do. Remember that newly planted hardy plants will be more susceptible to cold damage than those in the ground for several + years. Where possible bring hanging and other potted plants in or gather together next to a structure and cover for extra protection.

For specific gardening information, be sure to contact us - 352-527-5700