

CENTER PIVOT

SUWANNEE COUNTY
UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Congratulations to the Suwannee County Farm Bureau 2023 Farm Family of the Year!

A.W. and Mrs. Carolyn Gaylard are the third generation to call their farm home. Today, their family farm is home to six generations of agriculturalists. Mr. AW and Mrs. Carolyn have three children, Donna Hall, Tina Meyer and Bill Gaylard, who have given them five grandchildren and many more great-grandchildren. Of the grandchildren, Jonathan, Jordan, and Andrew work on the farm, in addition to their full time jobs. It is an honor to recognize Mr. and Mrs. Gaylard as the 2023 Farm Family of the Year!



Top right: Erin Jones presents Mr. & Mrs. Gaylard with their statue.

Above: The entire Gaylard family joins A. W. & Carolyn in accepting the award!

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Idalia leaves its mark in Suwannee County



Erin Jones
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On Wednesday, August 30, 2023, Hurricane Idalia made landfall as a category 3 with wind speeds of 125 mph. Its path wreaked disaster in 13 counties, including Suwannee County. Along with high winds, widespread power outages, and home damage, Idalia caused extensive damage to agricultural infrastructure, livestock, crops, and equipment. More than 100 poultry houses have reported extensive damage and others have complete losses. Extensive damage to livestock fencing from falling trees has been experienced, many still have not been removed because farmers don't have equipment large enough to move it off of the fence lines. Many center pivots used for watering have been overturned in the field, and a lack of rain combined with the inability to irrigate created a stressed environment for crops.



Many of crops — such as peanuts, soybeans, and grain corn — were laid over or sustained wind damages. This damage will cause peanuts to lose their pegs, soybeans to drop their pods, and grain corn nearly impossible to harvest. Many of the crop fields that were ready for harvest had to have laborers walk the fields and remove debris prior to placing equipment to begin harvest into the fields. In Suwannee County many producers grow hay to sell to livestock producers have had their facilities blown away or damaged, lowering the quality of the hay that is being stored and limiting storage spaces for future crops.



Suwannee County has the largest number of privately owned pines in the state, but many were wounded and snapped, creating a habitat for disease and pest pressure to move into. These damages have also hindered the ability to harvest pine straw currently on the ground. The impact has been truly felt. Farmers and ranchers are working hard to pick up the pieces and rebuild, some have been faced with the decision of not rebuilding due to the debt load and their age. With the average age of the American Farmer being 57.5, events such as this lead farmers to have to make difficult decisions to move forward. Our office has been boots on the ground working to facilitate immediate needs, long term relief, visiting with congressional leaders, and collecting information to help quantify losses.



In an effort to help with recovery UF/IFAS is collecting damage assessment surveys to record the impact of the storm on our ag community. This information is critical, as the numbers compiled from this survey will be used at the state and federal levels to lobby for short and long-term relief for our ag community. If you experienced a loss on your farm or ranch and have not yet completed the survey, please visit go.ufl.edu/IdaliaAgImpacts. Also be sure to check out USDA programs by visiting farmers.gov.

With more than 45% of Suwannee County jobs relying on agriculture and over \$831 million in direct outputs, this natural disaster is not a matter to take lightly. Agriculture is a strong economic driver here in the county and it is something near and dear to my heart. I hope we can take this time to recognize those who put food on our table simply by Thanking a Farmer!

Developing resiliency in our youth



Katie Jones
4-H Youth
Development Agent
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“Hard times create strong men, strong men create good times, good times create weak men, and weak men create hard times.”

Our community has had a rough month! Hurricane Idalia tore through us with a vengeance and many in our community are still suffering losses of home, property, and income. But despite the devastating losses that we've seen, we've also seen incredible acts of selflessness and goodness. Producers who visited our office often comment on how much worse others around them have been hit.

One of the Life Skills that 4-H targets for development is Resiliency. The dictionary defines this as *"the ability to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties."* Others describe it as mental toughness. Youth who have resilience are better able to face disappointment and learn from failure, cope with loss, and adapt to change. That resiliency builds confidence and capacity for the next time they face obstacles.

The International Youth Foundation identifies seven building blocks for raising resilient kids.

1. **Competence**- ability to handle a situation effectively.
2. **Confidence**- believing in personal abilities.
3. **Connection**- Creating a sense of belonging.
4. **Character**- Having a solid set of morals and values.
5. **Contribution**- Ability to make a difference.
6. **Coping**- Ability to handle stress appropriately.
7. **Control** – Knowledge and ability to affect an outcome.



Here's three tips for how you can help your kids build resiliency.

1. **Allow kids to experience hardship.** We love our children and want them to have everything we may not have had access to growing up. However, predicting and preventing problems for them sets them up to be unable to cope with difficulties as they mature. Whether it is getting cut from an athletic team, getting a lower grade in class than they are capable of earning, or just simply not getting their way, allowing them to experience consequences and hardship will prepare them for adulthood. Overcoming small challenges early in life builds their confidence and capacity to overcome larger challenges later.
2. **Help your child set goals and action steps.** Having clear goals helps a person to feel more in control in hard situations. Achieving goals helps youth feel capable and ready to tackle more tasks. When setting goals, think about the following: *What do you need to do?* (purpose); *How will you measure progress?* (measurement standard); *How will you achieve it?* (action steps); *When do you need to have it done?* (deadline). Breaking down what needs to be done into action steps and giving a deadline can help motivate youth who are uncertain how to begin. Being able to check-off those actions steps as complete adds to their sense of accomplishment and confidence for the next step.
3. **Coach Problem-Solving Strategies.** Hardship can bring strong emotions for youth. When we help them to both process those emotions and plan strategic responses for potential obstacles, we give them power and control over their choices and their outcomes. Allowing them to implement their chosen responses gives them confidence in their own ability to take care of themselves.

Talking to youth about how we as adults handle stress and other problems gives powerful examples of resiliency at work. Have them help you brainstorm potential solutions. By modeling those problem-solving and coping strategies, you are giving them tools to use for their own challenges.

Keeping food pantries safe for the holidays



Katherine Allen
Family & Consumer
Sciences Agent
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As we move towards the holidays, it feels good to donate food to those in need. Although I teach food safety, I have never taught volunteers or staff at a food pantry, nor to those who donate to food pantries. Food pantries play such an important role in supplementing meals for people in my community. Because clientele may be at a higher risk of contracting a foodborne disease, it is vitally important for them to receive safe food.

Put Safe Food on the Shelf

It is challenging to receive food from a variety of places. All food needs to be inspected prior to being accepted. Contaminated or spoiled food can pose a risk to pantry staff/volunteers as well as clientele. Food in dry storage should have areas of 50-70° F. Food needs to be stored 6" off the floor to allow for cleaning and for pest prevention.

Ten Most Unwanted Items

1. Home canned or home prepared food.
2. Spoiled food.
3. Rotten fruits and vegetables or those close to spoiling.
4. Opened packages of food.
5. Food in crushed, dented or rusted containers.
6. Food past their "best by" date.
7. Food past their "Use by" date.
8. Packages of food that are dirty or soiled.
9. Foods not from a retail business.
10. Left-over foods from catered events or restaurants unless the food is donated directly by the food business.



Keep or Toss?

Baby food (including infant formula) is the only food item that cannot be used past the date on the container. There are many factors that affect a food's shelf life, such as the type of food, the packaging, and the time, temperature, and humidity at which it is stored. Consider these factors when determining the quality and safety of the food in your pantry. Always discard if any signs of spoilage appear. If your pantry doesn't have guidelines, check out the FoodKeeper App to maximize the freshness and quality of food items. <https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/foodkeeper-app> The app can also be downloaded on your Android and Apple devices.

Keep Foodborne Illnesses Out of the Kitchen

In addition to properly receiving food, pantries need to keep illness out of the kitchen. If you are a paid staff member or an unpaid volunteer, stay home if you are sick! Pest control, facility cleaning and food storage are all important considerations for keeping food safe. Food pantry staff have key roles, not just in food procurement and distribution, but also in practicing and communicating proper food handling practices to the volunteers to ensure safe food for the clientele. If you would like training or more information on food safety, please contact me at 386-362-2771.

JOIN US FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit www.suwanneecountyextension.org for details and registration links.

OCTOBER 2023

- 11 MGV Workday, 8:30-11:30 am
- 12 MGV Alumni Meeting, 9 am
- 12 Homebuyers Workshop #1, 5-9 pm
- 17 Little Sprouts 4-H Meeting, 4 pm
- 18 MGV Workday, 8:30-11:30 am
- 19 Chick Chain Show
- 19 Homebuyers Workshop #2, 5-9 pm
- 25 MGV Workday, 8:30-11:30 am
- 25-26 Farm Bureau State Meeting
- 26 Youth Disc Golf Begins, 3:15 pm
- 28 Garden Club Fall Bazaar, 8:30 am
- 28 Candy Carnival/4-H Booth, 6-9 pm

NOVEMBER 2023

- 1 MGV Workday, 8:30-11:30 am
- 3 MGV Field Trip
- 7 Homebuyers Workshop #1, 5-9 pm
- 8 MGV Field Trip to Kanapaha
- 9 MGV Alumni Meeting, 9 am
- 14 Homebuyers Workshop #2, 5-9 pm
- 15 MGV Graduation, 11:30 am
- 17 **Farm City Week - Watch for Details and join us as we Thank A Farmer!**
- 22 MGV Workday, 8:30-11:30 am
- 29 MGV Workday, 8:30-11:30 am

DECEMBER 2023

- 4 Water Bath Canning Class, 9 am-noon
- 6 MGV Workday, 8:30-11:30 am
- 11 4-H Holiday Bake-Off, 6pm
- 13 MGV Workday, 8:30-11:30 am
- 14 MGV Alumni Holiday Luncheon, 11:30 am
- 15 Office Holiday Party
- 20 MGV Workday, 8:30-11:30 am
- 25 Office Closed for Christmas
- 26 Office Closed for Christmas



SUWANNEE YOUTH DISC GOLF CLUB

Thursdays
3:15pm-5:15pm
September - May

Meet at
Heritage Park
Disc Golf Course



Wednesdays,
1-3 pm

Suwannee River Regional
Library in Live Oak

Plant & Garden Q&A

Bring your questions and samples
for Master Gardener Volunteers

Merry
Christmas



JOIN US FOR A
Seasonal Canning Class

A water bath canning class
with holiday flavors in mind!
Make a gift for yourself or
someone special this holiday
season.
COST: \$15

CLASSES WILL BE
HELD DECEMBER 4TH,
2023 IN LAKE CITY
REGISTER @
<https://extseasonalcanning.eventbrite.com>

LOOKING AHEAD



PEANUT BUTTER Challenge

Our county
is competing
in the Peanut
Butter
Challenge
in October!

Bring
unopened
peanut butter
jars to our
office and
help us feed
our hungry
neighbors.



Spring Veggie Gardening

Hands-on workshop on Fridays, 9:00 to 11:00 am,
presented by the UF/IFAS Extension & Master
Gardener Volunteers of Suwannee County

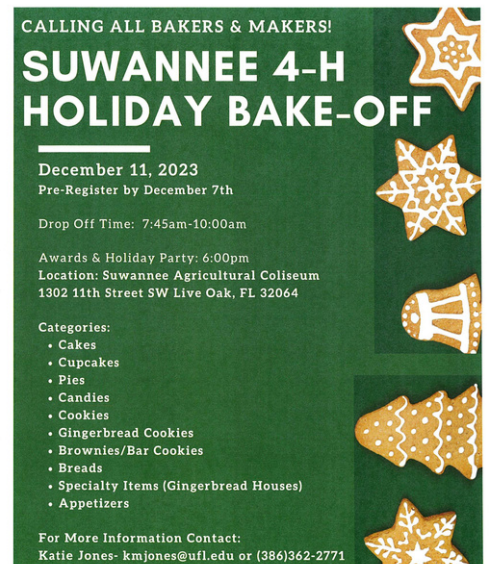
- **January 12:** Seed Starting
- **January 19:** Transplants, Garden Layout, Common Soil Problems and Soil Testing
- **February 9:** Basic Hydroponic Systems
- **February 16:** Low-Volume Irrigation, Composting, Fertilizing

\$25 per person. For more information and registration visit
www.suwanneecountyextension.org or call Michelle at 386-362-2771

Classes held at Suwannee
County Extension Greenhouse,
1302 11th St. SW, Live Oak
An equal opportunity institution

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
Suwannee County

FLORIDA
MASTER
GARDENER
VOLUNTEERS



CALLING ALL BAKERS & MAKERS!

SUWANNEE 4-H HOLIDAY BAKE-OFF

December 11, 2023
Pre-Register by December 7th

Drop Off Time: 7:45am-10:00am

Awards & Holiday Party: 6:00pm
Location: Suwannee Agricultural Coliseum
1302 11th Street SW Live Oak, FL 32064

Categories:

- Cakes
- Cupcakes
- Pies
- Candies
- Cookies
- Gingerbread Cookies
- Brownies/Bar Cookies
- Breads
- Specialty Items (Gingerbread Houses)
- Appetizers

For More Information Contact:
Katie Jones- kmjones@ufl.edu or (386)362-2771

Fall prevention for safety



Kim Griffin
Family & Consumer
Sciences Agent
griffink@ufl.edu

Fall prevention is an important and relevant topic for people of all ages, but especially for those 65 years of age and older. Understanding the root cause of falls and how to prevent them is essential to maintaining your safety and well-being.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that more than one out of four older adults suffer a fall every year. Most hip fractures are caused by falling, and at least three million older adults are seen in the emergency room for injuries related to falls annually. Below you will find some of the most common causes of falls and tips to help you stay on your feet and stand tall.

People of all ages can benefit from these strategies by making conscious efforts to minimize risk factors and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Most falls are preventable, but it starts with awareness. Take the initiative to protect yourself and your loved ones from unnecessary falls and remember that fall prevention is a lifelong commitment to your overall well-being.

COMMON CAUSES OF FALLS:

Weakness in your lower body.

Difficulties with walking and balance.

Use of medications that affect your balance.

Problems with your vision and low lighting.

Foot pain and improper footwear.

Broken or uneven steps in the home.

Throw rugs or clutter that can cause tripping.

Fear of falling

FALL PREVENTION STRATEGIES:

Do exercises that make your legs stronger such as lunges, and heel raises.

Do exercises that improve your balance such as side stepping, balancing on one leg, and Tai Chi.

Have your eyes checked every year and update your glasses if needed.

Get rid of things that cause tripping in the home.

Add grab bars inside and outside of your tub or shower.

Make sure your home has lots of lighting.

Review your medications with your doctor to see if any may cause dizziness or sleepiness.

Deciding what to do with damaged trees

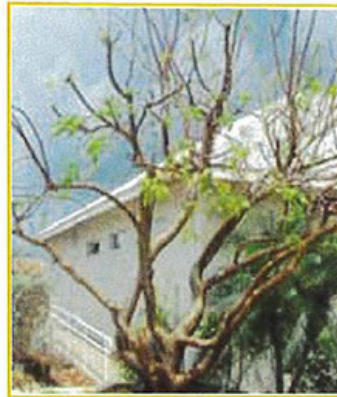


Carolyn Saft
Environmental
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Even after experiencing high winds, many trees can be restored. However, restore only trees that have major limbs, trunk and roots intact. To be a good candidate for restoration a tree should not have cracks in major limbs or the trunk, decayed wood, or bark inclusions. Roots should not be exposed or lifted out of the soil. Also, make sure the branch and trunk structure were good prior to the storm. If you have questions please contact me for more information.

The canopy is defoliated

- Trees that lose their leaves in a hurricane usually are not dead.
- Wait. New foliage may be produced by the following spring.
- Trees and palms flooded with salt water often lose leaves. Irrigate to wash salts through the soil.



Note: some species may not recover.

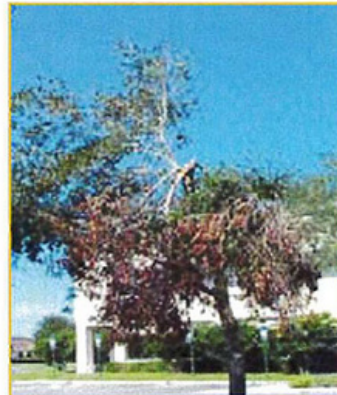


Small branches are broken or dead

- Trees with small broken branches (less than 4 inches diameter) can easily be pruned and have a good chance of recovering.

Some major limbs are broken in decay resistant species

- Live oak is one of the many species that are good at resisting decay. Such species can be restored even if there is some major branch breakage.
- Keep in mind that younger trees less than 10 inches in diameter are easier to restore than older trees.



Most of the canopy is damaged in decay resistant species

- Trees that resist decay well can lose much of their canopy and still recover after a storm.
- Even with $\frac{3}{4}$ of their small branches (less than 4 inches diameter) broken or removed by a hurricane, many decay resistant trees can be restored.

Leaning or fallen trees are small

- Only trees that were recently planted or have a trunk diameter smaller than 4 inches should be stood back up or replanted.
- If you are considering standing up large trees, seek professional advice.



How to re-establish a small tree

1. Keep roots moist.
2. Excavate the hole to accommodate roots.
3. Cut jagged or torn roots.
4. Pull tree up as straight as possible.
5. Back fill with site soil.
6. Water as if the tree were recently planted: 3 gallons per inch of trunk diameter, 3 times a week.
7. Stake the tree. Adjust stakes regularly and remove when tree is stable.

Restoration pruning after the storm



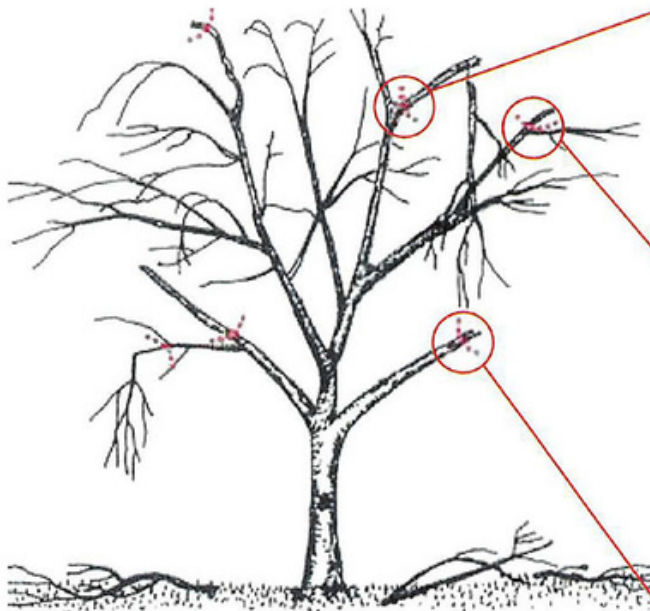
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Clean the Canopy

When hiring a certified arborist to restore your trees after a hurricane, know what to expect. A good restoration program begins with cleaning and takes more than one visit to the tree. Immediately after the storm, the canopy should be cleaned by removing hazards such as large dead branches and broken limbs. Cleaning also includes making smooth pruning cuts behind jagged branch tips to allow healthy development of new growth. Very little live wood should be removed because the tree is stressed, and needs to use energy stored in the limbs to recover.

Pruning plan

- Before pruning, make sure the tree is restorable.
- Determine whether the tree is personal or municipal property to avoid unnecessary expenses.
- Look up! Use binoculars to check for broken branches in the upper canopy, and look for cracks along limbs.
- Remove broken, hanging limbs first.
- Make clean cuts behind jagged tips of broken branches.
- Do not remove live wood unless the limb is cracked and may hit a person or property.
- Use a reduction cut as a first choice; if there is not a lateral branch, use a heading cut.



Cleaning the canopy: The red lines indicate where to make pruning cuts on this tree.

During restoration, water the tree in dry periods to alleviate stress.
In most cases, fertilization is not necessary.

Make good pruning cuts

Pruning a limb is a three-step process.

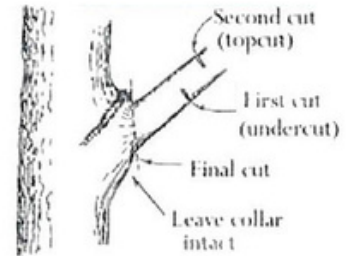
Step 1: Make an undercut about 12 inches from the trunk.

Step 2: Make a topcut farther out on the limb.

Step 3: Remove the stub with the final cut, being careful not to cut flush against the trunk or branch. Leave the collar intact.

What is the collar?

The collar, labeled in the diagram, is the swollen area at the base of the branch where it joins the trunk. The tissue is rich in energy reserves and chemicals that hinder the spread of decay. Good pruning cuts avoid cutting into the collar.



Removal cut

After a hurricane this type of cut is used to remove broken, cracked, and hanging limbs. A removal cut prunes a branch back to the trunk or parent branch. Remove hanging limbs first so that branches do not fall and cause injury. Use caution when removing broken limbs to avoid injuring other branches or the trunk.



Reduction cut

This type of cut is used for making clean cuts behind jagged tips of broken branches. A reduction cut shortens the length of a stem by pruning back to a smaller limb, called a lateral branch. The lateral should be at least 1/3 the diameter of the pruned branch, as shown in the picture. Reduction cuts are a better option than heading cuts.



Heading cut

Although not usually recommended for routine pruning, heading cuts are sometimes appropriate on damaged trees if removing the entire limb would remove too much live wood. The food stored in live limbs helps the tree to sprout and produce new leaves. A heading cut is made at a node along the stem, leaving a stub.

Excerpts from Gilman, E. et al. (Original Publication July 2006). Assessing Damage and Restoring Trees After a Hurricane (ENH1036). University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences EDIS. Retrieved September 29, 2023 from <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP291>.

Tips to Make Thanksgiving Cooking Go Smoothly

Beforehand:

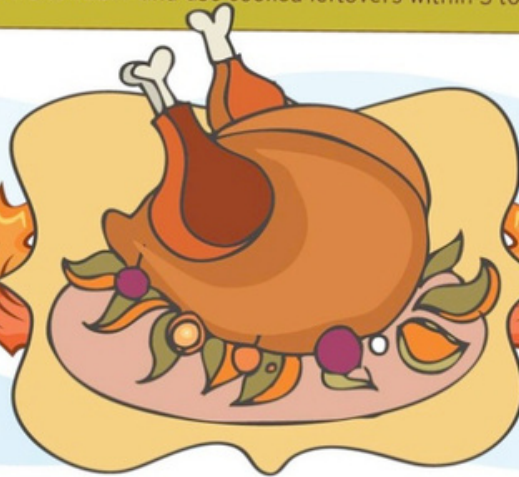
- Be sure to wash your hands!
- Have an oven-safe thermometer.
- Keep fresh turkeys in the fridge for only one or **two days**.
- Never thaw a frozen turkey on the kitchen counter at room temperature. Thaw it in the refrigerator or use a constantly refreshed cold water bath.

Meal Preparation:

- Cook stuffing separately from the turkey.
- The inside temperature of the turkey must reach **165°F**. Check temp in thickest part of breast and innermost part of the thigh and wing.
- Minimize the handling of foods with bare hands. Instead, use utensils.
- Keep hot foods at 140°F or warmer, and keep cold foods at **40°F or colder**.

Leftovers:

- Be sure to sanitize the area where the turkey was prepared.
- Refrigerate dishes prepared with meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, dairy products, cooked rice, and vegetables within **two hours** of purchasing or cooking, and within **one hour during extreme heat**, such as days when it is 90°F.
- Reheat leftovers to 165°F and use cooked leftovers within 3 to 4 days.



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 with 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 (MGV) Program:** MGVs receive training in exchange for service to the community. They assist with the Seed Library and hold plant clinics every Wednesday from 1-3 pm both at the Live Oak Library. Volunteers also staff a Seed Library and plant clinic at the Branford Library on Tuesdays from 2-5 pm.
- **Family and Consumer Sciences:** These programs offer 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:** 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.

MONTHLY MAINTENANCE PLANNER

OCTOBER

- Add new sweeps to bottoms of exterior doors
- Reverse your ceiling fans to blow up
- Clean gutters and downspouts
- Wrap water heater with insulating blanket
- Trim and prune your trees and hedges
- Have your HVAC system serviced and ready for winter
- Clean and winterize your swimming pool
- Fix any cracks in the driveway

NOVEMBER

- Check roof for curled or missing shingles or leaks
- Be sure well cover is tightly sealed to prevent pipes from freezing
- Drain and winterize irrigation system
- Seal holes in foundation, especially spots around pipes and wires where rodents might enter
- Give your dryer vents a thorough cleaning
- Pressure wash your home's exterior in preparation for holiday entertaining

DECEMBER

- Create a fire escape plan and practice it
- Be sure fire extinguishers and carbon monoxide detectors are working
- Use weather stripping or caulk to seal windows and doors to keep cold air from getting in
- Clean and store patio and lawn furniture
- If you have a fireplace, inspect for damage and have it cleaned if necessary
- Check holiday drop cords for wear and tear

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Carolyn Saft

County Extension
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- **Katie Jones**, 4-H/Youth Development
- **Carolyn Saft**, Environmental Horticulture

Administrative Support

- Michelle Drummond
- Linda Thomason
- Sandra Wainwright

NOW HIRING!

We have an opening for a **Staff Assistant** for the Family & Consumer Sciences & Agriculture agents. Please visit our website for the link with more information and application.

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