

# Center Pivot

*Helping Suwannee County Grow*

## *What's Inside*

Volume 1 Issue 4

Oct.-Dec. 2008

Important Dates	2-3
Walking/Glucose Monitors	4
Handwashing/Snacks/Saving \$	5
Pasture grasses	6
Methane	7
4-H News and Events	8
Freeze Protection	9
Fall Fruit	10
Right Plant/Right Place	11
To be Continued .....	12-13
HCE Corner	14
Congrats Page	15

UF/IFAS Suwannee Co. Extension

1302 11th St. SW

Live Oak, FL 32064

PH: 386/362-2771

FAX: 386/364-1698

[suwannee.ifas.ufl.edu](http://suwannee.ifas.ufl.edu)

## **EXTENSION DIRECTOR NOTES**

***Katherine Allen***

Happy Autumn!

Can you smell fall in the air yet? Sometimes in Florida it takes a little longer, but you should begin feeling cooler air in the mornings and less humidity during the days.

The Extension office picks up on local issues, one of which was asked about during the MSBU meeting in September regarding methane capturing at the landfill. Check out page 7 for additional information on using methane from dairy farms to produce energy.

In addition to timely topics, our vegetable gardening classes were extremely popular and a direct result of requests and comments from YOU! Thanks for helping to ensure our programming is relevant to your life.

We also had factsheets available to explain to the public about the issues on which they were voting. It was just one more example of how Extension is a resource for you in your community.

The news has been talking a lot about irradiation lately. If you'd like more information, please stop by or call the office. There is lots going on here, so don't forget to check the calendar pages as well as the Suwannee Democrat for upcoming events.

Before you know it, Spring will be here, along with the Suwannee County Fair, which is scheduled for March 27 through April 4, 2009. We are looking forward to having some additional educational activities. We hope you will join us at this Blue Ribbon award winning fair!

If you haven't tried our website, we have posted the newsletter, so you can access it even if you misplaced your hard copy!

<http://Suwannee.ifas.ufl.edu>

# Extension Calendar

→ DON'T FORGET!

## October 2008

- 9 **Master Gardener Alumni Meeting**, Extension office, 9-11:30 am.
- 9 **Pasture Poultry as Alternative Livestock**, FREE! In Lake City, with the Small Farm Working Group, 5:30-8 pm, call Elena Toro (386) 362-2771.
- 10 **4-H Farm Judging Contest**, Mayo, contact Brian for more info.
- 11 **Suwannee County Farm Field Day**, FREE! At J & J Beefmaster Farm in Live Oak, 9am-4pm, call Joe Jordan at (386) 842-1116 or (386) 842-2065 to register.
- 13 **4-H County Council**, 6pm, Suwannee County Extension Office
- 13 4-H exhibit entry forms due to North Florida Fair.
- 14-16 **Sunbelt Ag Expo**, Moultrie, Georgia. Go to <http://sunbeltexpo.com>
- 21 **Building Your Financial Future** 1-5 pm Suwannee County Extension Office \$20/couple, pre-register @ 362-2771 by Oct. 17.
- 23 **Suwannee River Partnership Breakfast Meeting** 7:45 am—Dixie Grill.
- 25 **Fall Festival** at the Coliseum complex, free, kid events, plant sale, etc.
- 27-31 **HCE State Conference** in Crystal River at the Plantation Inn.
- 31-Nov. 1 **Exploring Alternatives for Milk Production and Processing in Florida.** Contact Mary Sowerby by Oct. 28, 2008 at 386/362-2771.
- 31– Nov. 8 **Columbia County Fair**– “Go Green” Landscaping Demonstrations.

### It's Not Too Late!

If you don't fill out an income tax form and did not apply for the Tax Rebate earlier this year you can still turn in the form and receive at least \$300 if you file by October 15th. Need forms or help filing? Call (386) 362-2771 Cathy Rogers, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

Save the date :  
2009  
SUWANNEE CO. FAIR and  
SVLSS  
March 25–April 4

# Extension Calendar



→ DON'T FORGET!

## November 2008

- 3 **Medicare Updates**, FREE! 9:30am in the Extension Conference Room.
- 5, 12, & 13 **SHIP class**, provides down payment assistance for homebuyers meeting income requirements. Must attend all three classes to become eligible. 6-8pm each evening. Must pre-register 386-362-2771, FREE!
- 6 **Gardening Series**, Whistlestop Café, Wellborn, FREE!, 10am– 12pm.
- 6 **Suwannee Valley Agricultural Workshops**, \$25, at North Florida Research and Education Center, call Karen Hancock 362-1725 x101 to pre-register.
- 6-16 **North Florida Fair**, Tallahassee <http://www.northfloridafair.com/>
- 8-9 **Fall Animal Festival**, FREE! Suwannee Co. Fairgrounds.
- 10 **4-H County Council**, 6pm, Suwannee County Extension Office.
- 11 **Office Closed**, Veteran's Day.
- 13 **Master Gardener Alumni Meeting**, Extension office, 9-11:30am.
- 13 **How to Prevent the Turkey Flu: Food Safety to Keep Family Safe**, Advent Christian Village, 10am-11am, FREE.
- 15 **4-H Livestock Judging Contest**, North Florida Fair, Tallahassee.
- 18 **Cold Protection & How to Plant Trees and Shrubs**, Advent Christian Village Garden Club.
- 19 **National Restaurant Association's SERVSAFE Food Manager Certification** course and exam. Class starts at 8:30am. Class, exam and book \$140. Must pre-register, call toll-free 1-888-232-8723. Certification is good for 5 years. Bring photo id and bag lunch. <http://foodsafety.ifas.ufl.edu>
- 20 **Farm-City Week**, call Farm Bureau for more information.
- 21-22 **Suwannee Co. Youth Heifer and Prospect Steer Show**. For more info contact Janet Sampson 386/330-2302.

## December 2008

- 6 **Christmas on the Square**, Downtown Live Oak.
- 8 **4-H Holiday Bake-off**, 6pm, Extension office.
- 8 **4-H County Council**, Extension office, 6pm.
- 9 **FFA Environmental State Contest**—NFREC Suwannee.
- 11 **Master Gardener Alumni meeting** 9-11:30am, Extension office.
- 13 **Initial Steer weigh-in**, 8am-12 noon, Suwannee County Fairgrounds.
- 25-26 **Office Closed**

# Benefits of Walking

**Cathy Rogers, Family & Consumer Sciences/4-H & Youth Development Agent**

Do you need some reasons to walk? The American Heart Association lists the following as some of the benefits of walking for 30 minutes most days of the week:

- Reduces the risk of coronary heart disease
- Improves blood pressure and blood sugar levels

- Lowers the risk of obesity
- Enhances mental well-being
- Decreases depression
- Reduces the risk of osteoporosis
- Reduces the risk of breast and colon cancer
- Reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes



## Blood Pressure and Blood Glucose Monitors

So many people in this country have been

diagnosed with diabetes (24 million) and high blood pressure (73 million) that they are of major concern to the medical and insurance industries. Since complications from these conditions can cost plenty, to both patients and insurance companies, having reliable and affordable self-monitoring kits is important.

The September 2008 edition of Consumer Reports evaluated the accuracy, cost, and ease of use, among other things, in rating self-testing kits for blood pressure and blood glucose. Their findings show the “Best Buy” to be Walmart’s ReliOn brand for both types of products. The top-scoring blood glucose monitor was the OneTouch UltraMini which outperformed the others in consistency but all of the top four “Quick Pick” models including Ascensia

Contour, Accu-Chek Compact Plus and ReliOn, were accurate, easy to use, and quick (5 seconds or less). The ReliOn was judged to be a “Best Buy” due to the price of the monitor and the strips it uses.

When it comes to blood pressure monitors the Omron Women’s Advanced Elite 7300W model came in just ahead of the other “Quick Picks” which also included the CVS by Microlife Deluxe Advanced 344534, Omron HEM-711AC, and the ReliOn HEM-741CREL (Walmart). All of these models were accurate and took only about 30 seconds. They also alert users to irregular heartbeat. They differed in the range of cuff sizes and amount of memory for storing blood pressure data. Even though the Omron is marketed to women it can be used for men.



For all comparisons and costs refer to the September 2008 issue of Consumer Reports. Also check your insurance information to see which brands are covered by them. Access to independent test results such as those of Consumer Reports should help those with diabetes and high blood pressure to get these conditions under control and lead more normal lives with fewer complications.

Take Charge of Your Diabetes (TCYD) is an in-depth Extension-based, collaborative educational program targeted to adults with type 2 diabetes. The program is designed to improve blood glucose control and reduce long-term health risks of persons with diabetes by providing the information and motivation they need to adopt positive behavior changes. For more information, call Cathy Rogers 362-2771.

# Family Nutrition Program

**Bonnie Box, Program Assistant-Family Nutrition Program**

## Handwashing 101

### Why?

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.



### When?

- Before preparing or eating food
- After going to the bathroom
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has gone to the bathroom
- Before and after tending to someone who is sick
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After handling an animal or animal waste
- After handling garbage

### How?

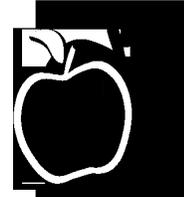
- Wet your hands and apply soap.
- Rub hands together vigorously to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue for 20 seconds. Time this yourself by singing the "happy birthday" song twice.
- Dry hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet and open the bathroom door to leave.
- Using alcohol-based wipes or gel are only ok if no soap and water are available.

For more information go to [www.itsasnap.org](http://www.itsasnap.org)

## Snack Foods by the Ounce

Let's compare the calories per ounce of some common snack foods:

Celery	4
Melon	9
Carrots	11
Apple	14
Grapes	19
Baked Potato	26

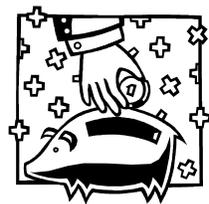


Most cookies, pretzels, crackers, bars, and chips are between 140-160 calories per ounce, even if they are baked, fat-free, or whole grain. It is easy to see that fruits and veggies are a much slimmer way to snack!

## Saving \$ on Food

A recent survey of 200 food and nutrition professionals in the U.S. revealed the following as the top 5 things they do to save money on food:

- Eat out less often
- Stock up on sale items
- Buy less processed food
- Clip coupons
- Shop at discount stores



For more information, contact Bonnie Box, Family Nutrition Program Assistant, Suwannee Co. Extension Office at (386) 362-2771.

# 2008 Fall Forage Update

**Elena Toro, Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent**

This is annually updated information on variety recommendations for cool season forages that have been adequately tested under Florida growing conditions.

Cool-season forages can supply excellent grazing for livestock. They are usually higher in total digestible nutrients and protein than our summer perennial grasses. Planting and growing these forage crops can involve considerable expense and is somewhat risky because rainfall is often unpredictable during the fall months. Winter forages may be grazed to supplement frosted perennial grass pastures or low quality hay, or harvested as a high quality hay or silage crop. Winter forages cannot be grown everywhere in the state and on every soil type. Some areas and some soils are too dry during the cool season to successfully grow plants. Therefore, the type of winter forage and the site where it is grown should be carefully selected.



## Recommended Cultivars (Varieties)

### Cool Season Grasses

**Rye** – Rye is the small grain most widely used for winter grazing. Rye is more cold tolerant than oats and generally produces more forage than either oats or wheat. If rye is planted very early in the season, it is often hurt by various seedling diseases. It is often best to wait until cool weather prevails. Normally rye developed from northern states will produce little forage in late fall or early winter and will usually be severely damaged by leaf rust; therefore, plant only varieties recommended for the Southeastern U. S. **Recommended varieties:** FL 401 (for early grazing or for use in blends), AGS 104, Wrens 96, Wrens Abruzzi, Bates, Oklon, Pennington Wintergrazer 70, and Early Graze.

**Oat** – Oat is very palatable, but is susceptible to freeze injury. Oat may be planted and grazed earlier than rye. Horizon 474, Horizon 270, and Horizon 201 are relatively new varieties that have improved crown rust resistance, winter hardiness, and good grain and forage production. In some years, some varieties, like NK-Coker 227, may be injured by Barley Yellow Dwarf Virus (BYDV). **Recommended varieties:** Horizon 270, Horizon 201, Horizon 321, Horizon 474, SS76-40, TAMO 406, and NK-Coker 227.

**Wheat** – Wheat is similar to oat in forage yield and palatability. Wheat is less susceptible to freeze injury than oat. Wheat should not be planted for grazing before October 15 and precaution to plant only Hessian-fly-resistant varieties for grazing should be taken.

**Recommended varieties:** AGS 2000, USG 3592, and Pioneer 26R61

**Ryegrass** – Ryegrass is a valuable winter and spring grazing crop for use on flatwoods soils or the heavier sandy loam soils in northwest Florida. Ryegrass may be seeded alone or with a small grain on a prepared seedbed or overseeded onto permanent grass pastures. Seeding ryegrass with a small grain crop lengthens the grazing season.

**Recommended varieties:** Jumbo, Ed, Big Boss, Attain, Oregro DH3, Verdure, Diamond T, Flying A, and Bulldog. These varieties were selected based on their recent three-year, multi-location performance. Other ryegrass varieties, such as Prine, Florlina, Surrey II, Jackson, Big Daddy, TAM 90, Passeral Plus, Brigadier, Fantastic, Graze-N-Gro, King, Beefbuilder III have also performed well in regional trials. (Other new varieties may be suitable but have not been adequately tested in Florida.)

(Continued on page 13)

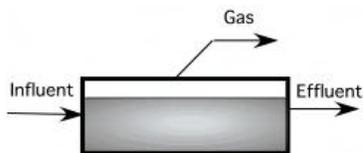
# Manure to Methane to Renewable Energy

**Dr. Mary Sowerby, Regional Specialized Extension Agent - Dairy**

Cow manure can be considered deep, smelly stuff and a potential environmental threat or a renewable energy source, fertilizer, soil amendment (compost) and potting soil. With energy (think gas and diesel) prices playing havoc on nearly everyone's budget and global warming a major concern, conversion of manure to methane to electricity is becoming an increasingly popular idea and reality.

There are four primary methods used to convert manure to methane. All involve anaerobic microbes (those which live without free oxygen) which break larger chain organic compounds into simple methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) gas molecules. By far the simplest method of essentially capturing lost resources is to place a **plastic cover over farm lagoons** (holding ponds for water used to clean milking parlors and barns with 0.5 to 3% solids). Microbes convert lagoons into vast fermentation tanks that naturally give off methane. Trapped methane gas is then collected from beneath the cover and piped away for use.

There are three other (alas more costly) methods of converting manure to methane which involve the use of anaerobic digesters. A **complete mix digester** is an engineered tank, above or below ground, which treats manure slurry of 3 to 10 % solids. It is compatible with combinations of scraped and flushed manure and requires a holding time of about 15 days, less than half that needed in a lagoon. Therefore it requires less volume than a lagoon, but it generally must be heated.

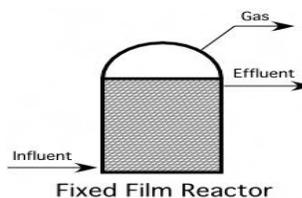


Plug Flow Reactor

A **plug flow digester** is another engineered, heated tank which treats scraped dairy manure of between 11 to 13 percent total

solids. Treatment time is again about 15 days.

**Fixed film digesters** work particularly well in Florida because most dairies use flush water to clean their barns and Florida stays warm most of the year, so no added heat is necessary. First, solids are screened out of flushed barn water, which can then be used for compost or "cowpeat". The remaining liquid, with soluble organic compounds, is put through the digester, a capped tank filled with plastic beads or other media on which bacteria form a biofilm (hence the term "fixed film"). In two to three days the bacteria have typically completed their job of methane conversion and the resulting gas is ready for use.



Fixed Film Reactor

Recovered biogas from these systems is 60 to 80 percent methane. Methane can be used as fuel for a boiler, space heater, refrigeration equipment or directly burned as a cooking and lighting fuel. With the addition of an engine-generator set, methane can be converted to electricity for on-farm use or sale to the electrical grid.

Manure to methane to electricity sounds like a win-win solution for the problems of odor and nutrient reduction into ground and surface waters. So why does not every livestock producer have a methane digester and engine-generator set to produce electricity for manure? Cost! Without cost share opportunities or grants the expense is more than most livestock producers can justify. However, the technology is available and proven, so with a financial boost and simplified regulations, your home electricity may someday be supplied by farm-green energy.

# Welcome to the 2008-2009 4-H Year!!!

**Brian Estevez, 4-H and Youth Development Agent**



Hello Suwannee County!!! We are looking forward to an exciting new year here in the 4-H office. This is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Florida 4-H. There will be many exciting opportunities to help celebrate this special occasion. Here in Suwannee County we finished up an exciting summer of day camps. We had over 190 young people attend these camps! We will be planning more of these opportunities in the near future. The end of the year 4-H banquet had to be postponed due to Tropical Storm Fay, but was a huge suc-



cess. Thank you again to all of the volunteers that put in countless hours to make it such a great way to recognize the accomplishments of Suwannee County youth.

- September 1, 2008 starts the new 4-H year. Please remember that to show an animal in the Suwannee County Fair, youth need to be enrolled in 4-H by November 1, 2008. You can pick up enrollment forms from our 4-H club leaders or at the UF/IFAS Suwannee County Extension Office at 1302 11th Street SW, next to the coliseum.
- The popular Holiday Bake-off has been scheduled for Monday, December 8, 2008. Start thinking now about all of the yummy treats that you can create for this special 4-H event.
- All Suwannee County 4-H members participating in the steer show will need to bring their animals to the Suwannee County Agricultural Complex and Fairgrounds for the initial weigh-in and tagging on the preliminary date of Saturday, December 13 from 8am until noon.

Our 4-H clubs have gotten up and running and are really doing a great job creating educational opportunities for the youth of Suwannee County. Did you know that the Pony Express 4-H club has a horse show on the third Saturday of the month between July and December? Did you know that the Leona 4-H club has been active since 1936? Did you know that the Suwannee County 4-H Council will be attending a retreat to learn leadership skills and prepare for the coming year? These are just three of the many activities that are going on in Suwannee County 4-H. Please join us as we continue to educate the youth of Suwannee County!!!

## Suwannee County 4-H Clubs

Branford	Pony Express
Farm Fresh	RoboDogs
Leona	Sharp Shooters
Live Oak Learners	Suwannee Explorers
McAlpin	County Council

**If your child is interested in any 4-H activity**, please contact the 4-H office, located in the Suwannee County UF/IFAS Extension office at **386-362-2771** located next to the coliseum in Live Oak.

# Protecting Crops from Freezes

**Bob Hochmuth, Multi-County Agent/Vegetable & Small Farms, NFRC-Suwannee Valley**

Cool temperatures of late fall and winter will be here before we know it. It is not unusual to have a first frost in late October or early November.



Damage from early frosts in the fall, or later than normal frosts in the spring, can be protected against. Protecting crops from frosts and freezes has been a continual challenge for vegetable growers in northern Florida. Several options are available including sprinkler irrigation, soil banking, and crop covers. Each method has application in certain areas for certain crops.

Young crops can be protected from frost by covering with soil. This is used commonly for early spring potatoes which have large energy reserves in the seed piece to grow out from the soil covering. Other crops would need to be physically uncovered. Early spring sweet corn or beans can be planted in a small trench in which the seedlings are protected from frost by the warm surrounding soil mass.

Sprinkler irrigation protects crops from freezing by providing extra “heat” to the plant. As water freezes, it gives up heat to warm the leaves. As long as water is continually applied in ample quantity, the plant will be protected. Sprinkler irrigation is less effective under windy conditions. Irrigation systems must be able to supply large quantities of water and must not be prone to breakdown.

Problems with sprinkler irrigation from frost protection include: large water requirements, expensive capital outlay, possible ice and water damage to the crop, soil erosion, and increased risk of plant disease.

Row covers (crop covers) also can be used for frost and freeze protection. Depending on the thickness of the cover, protection to 25°F is possible. Nonwoven materials of 0.5 oz per square yard will protect to about 30°F while materials in the 1.5 to 2.0 oz range will protect to about 25°F. Wire hoops can also be used over each row or bed to protect the crop from the physical abrasion of the row cover. Wire hoops under the cover also maximize the protection from cold damage by creating a large air space under the cover. A winter garden or small commercial acreage of cool season crops like lettuces, greens, broccoli, and cold hardy herbs like parsley or dill can be grown all winter by using row covers for protection down to about 25°F. The covers can be taken on and off as needed.

Row covers are expensive to purchase but can be used for several seasons. Row covers do not have the problems associated with water as in sprinkler protection. Fruits and plants do not suffer water and ice damage and workers can enter the field readily the morning after a freeze event. Large supplies are available from commercial sources; however, small supplies can be found locally or can be ordered from popular seed catalogs.

# Growing Fruit for Local Markets

**Linda Landrum, Regional Specialized Marketing Agent**

Farmers markets, produce stands and specialty food stores are springing up all over the Suwannee Valley providing a great opportunity for small producers to cash in on locally grown fruit crops. The demand is there but not the product so now's the time to get started! Many fruits are suited to small scale production and are fairly sustainable over time. With careful planning, you can have a steady stream of crops available for a good portion of the year.

As with all smaller farming operations, select crops which are harvested and sold at different times to even out monthly cash flow allowing you to generate income on a monthly basis (or if possible, at least quarterly) to assure farm survival. Times are tough with rising production costs such as energy, fertilizer, and labor to name a few, so you need to make enough money to pay monthly bills.

Some crops which come to mind are blueberries, blackberries, cold tolerant citrus, figs, pears, persimmon, and muscadine grapes. None are totally maintenance free but most can be grown successfully with minimal care. Now that I have your mouth watering, let's talk about the pros and cons of those above. For more detailed production information, contact the Extension office or go online at [http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/TOPIC\\_Fruit\\_and\\_Nuts](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/TOPIC_Fruit_and_Nuts) for UF/IFAS bulletins on specific crops.



Blueberries are shallow rooted, large shrubs preferring a well drained, acid soil. A new production system using pine bark culture expands areas on your farm where they can be grown. Many new cultivars produce large, incredibly sweet fruit starting in late spring. They are fairly pest-free, require some pruning once they become woody and are very sensitive

to nitrate fertilizers. Rabbiteye are less cold sensitive when flowering whereas highbush require cold protection during bloom to set a good crop.



Blackberries are easy to grow and widely adapted. Trailing and upright forms are available but both are very spiny and require heavy pruning at the end of the season which can be done mechanically. Flowering and fruiting (May and June) occur over a long time so cold damage is minimal. This shallow rooted plant produces suckers often several feet away from the mother plant which have to be removed to keep the planting tidy. The fruit is very perishable making it an excellent for local sales.

Cold tolerant citrus are a local favorite with consumers producing good yields if a warm, sunny, well-drained location is chosen. Satsuma, calamondin, kumquat and lemons are best but must be grafted on cold resistant rootstocks such as trifoliolate or 'Flying Dragon'. Mostly pest free, these drought tolerant plants require little pruning except for root stock sprout removal. They have a long harvest window storing nicely on the tree. Satsumas are ready in mid fall whereas the others will set a crop 3 or 4 times a year.



Closed eye figs are best for Florida being fairly low maintenance, requiring little or no pruning. Select a protected location, with well drained soils and mulch heavily to reduce nematode injury. The only serious pest problem is rust which can be controlled with fungicides. Fruiting occurs over the summer months and early fall.

*(Continued on page 12)*

# Right Native Plant, Right Place

**Carolyn Saft, Multi-County Horticulture & FYN Agent**

Native plants are practical and attractive when planted in the right place in your yard. Just because a plant is native to Florida, it doesn't mean a moisture loving plant like the Swamp Hibiscus (*Hibiscus coccineus*) will thrive in dry, hot, sandy soils. Even when selecting native plants, we should try and select the right plant for the right place. A good start is to select plants whose natural habitats are similar to our own yards.

Plant selection for sandy areas in full sun should reflect our upland habitats or even coastal dunes. Plants that grow well in hot dry conditions include our state tree, the Cabbage Palm (*Sabal palmetto*), Scrub Holly (*Ilex opaca*) and Southern Wax Myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*).

For areas that are shady with clay soil, plant selection would be similar to those found in hammocks, forests and wetland habitats. Select plants like Oakleaf Hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*), Sweet Pepperbush (*Clethra sinifolia*) and Fringe Tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*).

Of all the states, Florida has the greatest wealth of native plants for use in the landscape. The state has nearly half of the species of trees available in North America north of Mexico. Some advantages of planting native plants include their climate and soil adaptability. They generally have fewer pest problems and many provide food and shelter for wildlife. Right Plant, Right Place is the key to a healthy, attractive landscape even when selecting native plants. We have a free publication on *Native Florida Plants for Home Landscape* available online or in our office. Our local library also carries a selection of native plant books for your reference.

## NATIVE PLANT SPOTLIGHT

Scarlet Sage, Blood Sage and Tropical Sage are all common names for the plant *Salvia coccinea*. This salvia is native to the Southeastern United States including Florida. *Salvia coccinea* is an herbaceous perennial that grows in a vase shaped habit to around 3 feet. Typically this sage has beautiful red flowers whorled around the flower spike, but cultivars of this plant may also produce white or pink flowers. Don't confuse this species with the popular bedding plant *Salvia splendens* - it is an annual and does not reseed well. Use plants to attract butterflies and hummingbirds by planting as borders or mass planting. Flowers can also be cut and used in arrangements.

*Salvia coccinea* is found in hot, sandy locations in full or partial sun so avoid planting in shady, moist areas. Once established, this salvia reseeds itself year after year without dominating or becoming invasive.

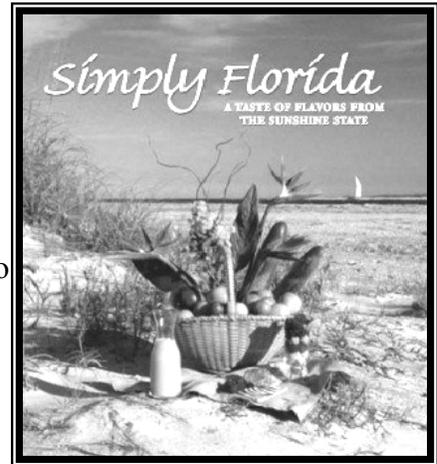
Family:	Lamiaceae (Mint)
Plant type:	Herbaceous perennial
Hardiness zone:	7 - 11
Height:	1 - 3 feet
Spread:	1 -2 feet
Plant Habit:	Upright
Plant texture:	Medium
Growth rate:	Medium
Propagation:	Mainly by seeds
Deer resistant:	Yes
Drought Tolerance:	High
Light:	Sun to partial shade

## Great Gift Idea !

With the holidays quickly approaching, The Extension Office has a variety of delicious, kitchen-tested recipes in the new cookbook, *Simply Florida: A Taste of Flavors from the Sunshine State*. They make great thank you gifts, employee appreciation gifts, or are perfect for the collector in your family. Get yours while supplies last.

This colorful, hard cover, coffee-table style cookbook is divided into chapters on flavorful beef; tasty pork, poultry & more; a taste of the sea; delicious dairy dishes; a bountiful harvest of nuts, beans and grains; sun-ripened fruits; and farm-fresh vegetables.

*Simply Florida* offers recipes savoring the unique flavors from Florida's seashore to panhandle—a cuisine that truly exemplifies American regional cooking.



Stop by the Extension office next to the coliseum in Live Oak to pick up your beautiful, full-color sewn hardcover or check out the website <http://www.simplyflorida.org/> Available for only \$20.

## Fall Fruit

(Continued from page 10)

Oriental or hard pears are best here due to a bacterial disease called fire-blight which is prevalent. Most pear varieties are used for canning but some newer releases are becoming popular as hand fruit. The good news is that pears will tolerate almost any soil, fruit prolifically, making them excellent for bulk sales at local markets. Some training is required on young trees but require almost none once mature.

Oriental persimmons are becoming more popular as our population becomes more diverse. Harvest both astringent and non-astringent cultivars in the late fall, with some being seed, others not. This glossy leafed small tree is an easy keeper, tolerates a wide variety of soils and conditions and requires little pruning. Excessive nitrogen

fertilization in fall can result in bark split and even death of the trees.



Muscadine grapes, a southern favorite, are highly sought after for both eating fresh and wine making. This native grape belongs to the slip-skinned group which means the entire ball of flesh pops easily out of the skin. The fruit is seedy but these tough plants are resistant to Pierce's Disease which kills European type grapes like 'Thompson Seedless' here in Florida. One downside is that they require a major amount of pruning in the winter, but they reward growers with loads of fruit come late summer.

I hope these brief descriptions of each fruit will entice you to plant a small orchard for sales at local markets and specialty stores.

# Fall Forage Update (cont.)

(Continued from page 6)

## COOL-SEASON LEGUMES

**White Clover** – White clover is usually a winter annual but may act as a perennial under optimum soil fertility and moisture conditions. It is adapted to moist soils throughout Florida. Production and persistence of white clover can be limited by nematodes and other pests. **Recommended varieties:** Osceola (developed in Florida), Louisiana S-1, and Regal Ladino. Durana and Patriot are also well adapted but have a prostrate growth habit and lower initial forage yields, but persist well under grazing. Commercial seed production of white clover will be limited in 2008.

**Red Clover** – This clover behaves as a winter annual under Florida conditions and usually does not reseed itself. It is not tolerant of flooding, however it provides long-season forage production in north Florida.

**Recommended varieties:** Southern Belle, Cherokee, Bulldog Red, Kenland, and Redland III. Cherokee and Southern Belle were developed in Florida and both are non-dormant (earlier forage production) types that produce greater total-season forage yields than dormant varieties. Commercial seed production of red clover will be limited in 2008.

**Crimson Clover** – This clover is a reseeding annual that is adapted to fertile well-drained soils. It has a relatively short grazing season. Crimson clover may be grown in combination with ryegrass or a small grain crop. **Recommended varieties:** Dixie and AU-Robin. Flame, Chief, and Tibbee may be available but commercial seed production for these cultivars will be limited in 2008.

**Arrowleaf Clover** – Arrowleaf clover is an annual that is similar to crimson clover in soil adaptation, management and fertility requirements. It is mainly grown on heavier soils in northwestern Florida. Arrowleaf clover makes more growth in late spring than crimson clover.

**Recommended varieties:** Yuchi and Apache. Apache has improved virus resistance compared to Yuchi.

**Vetch** – Vetch grows best on well-drained, fertile, loamy soils. Although it is well adapted, it is not a highly productive forage in Florida.

**Recommended varieties:** Americus, AU-Early Cover, Cahaba White, and Nova II. Commercial seed production of most vetch varieties will be limited in 2008.

**Ball Clover** – Ball clover grows on a wide-range of soil types. Although it is well adapted, it is not considered to be a highly productive forage in Florida. **Recommended varieties:** Segrest and common. Commercial seed production was fair in 2008 and pre-inoculated seed will be available locally in 2008.

## REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

- Planting cool-season forages on a clean-tilled seedbed will result in earlier and more total production compared to overseeding on a grass sod. Recent experience suggests that planting of cool-season annual grasses on bahia should be delayed until mid-November or later.
- Success of winter pastures depends on rainfall. This is especially true when overseeding.
- Look for opportunities to plant on a clean-till seedbed, such as following vegetables or a row crop, after lifting sod, or in a pasture renovation program where the sod is plowed.
- Winter legumes are more dependable on the heavier clay soils of northwestern Florida or on sandy soils that are underlain by a clay layer compared to deep upland sands or sandy flatwoods. However, white clover and ryegrass overseeded can also be grown successfully on certain flatwoods areas in northeast Florida and south central Florida where the soil remains moist throughout the growing season. Do not forget to add the correct inoculant (nitrogen fixing bacteria) to the legume seed before

# HCE Corner

## Voting

Voting for the 2009 slate of Council officers will be via paper ballot at the November meeting. It would be great to have two candidates for each position. There is still time to be added! Currently, the candidates are: President-Bettye Bracewell or Claudia Smedley

VP-Joan Stanton

Secretary-Donna Wade

Treasurer-Irene Sapp

Council Delegate-Bill Smedley

Publicity-Still need YOU!

## District II Meeting

Please register by Dec. 19 for the District II HCE meeting that will be held here in Live Oak. Lunch will cost \$11.50 and will be sliced pork, baked potato, green beans, drink and cake. We have awesome speakers and some fabulous entertainment. Don't be left out! The theme is *Healthy and Happy with HCE*.



★ Anyone interested in helping judge at the Levy County Fair on Oct. 30, please contact Wanda or Katherine at the Suwannee Co. office or Reta Scott at the Levy Co. office at 352/486-5131.

★ Don't forget to bring canned goods and nonperishable items to the December meetings to support our service projects.

## By-Laws

Some of the changes to the by-laws include changing the name of scholarship award to the Merry Taylor Memorial 4-H Scholarship. It will also change from a high school student in Suwannee to a 4-H Senior. It will also amend the amount from \$500 to \$300. The scholarship award deadline will be changed to the first Wednesday in May (vs. the first Friday in April) and the award will be given at the 4-H banquet (rather than at the student's school award ceremony.)

The other by-law updates include changing from Family and Community Education Agents, to Family and Consumer Sciences Agents.

There is also a suggestion to elect officers to the council for a period of two years (vs. annually.) In Finances, "All room and registration expenses will be paid if the funds are available" will be added.

And lastly, the final suggested change will be that if a member buys without pre-approval, he/she will assume the cost of the expense.

## Fundraising

It was decided at the last Council meeting that two yard sales would be scheduled for 2009. Please save your "treasures" for March 7, 2009 and October 3, 2009. They will be held outside on the grassy area in front of the Extension office. The Home and Community Educator volunteers will sell tables for \$10 apiece to outside organizations. We will also have food available (hotdogs, chips and soda.)

**University of Florida/IFAS**

Use of trade names in this publication is solely for the purpose of providing specific information. It is not a guarantee or warranty of product named and does not signify approval to the exclusion of others of suitable composition.

**Suwannee County Extension Staff**

**Katherine Allen**, County Extension Director (CED) and Family & Consumer Science (FCS) Agent  
**Cathy Rogers**, FCS & 4-H Agent/HCE Advisor  
**Bonnie Box**, Family Nutrition Program (FNP) Program Assistant  
**Diane McMillan**, Staff Assistant  
**Wanda Walters**, FCS/Dairy, Admin. Secretary  
**Carolyn Saft**, Suwannee River Partnership Educational Coordinator/ Horticulture/FYN Agent  
**Elena Toro**, Agriculture/Natural Resources Agent  
**Pam Burke**, FYN/AG Administrative Aide  
**Brian Estevez**, 4-H & Youth Development Agent  
**Carolyn Williams**, 4-H & FNP Administrative Aide  
**Mary Sowerby**, Dairy, Regional Specialized Agent  
**Linda Landrum**, Marketing, Regional Specialized Agent  
**Bob Hochmuth**, Vegetables and Small Farms, Regional Specialized Agent

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA/IFAS  
Suwannee County Extension  
1302 11th St. SW  
Live Oak, FL 32064-3611

**Dated Material**

**Congrats!**

- Kudos to the **Suwannee County Fair Association**. Our own Suwannee County Fair won **Blue Ribbon Fair** status for the 2008 Fair. This is a prestigious award and the volunteers deserve appreciation and admiration for all of their hard work (check out the "board" page of the website and congratulate them!) If you weren't able to attend, check out the virtual tour on the website [www.suwanneecountyfair.org](http://www.suwanneecountyfair.org)
- Congrats to the **Mark Randall family** for the 2008 **Suwannee County Outstanding Farm Family of the Year!** The North Florida Fair is Nov. 6-16, 2008. For more info, check the website [www.northfloridafair.com](http://www.northfloridafair.com)

**Congrats!**

**Congrats!**