

'News You Can Use' From the Extension Office

UGA Cooperative Extension in Hall County



Hall County Cooperative Extension provides information and assistance in the areas of:

- Agriculture and the Environment
- 4-H and Youth Development
- Family & Consumer Sciences
- Radon Education

Inside this issue:

Hall County Forage Field Day 2008	1
Planting Pecan Trees	1
4-H News & Events	2
Child Safety Seats	3
P.R.I.D.E. Program	3
EFNEP Programming News	3
Treating Infants' Coughs	4
Gifts for Special People	4
Hall County Master Gardeners	5
Compost & Other Fertilizers	5
Planting Pecan Trees, cont.	5

Hall County Forage Field Day 2008

On Monday, October 27th, Hall County Cooperative Extension and the Natural Resources Conservation Service hosted a Forage Field Day for area farmers. The Field Day was sponsored by the Hall County Soil & Water Conservation District and dinner was provided by Belmont Baptist Church. Mr. Larry Nix hosted the participants at his Big Oak Farm, and the featured speaker was Dr. Dennis Hancock, UGA Forage Agronomist.

Those in attendance endured a bitter cold afternoon at Nix's farm, but seemed to take it in stride asking many questions of Dr. Hancock. Participants guessed the weight of three rolls of hay, and those coming the closest were awarded prizes. Hancock discussed the importance of proper hay storage and handling as well as how to interpret hay analysis results.



Early Planting Decisions Important to Pecan Trees

If you're thinking of planting pecan trees, a few simple facts can help ensure your success. In particular, the pecan variety you select and where you plant your trees are the most critical choices homeowners can make when planting pecan trees.

As a homeowner, you cannot spray your pecan trees the way commercial growers do. You need to consider disease resistance as a major factor in selecting a pecan variety.

Backyard trees mainly need a built-in resistance to scab, a major disease of pecan trees. For all practical purposes, scab resistance will limit your choices to five fine varieties. These include: Elliott - Stuart - Curtis - Gloria Grande - and - Sumner.

When selecting a tree, the best size is normally a 5 to 6 foot tree. This size is large enough to have reserves to carry it through some tough times.

Cont. on pg. 5



Hall County 4-H News & Events

Mule Camp Market Festival

4-H Club members, Extension staff, 4-H alumni and 4-H friends all helped raise money for the Hall County 4-H Club at Mule Camp Market Festival. It has become a tradition for the 4-H Club to grill chicken onsite and to sell chicken plates at the festival. We wish to thank the many volunteers who helped us. Also, thank you to everyone in our community who purchased chicken plates, and a big thanks to our two main sponsors, Mar-Jac Poultry and AgGeorgia Farm Credit. We appreciate their amazing support!

Junior Conference

7th and 8th grade Hall County 4-H'ers participated in a statewide leadership conference in November. The 4-H'ers attended several leadership classes. They also participated in an exhibit fair and community service projects. The Junior 4-H'ers from all over Georgia collected pop-top tabs throughout the year and brought them to Junior Conference to help raise funds for Ronald McDonald Houses.

4-H Christmas Camp

Hall County 5th and 6th graders are invited to share in some Christmas spirit with the 4-H staff and the High School 4-H'ers. On December 22 there will be an all day Christmas Camp at the Chicopee Woods Agricultural Center. Students will enjoy a wide variety of workshops, crafts, and recreation all with a Christmas theme. Contact the Hall County 4-H Club for more information at 770-535-8291.

BB Rifle Gun Safety Class - January 8

The 4-H S.A.F.E coaches are sponsoring a special safety class for youth who have received target sports equipment for Christmas or who currently own equipment. The purpose of the class is to teach young people about the safety issues involved in gun use and ownership. The class is **FREE** but you must register by calling the 4-H office (770-535-8291).

Summer Camp Registration - February 27

4-H Summer Camp registration will be held on Friday, February 27th. This is a ONE DAY event! Spaces for summer camp fill very quickly. Please visit the 4-H website at www.hallcounty4hclub.org for more information as it becomes available.



Gainesville's finest!
Chicken donated by Mar-Jac Poultry ~
New 4-H grill purchased with sponsorship
from AgGeorgia Farm Credit



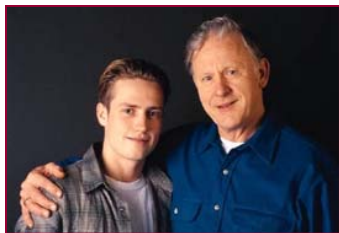
Hall County High School 4-H'ers pause for the camera while making plans for a fun-filled Christmas Day Camp to be held at the Chicopee Woods AG Center in December.

Is Your Child (or Grandchild) Riding Safely Protected?



Debbie Wilburn, Hall County Extension Agent, FACS, along with other Safe Kids volunteers, teaches a monthly child safety seat class at the Hall County Health Department on the third Friday of each month. If you would like to attend please call her at 770-535-8290. *Nearly 90% of child safety seats are not used correctly.* Bring your seat installed and Debbie or another certified child safety seat technician will be glad to check your seat and show you how to make corrections if needed.

P.R.I.D.E. (Parents Reducing Incidents of Driver Error) Program



The PRIDE program addresses driver attitude, knowledge and behavior of both the parent and new teen driver.

P.R.I.D.E. is a **FREE**, two-hour course designed to help parents and their new teen drivers, ages 14-16, learn what they need to do during the 40 hours of supervised practice driving time (20 hours of supervised practice driving time is required if the teen successfully completes driver's education) required by Georgia law.

Rather than a technical hands-on driver training course, this program addresses driver attitude, knowledge and behavior of both the parent and new teen driver. Register today! *Teens and Parents must register to attend.*

The next class will be held on **March 9th** from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at Gainesville State College. A parent or guardian is required to attend with the teen. Please call the Extension Office to register: 770-535-8290.

EFNEP Programming News

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP) program recently celebrated its first group of graduates from Gainesville Exploration Academy. Future sessions are planned for parents.

Approximately 60 area high school students recently received their University of Georgia EFNEP certificates for completing a lesson series. "Super Shake" and "Munchy Mix" were popular recipes among students in Monica Thompson-Nelson's classes at Flowery Branch High School. Karen Jackson's students at Gainesville High School sampled "Turkey & Curly Noodles" and "Yogurt Parfaits."

We are in the process of scheduling more sessions at area day care centers, pre-k sites, youth centers and churches. We also participated in the National Family Week Celebration in Gainesville. The event was sponsored by INK (Interactive Kids Neighborhood) and Healthy Families Georgia.

And we have more exciting news to share. "Food Talk: Featuring Meals in Minutes" is the brand new EFNEP free cooking school. Parents can look forward to sessions packed with fun, educational activities. They will receive special incentives throughout the sessions plus an EFNEP cookbook at graduation. Don't hesitate to be among the first to offer Food Talk to parents at your school, non-profit agency or congregation.



Ghazala Khan, Ashleigh Jones and Maricela Arreguin recently earned their certificates at Gainesville Exploration Academy.

EFNEP, established in 1969, is conducted through Cooperative Extension nationwide. We offer free nutrition education for youth and adults. For more information, contact: Sandra Stringer, (770) 535-8293 or stringer@uga.edu.

Treating Infants' Sniffles and Coughs Without OTC Medications

Since makers voluntarily recalled infant cough and cold formulas late last year, parents are asking lots of questions. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, studies suggest these products are not effective in children younger than 6 and can cause potentially serious side effects. And despite the word "infant" in many of the formula brand names, there has never been FDA-approved dosing of cough or cold remedies for children younger than 2.



So what should a parent do to treat an infant with a cold or cough? Turn to your child's doctor for advice, and keep these points in mind:

- Coughing is the body's way of clearing mucus from airways. Suppressing a cough can interfere with the body's ability to do this.
- Colds are the most common infection in children. By your baby's second birthday, it is probable that he or she will have combated eight to 10 colds.
- The best way to protect a newborn from colds and cough is by making sure he or she is not exposed to anyone who is sick.
- Sometimes simple solutions, like rest, fluids and a humidifier, are the best solutions.

Over-the-counter medications are powerful. Even though no prescription is required, these medications can cause side effects and overdosing can be deadly. Follow the FDA's advice and do not give cough and cold products to children younger than 2 years of age (regardless of what the product name suggests) unless given specific directions to do so by a healthcare provider.

For additional information about infant care, visit the Medem Medical Library at www.medem.com.

(Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association)

Gifts for Special People in Long-term Care

The most wanted gift on the list for nursing home residents and their caregivers is your gift of frequent short visits. It doesn't matter what you talk about, so long as you remember the dignity and uniqueness of that friend or family member. Days grow long when old skills are lost and familiar surroundings change. Even a few minutes of quietly holding hands or walking can bring much joy.



With the holiday season approaching, you may be looking for other kinds of gifts to cheer the days of someone in a nursing home. Consider the following gifts for residents in a long term care facility.

Small photo albums with one picture per page are especially welcome for those with cognitive losses. Create a label for each picture by describing who it is and what they are doing. Caregivers can "read" the album with the resident.

Plants and flower arrangements should be small because space is very limited in most facilities. Consider whether the resident will be able to care for the plant or whether a caregiver is able and willing to care for it.

Residents who are still able to write cards and letters might appreciate a box of varied greeting cards and stamps to keep in touch with old friends. Grandparents will enjoy an audio tape of grandchildren's messages. Artwork by children is always a highlight for residents.

Large print books and magazines and those with colorful photos can be a great addition to the commons area of your family member's care facility. Musical tapes or CDs that can be used for everyone are welcome gifts, as are travel videos and movie classics.

If your family member or friend is unable to enjoy a gift for him or herself, remember the facility. New games, contributions to a fund for a new rocking chair or physical therapy equipment, activity supplies or artwork, can brighten the lives of all the caring people who work in the facility.

The 2009 Hall County Master Gardener Class is set to begin on Tuesday, January 6th. The program is a volunteer training which prepares participants to assist the Extension office in providing horticultural information to the community. In addition to working at the Extension office, Hall County Master Gardener volunteers are involved in many other projects - including the Junior Master Gardener Program, Smithgall Woodland Garden, Elachee Nature Center, Gardens on Green, as well as hosting the annual Garden Expo and Gardening Symposium.

The 2009 class includes Jean Carmack, Michael Carson, Betty Daunhauer, Tamara Dellinger, Ted & Patti Golab, Jill Grobeck, Lynda Hawkins, Beth Kendall, Sharon Marler, Therese Melchiorre, Shannon & Michael Mooney, Russell Nash, Jennifer Orr, Amber Pindak, Tiffany Potter, Margaret Rasmussen, Kimberly Riggan, Rhonda Rouadi, Barbara Thornton, Susan Trotter, and Cheryl Watson. Congratulations!



For more information, visit www.hcmgs.com

Compost & Other Fertilizers Can Impact Spring Harvest

If you want to make the most of your garden, you'll need to make the best use of fertilizers, including compost and other organic products. Fertilizers fall mainly into two classes: organic or inorganic.

Inorganic fertilizers, sometimes called synthetic or mineral fertilizers, are store-bought mixtures of inorganic nutrients such as nitrates, phosphates and potassium. They have much higher concentrations of plant nutrients than organic fertilizers. The nutrients in them are released into the soil soon after you apply them, too.

Organic fertilizers come from plants or animals. The plant nutrients in them have been taken up by living plants or animals and chemically bound in their tissues and by-products. Because they're integrated into complex organic molecules, these nutrients are in relatively low concentrations. They're not water soluble. As a result, plants can't take them up as soon as you apply them.

Organisms in the soil have to break down the organic matter before the bound nutrients are released for plants' roots to take them up. Besides the slow-release nutrients, organic fertilizers typically have generous amounts of helpful organic matter.

You usually have to apply organic matter many times over several years to build up the soil's organic content and nutrient reserves. Until then, most gardens will do better if you apply both organic and inorganic fertilizer.

For more information on composting, check out the Extension publication, *Composting: Feed Your Landscape – Not the Landfill* at www.pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/horticulture/composting.html.



Planting Pecan Trees, cont. from page 1

Winter is generally considered the best time to plant pecan trees. But once you've got the tree, you still have a critical choice to make: Where will you plant it?

Probably the most important aspect of planting pecan trees is to make sure that they have enough room to grow. It may be little now, but it's going to be a big tree. **Do not plant pecan trees too close to buildings or power lines.** It is a good idea to give them 40 to 50 feet on all sides.

A pecan tree produces nuts on the ends of the limbs. If it doesn't have room, it will stop fruiting and begin to grow straight up like a pine tree. For more information, check out the Extension publication, *Home Orchard Pecans*, at www.pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/pubcd/B1348/B1348.htm.





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Merry Christmas

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