



SEASONS IN WAKULLA COUNTY

Horticulture, Agriculture, Natural Resources
Quarterly Report, January - April 2024
Volume 3

Mission Statement

UF/IFAS Wakulla Extension is a federal, state, and county partnership throughout Florida, with the mission to improve our lives by developing knowledge in agriculture, natural resources, and the life sciences and to make that knowledge accessible to sustain and enhance the quality of human life. The partnership includes Florida Cooperative Extension, University of Florida (UF), Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU) and the Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners.

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Helpful Links

Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Information

mastergardener.ifas.ufl.edu
UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions
gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu
Florida-Friendly Landscaping (TM)
ffl.ifas.ufl.edu
UF/IFAS Solution For Life
solutionsforyourlife.com
Ask IFAS
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>



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Horticulture, Agriculture, Natural Resources Advisory Committee:

The activities offered by UF/IFAS Extension Wakulla County are based on statewide priorities, national initiatives, current research, and local community needs. In an effort to best represent Wakulla County, the Horticulture, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Extension Advisory Committee was developed. The Extension Advisory Committee provides advice to Extension Faculty in the creation and updating of program plans to make sure that Extension programming reflects both the mission and vision of the organization as well as the interests and requirements of the community.

Are you passionate about the environment, agriculture, or gardening? Here's a fantastic opportunity to make a difference! We invite you to consider joining the UF/IFAS Extension Wakulla County Horticulture, Agriculture, Natural Resources Advisory Committee. Your voice matters, and this committee is a platform for you to contribute ideas and perspectives. To express your interest or for more information, please contact the Extension Office @ 850-926-3931, option 5. Let's grow together and make a positive impact on Wakulla County!

Advisory Committee Members

Nelson Ball, Lorraine Calaway, Katasha Cornwell, Bryan Green,
Tonya Green, Kellie Keys, Kenny Manning,
Robert Manning, and Kaitlyn Sheffield



Wakulla County Master Gardener Volunteers

Dianne Amburn, Maxine Chentnik, Linda Clemens, Mary Cortese, Michele Hackmeyer, Ruth Jacobs, Jenny Lorch, Roy Malberg, Rita Schuetz, Diana Whitmore, Shannon Whitmore

Master Gardener Trainees

Rhonda Blake, Dewana Britten, Alicia Crites, Jiuqing Gu, Abby Lisboa, Pennie Slaughter, Nicole Sullivan, Jeffery Zou



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KHADEJAH'S CORNER

Dear Wakulla County Community,

As I write this farewell letter, a wave of mixed emotions washes over me. It's with a heavy heart that I bid farewell to a community that has been more than just a place of work for me—it's been a home filled with fond memories, wonderful experiences, and remarkable individuals.

Serving as the Horticulture, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Agent for UF/IFAS Extension Wakulla County has been an honor and privilege beyond measure. From assisting homesteaders in adopting sustainable practices to guiding homeowners in nurturing vibrant gardens, every interaction has been a testament to the resilience and passion of our community.

In this role, I've had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the beauty of Wakulla County's landscapes and the richness of its biodiversity. Reflecting on our shared endeavors, I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for the unwavering support, collaboration, and trust you've extended to me. Whether it was organizing workshops, conducting research, or addressing concerns, your enthusiasm and commitment have been the driving forces behind every success we've achieved together.

As I begin a new chapter in my journey, I carry with me the invaluable lessons learned and the cherished memories forged in Wakulla County. While my physical presence may be moving on, my heart remains intertwined with this community, and I will continue to champion its prosperity and well-being in every way I can.

To my colleagues, partners, stakeholders, and friends, I extend my deepest appreciation for your support, collaboration, and friendship. Our paths may diverge, but the bonds we've forged will endure, serving as a reminder of the impact we can achieve when we come together with a shared vision and purpose. Wishing you all continued success, prosperity, and fulfillment in all your endeavors.

With warm regards and heartfelt thanks,



May Flower of the Month Lily of the Valley



Lily of the Valley symbolizes romance, luck, happiness, purity and humility.



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Highlights From Recent Workshops

Sow and Grow: 3/5/24: This workshop helped develop gardening skills as it pertains to spring vegetable gardening. Participants learned about site and seed selection, pest management, watering, maintenance and more.

Buzz Worthy Homes 3/11/24: Highlighting the importance of native pollinators, participants constructed mason bee houses out of natural materials to help support the local ecosystem.



Participation & Outreach

Arbor Day Celebration 1/20/2024: The Crawfordville Arbor Day Committee, in collaboration with UF/IFAS Extension Wakulla County, the Master Gardeners, US Forest Service, and more, recently organized a vibrant Arbor Day celebration. This program aimed to offer free native trees to the community, fostering a deeper connection to nature and promoting environmental stewardship.

Wildlife Heritage Outdoor Festival, St. Marks Wildlife Refuge (WHO) 02/02/2024: The festival's aim is to "Connect People and Nature" by hosting a community-wide celebration highlighting the richness of local heritage and nature's diversity. UF/IFAS Extension Wakulla County and the Master Gardener Volunteers provided research-based education to the public and showcased a new butterfly matching game.

Seed Library Kickoff 03/14/2024: The 2024 Spring Seed Library Program provides small packets of seasonally appropriate vegetable and flower seeds to encourage members of the Wakulla community to try growing their own plants from seed.

SunBlest Gardens Open House 03/23/2024: Master Gardeners offered gardening and planting advice to plant buyers at SunBlest Garden's Spring Open House.











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TIPS FOR PROPER WATERING

Proper watering isn't a simple task to be taken lightly, but more a routine act of caring for our plants and trees. It includes attention to detail, patience and, a fundamental knowledge of the plant or tree's needs. For them to thrive, we must attend to their specific requirements, considering the soil type and certain weather conditions. By providing sufficient and timely watering, we are nurturing the growth and longevity of our plants.

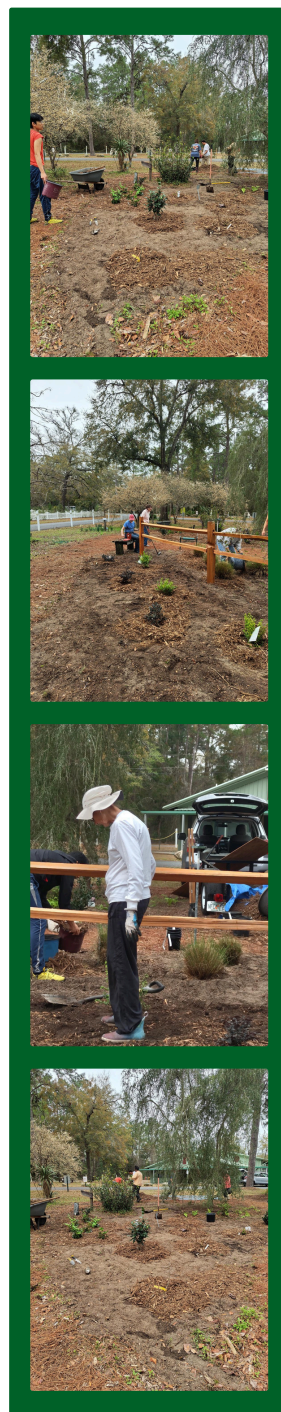
-  *Provide regular, daily watering, especially during dry periods*
-  *Ensure that you water deeply to encourage root growth*
-  *Check soil before watering and direct water to roots*
-  *Adjust watering frequency based on weather conditions*
-  *Water sufficiently but avoid overwatering which can lead to root rot*
-  *Allow soil to dry out slightly between waterings*
-  *Water in morning, if possible*
-  *Use mulch to conserve moisture*



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Renovation of Island Bed



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April Plant Sale



Plant Sale Sequel

Saturday, June 22, 2024
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
84 Cedar Ave., Crawfordville

Cash or Check Only
Tax Charged at Point of Sale

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Stay on the Vine - Upcoming Events

6/22/2024 - Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Sale: Summer sale of plants, trees, veggies and herbs. Wakulla County Extension Center. 9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m. This will be our last sale of the year, so please stop by and support our local program.

Mark Your Calendars Now!



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What's Growing On

Your MULCHING HERBS, VEGETABLES AND FRUIT TREES IN THE FLORIDA-FRIENDLY EDIBLE LANDSCAPE

Tina McIntyre, Rachel Gutner, Tiare Silvasy, Jacquelyn Rivas, and Esen Momol

INTRODUCTION

Mulching is the practice of spreading material around the base of a plant to protect the plant, conserving moisture or suppressing weeds. Applying mulch is Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Principle #4. This publication serves as a guide for homeowners and professionals to reference best practices on mulching and discusses mulch sources, application techniques, and management practices. It will clarify the mulch needs of fruit trees, shrubs, herbs, and vegetables to promote plant health. This information builds on the Edible Landscaping Using the Nine Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Principles publication, <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ep594>, specifically building on recycling yard waste. For more info, see Recycling Organic Materials to Improve Your Florida-Friendly Edible Landscape: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/EP599>.

WHAT IS MULCH?

Mulch is a layer of material applied to the surface of soil (Figure 1). Within that broad category there are an array of various materials to choose from. Mulch can be categorized as either organic or inorganic. Organic mulch is derived from living matter, is made of carbon and comes from renewable, biotic (living) resources. It includes wood chips, leaves, hay, and straw, as well as other yard waste such as cut branches and twigs or grass clippings. Leaf mulch is made up of whole or ground-up leaves. You can use any leaves from your yard or neighborhood (Figure 2). Pine straw/needles are sustainable and can be found at most local nurseries. Inorganic mulch is not made of living matter and is abiotic (nonliving). Examples include rocks, gravel, and crushed shell, or manufactured materials like rubber, artificial turf, or weed barrier. These inorganic mulches do not break down, can heat up the landscape and do not provide nutrition back to the soil like organic mulches do. Additionally, crushed shell, gravel and rocks do not prevent weeds, and they reflect heat, which prevents soil moisture loss. Recycled tires and rubber mulch should be avoided (Table 1) because chemicals are often leached into local water sources, float, and tend to wash away and end up in our waterways (Edil 2008).



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Garden Therapy

Boy howdy is it warm, the temperatures are on the rise. Don't let the heat **herb** your enthusiasm for gardening. Remember **cultivating** is not just for the outside but indoors as well.

Beautiful indoor plants are like having good friends around the house. Here are some ideas to incorporate some beautiful **buds** in your space. Sit back and let your creative juices **grow**. Here is **fruit** for thought. Look around and to see if you have an empty corner or a shelf not being used. Start off with one **plant**, I am sure it will **grow** on you. I know it will ex-**seed** your expectation. Before you know it, you will be able to kick back with a glass of wine and admire your **vines**.



SPONSORSHIP

The UF/IFAS Wakulla County Master Gardener Volunteers Program is entirely dependent on support from funds generated by the kindness of monetary donations, plant sales, and volunteers providing their personal time maintaining the Extension center grounds. By becoming a Sponsor, you will help volunteers make a difference by sharing their experience and knowledge with the public. The results are significant and meaningful to the community.

Benefits of Your Sponsorship

Pride and satisfaction knowing your contributions to the Wakulla County Master Volunteer Program are helping county residents.

Free advertisement promoting your company business in our quarterly newsletter "Seasons in Wakulla County" sent out to over 300 residents and businesses.

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Thank you for supporting your local Wakulla County Master
Gardener program!**

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Please make all checks payable to: **“University of Florida Foundation.”**

Sponsor now and see your ad in the next edition January 2024, newsletter.

Thank you for supporting your local Wakulla County Master Gardener program.

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**Thank you for your continuing
support to our Master
Gardener Volunteer program**

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Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent III**

**Vacant, Horticulture, Agriculture, and
Natural Resources Extension Agent I**

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