Welcome Linda Thomason!

Linda is our newest edition to Suwannee County Extension office. She is a Staff Assistant that will be our Bookkeeper for the office. To get to know Linda a little more, we asked her these questions:

- Where did you grow up? Barnhill, Illinois
- What is your favorite color? Yellow
- What was your favorite childhood toy? My Huffy Bicycle
- What is your favorite Italian food? Fettuccine Alfredo
- The most beautiful beach you have visited? Santa Rosa Beach
- What is your favorite movie? The Shack
- What is your favorite book? Take Me With You by Catherine Ryan Hyde
- What is your dream vacation? Northern California–Redwood Parks
- What is your favorite meal? Fried Chicken with fresh veggies
- What is your favorite dessert? Ice cream
- What is your favorite hobbies? Nature Walks
- What is your favorite season? Summer

Visit our website: suwannee.ifas.ufl.edu
We have been closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation. While we do not enjoy disrupting our programs, our top priority is for the health and safety of our clients, volunteers, staff and faculty. Current in-person activities being held by UF/IFAS Extension in Suwannee County such as 4-H Club meetings, Master Gardener volunteer meetings or workdays, Overall Extension Advisory committee meeting, first time homebuyers (SHIP), judging practices, and other classes and workshops, etc. have been postponed, canceled or in some instances, moved to virtual platforms due to direction from the University of Florida based on the recommendations by the Florida Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institute of Health concerning COVID-19. Any events, meetings or programs offered online or via video conference are still being held. Other face-to-face meetings may now take place via video conference where appropriate. As always, our extension faculty are available for consultation at the office, by email, or by calling the office phone number (386-362-2771) Monday through Friday, during normal business hours. The disappointment and inconvenience these cancellations will cause are unfortunate, but the safety and well-being of our clientele, faculty and staff are paramount. Thanks for your understanding.

We will post updates as we get them. Stay well (and wash your hands)!

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Just as we are sure you have, Florida 4-H has continued to monitor the COVID-19 situation. In line with the direction of the University of Florida, the CDC, and others we are very disappointed to share with you that in-person Florida 4-H summer programs have been canceled through July 31, 2020. This means this summer we will not have in-person offerings of the traditional events we have enjoyed for decades such as 4-H Legislature, 4-H University, and residential camping at Camp Timpoochee, Camp Cherry Lake, and Camp Cloverleaf. This is undoubtedly disappointing. Please know it is to us too. This has been an agonizing decision which was not made lightly but was made in consideration of the health of all in our 4-H family.

Instead of in-person programs, we are currently working on ways for our 4-H members to connect through virtual means. We know this is may not look the same, but we feel a great responsibility to continue to provide our 4-H members and families a place to learn, lead, serve, grow, and belong. Understandably, as this is new territory for all of us, we don’t know exactly what these alternatives will look like yet. However, 4-H has a history of youth-adult partnership and we value our youth as the problem solvers they are. We will be tasking some of our own youth leaders to help us create innovative solutions.

This is unprecedented for us and we realize this is disappointing news. We believe we will hit the ground running with the start of the 4-H year on September 1, 2020. Please know though that the safety of our 4-H members, volunteers, families, staff, and faculty is always our top priority, and thank you for your cooperation in keeping us all healthy. Please reach out to your local UF/IFAS Extension county office if you have additional questions.
For some of us, the trip to grocery store includes a list and a thought “how quickly can I get out of here”. The result, eating the same things until you grow weary of them. For others, they look through magazines or cookbooks for new ideas and recipes to try. One of our Master Gardener volunteers expanded her taste buds and green thumb by eating a fresh dragon fruit and germinating some of the seeds from the fruit. She brought them to me as tiny seedlings and now the plants are growing in my office.

Dragonfruit which is also known as Pitaya, Strawberry Pear, Night-blooming cereus have a slightly sweet flavoring between a pear and a kiwi. The fruit is a fleshy berry, which is oblong and about 4.5 inches thick with red or yellow peel with scales and with or without spines. The pulp may be white, red or magenta depending on the species. You can cut them in half and eat the fruit fresh, cut into small pieces with yogurt and nuts, add it to salads or juice them. The fruit is good in fiber, calcium, vitamin C and antioxidants. A 3.5 ounce serving contains approximately 60 calories. The small seeds are edible with a nutty flavor and are rich in lipids. The flower buds can be eaten as a vegetable.

Dragonfruit are fast-growing vine-like cacti. They are a perennial plant that needs a strong support trellis. The stem sections of pitaya form aerial roots that adhere to the surface upon which they grow or climb. The stem may reach a length of 20 ft.

The extremely showy, edible, white or pink flowers are large up to 14 inches long and 9 inches wide. The very fragrant flowers are pollinated by moths, bats or in the early part of the day by bees. To increase the potential for fruit production, plant 2 or 3 different genetic types (not the same clone or variety). Cross-pollination between the different types in the planting will assure a better fruit set and size.

In general, plants should be planted in full or almost full sun (very light shade) for best growth and fruit production. Select a part of the landscape away from other trees, buildings and structures, and power lines. Remember, pitaya plants can become very large if not pruned to contain their size. Select the warmest area of the landscape that does not flood (or remain wet). Because Dragonfruit is a subtropical fruit, care needs to be taken during very long, cold periods in North Florida. They quickly recover from light freezes. Although they are drought tolerant, periodic watering is recommended from flowering through harvest. A dry period (winter and early spring) is required for abundant bloom induction, but once plants flower (late spring and summer), periods of drought may result in poor production. Higher production yields are returned when plants are fertilized a few times a year with 6-6-6, 8-39, or 8-4-12 (palm special) fertilizers with 2-3% magnesium.

As much as I like to eat oranges and blueberries, adding different fruits like the Dragonfruit or Starfruit (Carambola) or Jackfruit are sure to delight your taste buds. Try it, You might just like it. For more detailed information, follow this link; https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs303
Sometimes it’s very hot, dry and droughty, sometimes it’s stormy, windy and very wet, and sometimes there can be a day or two of surprisingly cool weather— that’s just summer in Florida. Our native plants have to adapt and survive these weather extremes while we have the option of retreating to air conditioning and a glass of cool water. We also have the option to add plants in the location that will make summers more enjoyable.

You know the temperature difference you feel when walking under a large shade tree. Shade not only cools us it can cool your home the same way. There are flowers that withstand those extremes of summer while providing us with surprises of color. There are vines that climb trees and trellises to add shade and flowers. Native trees, flowers and vines are important to Florida for providing food, shelter and nesting material for many of our songbirds, butterflies, pollinators and small wildlife. All of this with the environmental benefits of cooling the ground, providing erosion control, producing oxygen, nourishing the soil, and many others.

Many native plants have developed ways to cope with summer, but not all species are “native” to Florida. Each species has its own way of coping with summer conditions. To preserve moisture, some plants stop blooming, some lose their leaves, and some are dormant. “Drought tolerant” plants can survive the dry conditions, although most species respond to a little moisture when it’s so dry. It may not be thriving in drought, but it will return to normal with the rain. The short list below is only a few of the many Florida natives that survive our summers. Choose your species carefully in order to get the right plant for the right place.

“Coolers”
Live Oak (Quercus virginiana) - large spreading shade tree that adapts to most soil conditions. Drought tolerant. Considered tardily deciduous— old leaves are pushed off in the spring when the new leaves form.

Dahoon Holly (Ilex cassine) - small evergreen tree with dense foliage, single trunk and moderate growth rate (25’ in 20 yrs.). Female plants produce bright red berries in fall. May require some moisture.

“Bloomers”
Blackeyed Susan (Rudbekia hirta) - an old favorite that loves sun light with slight moisture. Sothair coneflower (Rudbekia mollis), is drought tolerant, blooms when Blackeyed Susan slows down and continues into fall with similar long stemmed bright yellow flowers. Both species are annual to short lived perennials.

Purple coneflower (Echinacea purpurea) - big purple flowers with orange-brown flowers all through the summer. Full sun with some moisture brings blooms all summer. Perennial

Beach Sunflower (Helianthus debilis subsp. Debilis) - bushy sprawling annual with large yellow flowers from spring to fall. Drought tolerant – do not overwater.

Starry Rosinweed (Silphium asteriscus) - branching perennial with large yellow flowers on all stems from spring to fall. It likes the sunshine and slightly moist soil to perform best.

“Sprawlers”
Carolina Jessamine (Gelsemium sempervirens) - evergreen twining vine with small dark green leaves that loves to climb trellises and treetops, drought tolerant. Fragrant yellow flowers over its top in late winter.

Coral Honeysuckle (Lonicera sempervirens) - twining vine for sunny spots, drought tolerant but responds to slight moisture. Tubular red flowers bring in the hummingbirds.
Homeowner Root Woes

Katherine Allen
Family & Consumer Sciences Agent

Someone in my neighborhood was in their front lawn looking down a pipe. When I called out asking what was going on, she responded that she had tree roots invading the sewer pipes. The intrusion of roots into sewers is probably the most destructive problem encountered in a wastewater collection system. Many municipalities don’t fund preventative root control problems unless they get customer complaints.

My neighbor explained that they were experiencing overflows from the toilet and in the shower inside the house. Stoppages or overflows are probably the most common way that homeowners find out that they have roots invading their underground sewer pipes. Roots can also cause structural damage. Velocity of water in the sewer serves not only to move the solids but can cause self-scouring properties to occur. When blockages reduce the flow of water, the problem is compounded with additional solids collecting and pipe walls accumulating debris.

In Florida, because our sewer pipes are typically placed above our high-water table, there is fluctuation in the amount of liquid. Roots do not like to be permanently submerged, so the fluctuations in water levels in the pipes is ideal for growth.

How a root finds a pipe:
The leading tip of a root shoot senses differences in water and nutrient levels and grows toward them, also called hydrotropism. Even if there is not a leak in the pipe, condensation can cause wetness on the soil by the pipe. Older pipes may be more porous depending on their construction material that allows water leakage or small cracks to allow fine hair-like root structures to penetrate.

In addition, backfill used during construction may provide more favorable soil than undisturbed soil. During drier times when the water table drops, tree roots will grow in search of moisture. In fact, some roots extend well beyond the tree’s drip line in search of water and nutrients. In cold weather, the soil around the pipe is warmer and thus, a more suitable growing condition. Finally, the pipe’s environment provides not only nutrients, but also water and oxygen. Note that even after a tree is removed, roots may survive. Make sure the stump is pulled or chemically treated.

Two types of root structures:
Veil root structure is where you have a “curtain” of roots that hangs into pipes that have a steady or constant flow. The roots sift or screen out solids, which eventually block the flow and cause the stoppage.

A tail structure is found in pipes with intermittent flow and like its name suggests, reminds one of a horse’s tail. The root grows downstream filling the pipe, eventually filling it. There have been tail roots that have been over 20 feet long when removed.

If the sewer is stopped up, call a plumber. If it is sluggish, use copper sulfate in the toilet (it is corrosive on metal p-traps and chrome drains in sinks, showers, and tubs). For septic tanks, two pounds is recommended for a 300-gallon tank. Repeat twice a year. For sewer systems, add a small amount, usually ½ cup at a time (follow label directions) each day for two-week period, which is more effective than one large dose. Copper sulfate can be purchased from drug stores or garden centers but follow label directions carefully as the vapor should be avoided. Check with your public works or utilities department for more information on approved chemical treatments.

Considering some of the issues, you may also want to reconsider the proximity of your trees when planting! The recommendation is to keep trees planted at least 30 feet from the structure for both root issues and fire-wise landscaping.

For more information on housing related issues, contact Katherine at the UF/IFAS Suwannee County Extension office, an Equal Opportunity Institution. She can be reached by phone 386-362-2772 or via email at nrgkate@ufl.edu
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) almost half of all adults in the United States (45%) have high blood pressure but on 24% have their condition under control. A few years ago, the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology updated blood pressure guidelines for the first time in over a decade. The update included eliminating the “prehypertensive” category and defining high blood pressure as readings of 130/80 mm Hg or higher compared to the old definition of 140/90 mm Hg and higher. By lowering the definition of high blood pressure, the guidelines recommend earlier treatment to prevent further complications of hypertension.

Risk Factors:
There are many risk factors for high blood pressure. Some of these risk factors can be changed and others cannot. Risk factors that cannot be changed include age, family history, genetics, race and sex. Risk factors that can be changed include smoking, alcohol intake, caffeine intake, medications, sleep habits, physical activity habits and diet.

Signs and Symptoms:
It is critical to get your blood pressure checked regularly. High blood pressure usually does not cause symptoms until it has caused serious problems. This is why, it is referred to as the silent killer. Health consequences of undiagnosed high blood pressure include heart attack, heart failure, stroke, aneurysm, kidney disease, and eye damage.

Diagnosis:
For most healthy adults, normal blood pressure is usually less than 120/80 mm Hg. Typically, your doctor will take multiple blood pressure readings at separate appointments to make the high blood pressure diagnosis. When you have consistent blood pressure readings that are higher than or equal to 140/90 mm hg or 130-139/80-89 mm Hg with other risk factors, then your doctor may make the diagnosis.

Treatment
For most people with high blood pressure, a doctor will develop a treatment plan that usually includes include heart-healthy lifestyle changes alone or with medication. Healthy lifestyle changes may suggest that individuals avoid or limit alcohol, avoid smoking, manage stress, get adequate sleep, aim for a healthy weight, get regular exercise and choose a heart-healthy diet such as the DASH eating plan. The Dash Diet – Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension is an eating plan that been shown to effective in lowering high blood pressure.

References:

Blood Pressure Categories

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<td>LESS THAN 120</td>
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<td>ELEVATED</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2</td>
<td>140 OR HIGHER</td>
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<tr>
<td>HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)</td>
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Interested in getting goats, but not sure what breed is right for you? This guide is one of a two-part series that will introduce some of the breeds commonly utilized for meat and dairy production in the southeast.

**Spanish**

Originally brought to the United States from Spain, this breed is commonly referred to as the “wood goat” or “brush goat”. This breed earned its nicknames because its hardy and a good forager. They thrive in difficult environmental conditions and are relatively tolerant of internal parasites. Bucks weigh 100-180 lbs., and does can weigh 70-120 lbs. Spanish goats come in a variety of colors and patterns. Since the breed has not been extensively domesticated, they can sometimes be flighty or difficult to manage. It is common to cross Spanish goats with other breeds to improve their meat or milk production. It is rare to come across pure bred Spanish goats because of the popularity of cross breeding them.

**Boer**

This South African native is favored for meat production because of its heavy muscling and high average daily gains of 0.3-0.4 lbs. per day. Adult males weigh around 250 lbs., reaching 100 lbs. as a yearling. Female yearling weigh slightly less at 80 lbs., with adults reaching 140 lbs. They are known for the distinctive red pattern on their heads. This is a docile, mild tempered breed that is generally easy to handle. Since they have a non-determinate breeding season, they can breed year-round. They tend to graze more and are more susceptible to internal parasites than other breeds.

**Kiko**

These goats were imported from New Zealand. One of their most common characteristics are their ability to achieve substantial weight gain, even under tough environmental conditions. They tend to be more resistant to internal parasites compared to other breeds and have fewer problems with foot-rot. They have a large frame with adult bucks weighing 250-300 lbs. and does 100-150 lbs. They tend to be white or cream in color but can range from white to black with various patterns.

**Myotonic**

The Myotonic or “faint goat” is indigenous to the United States, although its ancestors can be traced back to goats from Nova Scotia. Their most well-known trait is fainting when they are scared. This is the result of a recessive gene that causes their skeletal muscles to lock up when they’re startled. They are heavy muscled, but smaller than other major meat breeds. They can weigh anywhere from 60-175 lbs., with some bucks reaching 200 lbs. They can have a variety of colors, but the most common pattern is black and white. Their myotonic characteristic helps keep them fenced in, however, it can make them more susceptible to predation.
It’s Watermelon Eatin’ Time!

*Sylvia Willis*

*Row Crops/Commercial Horticulture Agent*

You may not have noticed, but I love talking about watermelons! Any chance I get to meet a new watermelon grower or try a new watermelon recipe, I don’t pass it up. However, my love for watermelon was not always there. I grew up in a small rural town in Indiana where we mostly planted corn and soybeans, there was little watermelon production in my county. I grew to love watermelon when I moved to Florida to get my masters researching them and different production practices. I went from knowing very little about watermelons (maybe only how to best eat them) to doing research every day on them. Watermelon production became very important to me and I soon came to realize how important watermelons are for Florida’s growers and the state’s economic market.

**What are watermelons?**

Watermelon (*Citrullus lanatus*) is a fruiting vegetable in the Cucurbit family that grows on a vine in tropical to temperate climates, like Florida! It has a green rind and red flesh, depending on the variety, and can either have seeds or be seedless. The watermelon originated in West Africa, but today it is highly cultivated worldwide with nearly 1,000 different varieties. Florida is ranked first nationally in total watermelon production, with the greatest watermelon production in the north to north-central region. This region contains 42% of the state’s watermelon producing acreage. The leading watermelon producing counties, with approximately 118 total farms are Alachua, Gilchrist, Levy, Marion, Union, Lafayette, Madison, and Suwannee counties. Watermelons in north-central Florida are planted as transplants in early spring, February to April, and harvested in May to July.

**Challenges with growing watermelons:**

Watermelons are quite a labor-intensive crop. They thrive in Florida’s hot, humid climate, but what also thrives in this climate are pests and diseases that can greatly impact a crop. Major pests and diseases include aphids, root-knot nematodes, fusarium wilt, downy mildew, and many more. The conditions of that growing season will determine the type of issues a grower may face. One interesting issue seen this season has been lightning strike damage in the field due to increased storms this spring. Lightning can cause sudden death of a few plants in a row, etch a burn line in the fruit rind, and cause the plastic or drip tape to be melted around the affected area. Beside natural environmental occurrences, pests and diseases can negatively impact a crop, so it is important to keep up with your spray schedule.

**How to pick the perfect watermelon:**

You may have been to the store or market and when faced with picking the best watermelon, you are unsure on which one to choose. Here are some quick tips when choosing your next watermelon:

- Pick it up - the watermelon should feel heavy and full of flavor
- Look for a uniform size – the watermelon can be oval or round, but watch out for irregular bumps
- Look for dark and dull watermelons – this is a sign the watermelon is ripe and ready to eat
- Look for a yellow spot – when watermelons grow, they develop a spot where they rest on the ground and when the spot is an orange-yellow color, it is ripe
- Tap the watermelon – a ripe watermelon will have a deep hollow sound
A sod-based rotation incorporates two or more consecutive seasons of a perennial grass into a conventional row-crop rotation. Bahiagrass is commonly used in the sod-based rotation in North-Florida because it is relatively simple to establish, and it grows well in non-optimal soils under low input management. Bahiagrass can be grazed, cut for hay, or harvested for seed as a means of income. Adding livestock can make the system more productive and can improve the use of the Bahia grass. Incorporating bahiagrass as sod rotation is an easy adaption for producers who raise livestock. The use of livestock can improve the productivity of the rotation system and the use of bahiagrass.

Sod-based rotations are associated with reduced climate-related risk, agronomic improvements, and soil improvements. The increased soil organic matter produced in sod-based rotation systems improves the water holding capacity of the soil. Additionally, the infiltration rate and bulk density improvements are seen. Perennial forages have been shown to significantly decrease drainage volumes and nitrate leaching compared to annual crop rotations. Integrating livestock and perennial crops into traditional rotations show lower annual soil erosion rates. Reduced runoff and both nitrogen and water holding capacities in the soil profiles are related to increased residue cover on the soil surface and expansion of plant root zones. Agronomic benefits of sod-based rotation include increased nutrient use efficiency, increased yields, increased root activity, lower pest and disease pressure, and increased biomass. A producer with livestock will likely already have the equipment to use sod-based rotation as a forage option or the fencing necessary to integrate grazing. If a producer does not have access to the required seeding equipment, this will add to the investment cost. An option for producers without livestock is to cut and sell the bahiagrass as hay or work with other producers that have livestock.

Cover crops are an alternative way to manage soil fertility in crops. They have the potential to improve the physical, chemical, and biological properties of the soil. Cover crops protect the soil from degradation caused by heavy rain, wind, or sunlight. Cover cropping is associated with improved nutrient retention and cycling. They can control weeds through competition for light, water, and nutrients. Cover crops have been known to adequately protect crops from damage caused by sandblasting. They also can reduce certain nematode populations while providing habitat to beneficial insects and birds. The sandy or gravelly soils of Florida often have native soil pH ranges that are either too high or too low for optimal vegetable crop production. These pH extremes and their effects on nutrients can be partially offset by the addition of organic matter supplied by cover crop biomass.
To protect the soil from erosion, the cover crop selected needs to both establish quickly and produce a ground cover and an extensive root system. Cover crops can also be a source of additional income when grown for seed or as an energy crop. While it is difficult to achieve all the listed benefits with one crop, producers should select cover crops that offer multiple benefits at once. Cover crops are typically annual grasses, grains, and legumes are considered annual crops that last a single season. However, a few perennial cover crops have been identified that are suitable for Florida. While it is difficult to achieve all of the aforementioned benefits with one crop, producers should select cover crops that contribute multiple benefits at once. Growing multiple crop species can increase the performance and adaptability of a cover cropping system. Selecting multiple cover crops when growing conditions are less favorable for one of the species increases the likelihood of success. Cover crops should be established easily with minimal to no inputs. They should be managed with equipment and labor resources at hand, while not competing with the vegetable crop and perform well during periods of drought or flooding and under various other non-optimal environmental conditions. Avoid cover crops that require additional labor and expense, delay crop planting, and serve as an alternate host to crop insects or diseases.

By Moriah Williams, UF/IFAS CALS Extension Intern

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This photo highlights a four year sod-based rotation system beginning with two years of bahiagrass and ending with two years of a cash crop.
Summer camp will look different for many young people across the country this year, as the coronavirus pandemic has made gatherings around the campfire and other in-person activities too risky. The thousands of young people who annually attend 4-H camps across Florida are no exception. So, instead of packing their bags for a week of songs, smores, and arts and crafts, Florida youth will log on for a virtual camping experience this summer. There will be 45 different ‘4-H Adventures’ to choose from. The camps will be led by agents all over the state of Florida. Well over 1200 participants have registered with close to 40% of them being non-4-H members. Camps include: drones, culinary arts, marine science, life skills, range ready shotgun camp, bee keeping, tailgating, robotics, and even entomology! It’s not too late to sign up! Check out what is available at: http://florida4h.org/programsandevents_/4-h-adventures/

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OUR MISSION OF EDUCATION

UF/IFAS Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses and communities solve problems, develop skills and build a better future. When you use UF/IFAS Extension, you can be confident that experts have reviewed and developed educational programs to ensure that you receive the best information for your needs. UF/IFAS Extension employees and volunteers work hard at improving the quality of life for our neighbors and communities. We provide solutions to everyday problems. We offer a variety of educational programs and information:

Agriculture and Natural Resources: Local farmers and ranchers are provided technical assistance and education to enhance their profitability and sustainability.

Horticulture: Programs are designed to meet the needs of residents by utilizing Florida-Friendly Landscaping principles.

Master Gardener Volunteer Program: Master Gardener volunteers receive training in exchange for service to the community. The Master Gardener volunteers staff the Seed Library and hold plant clinics every Wednesday from 1:00-3:00PM, and provide a gardening presentation on the second Wednesday of each month from 2:00-3:00pm, both at the Live Oak Library. Volunteers also staff a Seed Library and plant clinic at the Branford Library on Tuesdays from 2:00-5:00pm.

Family and Consumer Sciences: Family and Consumer Sciences programs offer you information about health and nutrition, food safety, food preservation, money management, home concerns, relationships, community development and many other topics.

4-H and Youth Development: The UF/IFAS Extension 4-H Youth Development program uses a learn-by-doing approach to help youth gain the knowledge and skills they need to be responsible, productive citizens. This mission is accomplished by creating safe and inclusive learning environments, involving caring adults, and utilizing the expertise and resources of the University of Florida and the nationwide land grant university system.

**Home Monthly Maintenance Planner**

**July**
- Be sure A/C condensation drip tubes are flowing freely.
- Trim shrubs away from heat pump compressor & crawl space vents.
- Cut back tree limbs that are touching roof.
- Flush water heater as needed.
- Open & close cutoff valves to sinks & toilets.

**August**
- Call heating service to schedule a checkup; call propane company to fill tanks.
- Check A/C ducts for leaks. Add programmable thermostat if you don’t have one.
- Replace light bulbs with LED bulbs.
- Add motion sensor controls to exterior lighting.

**September**
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms & replace batteries.
- Caulk around windows & doors.
- Add weather stripping around pull-down & attic access holes; insulate backs of panels.
- Vacuum gas logs & be sure they’re properly seated.
- Open weep holes in storm windows.

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**FREE NEWSLETTER SIGN UP**

UF/IFAS Extension in Suwannee County publishes *The Center Pivot* for free each quarter. You can receive an email reminder for a paperless copy that will link you directly to the website. The electronic format reduces our costs (i.e. Your tax dollars.)

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OR send an email to Amanda.law@ufl.edu or kglasscock@ufl.edu requesting to be added