



A NEW LEAF

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UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Duval County Extension

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Rainy Season by Terry DeValle

The rainy season is here and most areas are getting adequate rainfall. If you have an in-ground irrigation system, do your plants a favor by turning the clock to off and run the system as needed. Too much water is the kiss of death for plants. Collect rainwater in barrels and make sure to direct overflow away from your home.

Hurricane season is here so keep storm water drains free of debris. Blow lawn clippings back onto the lawn which serves as a free source of fertilizer. Many homeowners will make the last fertilizer application in September so sweep up or blow any fertilizer that gets on hard surfaces onto the intended lawn or plant bed. This will help reduce pollutants going into our storm drains. They are for water only; we may need them to work this season!



Want to stay on the mailing list? Complete the enclosed survey so you don't get dropped. The information gathered helps us improve our newsletter and obtain funding. Mail in now so you don't forget.

Upcoming September/October Classes

Thursday, September 10, 6:30 to 8:30 pm "Backyard Poultry Class" Duval County Extension Office. To register call Jeannie @ 255-7450 or email crosbyj@coj.net. In email, include your name, address, and telephone number. The cost is \$5 and will be collected at the door.

Friday, September 18, 9:30-11:30 am Rain Barrel "Make & Take" Workshop. Learn about saving water with rain barrels and rain gardens and reducing storm-water runoff. Class is limited. Registration & prepayment deadline September 15. Cost \$5 for class & \$40 each rain barrel. Check payable to DCOHAC. Call Belinda to register.

Saturday, September 19, 9 am-1 pm Cool Season Vegetable Gardening Topics include: Planting & maintaining; Composting, Irrigation, and Preserving warm season edibles. Cost \$5. Pre-registration and payment is required. Call Jeannie to register

Tuesday, October 13, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm, Fall Gardening Program @ Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretta Rd. Topics include Camellias: to grow or not to grow, Daffodils for Florida, Fall Tips, and What's a Florida Yard? Cost is \$5 to attend. Call 255-7450 to register. Daffodils for FL will be available for purchase at the workshop.

Thursday, October 8, 6 pm-8 pm "Growing Wildflowers" & "Fall Landscape/Garden Tips". Regency Square Library, 9900 Regency Square Blvd. Learn wildflower identification and planting information plus what to do in the landscape and garden for fall. Call BeLinda to register @ 255-7450.

Canning Classes are \$20 per person, pre-registration & pre-payment required. Call Jeannie to register.
September/October Classes:

- Monday, September 21st, Pressure Canning Class (Carrots) 9 am -1 pm
- Saturday, September 26th , Pizza Sauce 9 am-Noon, Hot Banana Pepper Rings 1 - 4 pm
- Saturday, October 10th, Spiced Apple Butter 9 am -1 pm
- Saturday, October 17th, Cranberry Apple Walnut Relish 9 am -Noon

Things to do in September/October

By Terry DeValle

Flowers

- **Start ten weeks** of short-day treatment for Christmas cactus in mid-October to enjoy blooms at Christmas.



- **Apply last fertilization** to poinsettias in late September and avoid light exposure at night.

- **Scout for insect and disease problems.** Aphids, mealy bugs, whiteflies and other insect populations can build up quickly.

- **Remove old flowers** to keep plants in bloom and reduce disease problems.

Fruits and Nuts

- **Harvest** season for grapes comes to a close as other fruits like Persimmons and Pecans begin their season. Satsumas ripen around late October, especially if we start getting cool weather.
- ♦ **Fertilize fruit trees/shrubs** in September as a final application. One exception is Persimmons since they may drop fruit if fertilized.
- ♦ **Check grafted plants** to make sure no growth emerges below the graft union. Graft unions are usually 6" above the soil level and a swollen area is usually noticeable.

Lawns

- **Keep up with lawn mowing** - Sharpen those mower blades and remove no more than 1/3 the height at each mowing. Leave the clippings on the grass unless you are bagging to collect weed seed heads or the lawn has disease problems. Keep grass clippings out of drainage ditches, off hard surfaces, and out of water bodies.
- ♦ **Fertilize lawns going into the winter** using one with equal amounts of nitrogen and potassium and no more than 2% phosphorous (15-0-15 or 18-2-18). Make sure it has at least 30% or more water insoluble nitrogen and apply at no more than 1% N per 1,000 square feet. Check the label to determine the appropriate amount to apply or go to <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep236>. Apply 1/4" water following application. Do not apply fertilizer prior to a heavy rainfall or potential storm.
- ♦ **Got weeds?** Now's the time to spot treat for perennial weeds. Hand-pulling is still the best option if a weed is setting seed. If cool season weeds

were a problem last year, treat area with a preemergence herbicide when air temperatures reach 65 to 70°F for 4 to 5 consecutive days (early October). For more info on weed control, go to <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP141>.

- ♦ **Scout lawns for pest problems.** Chinch bugs and lawn caterpillars are still very active. Go to <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/IG001> for more information on chinch bugs. See page 6 for sod webworms.

Trees & Shrubs

- **Do not prune** spring blooming shrubs or trees now or there will be no flowers next spring.
- **Scout ornamental plants** for scale, grasshoppers, caterpillars, whiteflies, and leaf beetles. If treatment is needed, treat only the affected area and use a Florida-friendly insecticide (soaps, oils, neem, BT) to protect beneficial insects. Grasshoppers are laying eggs so to avoid higher numbers next year, kill manually because insecticides are not effective.
- **Fertilize trees and shrubs** if needed in September. If trees have been in the landscape for over three years and are surrounded by lawn and/or shrub beds, no additional fertilizer is needed if those areas are fertilized. If plants look healthy and growth is adequate, skip this application.
- **Prune trees now** to remove dead branches and check for structural problems. Don't wait for hurricanes to arrive to prune; be proactive!
- **Put new plants in landscape now.** Cooler weather and more rain will make it easier to establish. Make sure to call 811 before you DIG and don't plant too deep! (see page 7, item 1)

Vegetable Garden

- **Start cool season transplants** for fall gardens. This is one of the best times to garden in north Florida. If you don't have a traditional garden, consider planting a few edibles in landscape beds or try growing in a container. An assortment of lettuce=dinner salads.
- **Plant warm season vegetables** like tomatoes ASAP. Buy determinate, early varieties for a quicker yield before the cold weather moves in.



What to Plant in September/October By Terry DeValle

For instant color now plant coleus, marigolds and garden chrysanthemums or wait until October to plant cool season flowers like dianthus (firewitch dianthus on left), lobelia, pansy, petunia, phlox, shasta daisy, snapdragon, viola, status, flowering kale and cabbage. Marigolds are an inexpensive alternative to chrysanthemums and will frequently provide fall color for a longer period. Wait until late October to plant pansies and violas because of the heat.



Daffodils for FL will be for sale at Mandarin Fall program on Oct. 13 and require no pre-chilling

Bulbs or bulb-types to plant include amaryllis, Aztec lily, calla, grape hyacinth, iris, lachenalia (leopard lily), narcissus, snowflake, watsonia, and zephyr lily. In October, add to the list African lily (*Agapanthus*), daffodil, gladiolus, kaffir lily, lily, marica (walking iris), moraea, society garlic, spider

lily, anemone, hyacinth, pineapple lily and Star-of-Bethlehem. For better results, pull up caladium tubers and store in a cool dry area as the foliage dies back. Tubers may rot if left in the ground and we have a wet fall season.

For northern type bulbs (tulips and hyacinths), buy in October and store in the refrigerator for about 60

days. Plant bulbs immediately upon removal. Keep them away from ripening fruit during storage. Many are available pre-chilled, but make sure to check before purchasing.

If your purple coneflowers, *Echinacea*, look like this, prune the distorted seed heads. They are affected with eriophyid mites that live inside the flowers. Prune and discard the affected seed heads and do not compost.



In September plant bush beans, pole beans, cucumbers, summer squash, tomatoes, beets*, broccoli*, Brussels sprouts*, cabbage*, carrots*, cauliflower*, collards*, endive, kale*, kohlrabi*, leek*, lettuce*, mustard*, onions*, parsley*, radish* and turnips*. Add to the list for October those with an asterisk listed above, plus Chinese cabbage and spinach.



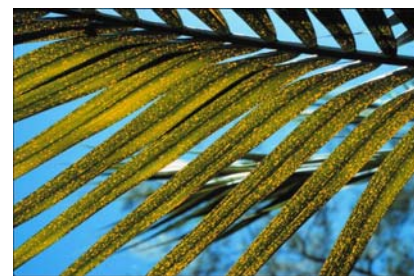
Potassium Deficiency in Palms By Terry DeValle

There is no question that potassium deficiency is the #1 problem with palms in northeast Florida landscapes. Symptoms appear first on the oldest leaves and vary with the type of palm. Some palms display mottled areas with yellowish spots whereas others show marginal or tip burn that is withered or frizzled. Symptoms are always most severe at the leaf tips decreasing toward the leaf base and most severe on oldest leaves becoming less severe on new growth.

Advanced cases will eventually affect the entire canopy. Leaves will be reduced in size and will be chlorotic and frizzled. Over time, the trunk will taper and the palm will die.

Potassium is a mobile nutrient in the plant and reserves in old leaves are shifted to new growth. If a

homeowner constantly prunes away these unsightly leaves or over-prunes, it creates a more severe problem.



To prevent this deficiency, apply a 8-2-12+4Mg palm fertilizer at the rate of 1.5 pounds fertilizer per 100 square feet of canopy area and avoid high nitrogen fertilizers around palms. Apply the last fertilizer application of the year in September. To correct the problem apply regular applications of a slow release potassium (K) fertilizer like sulfur coated potassium sulfate. Add 1/3rd the amount of magnesium (Mg) at the same time to avoid a K:Mg deficiency.

Urban Gardening Highlights By Mary Puckett

What do you have growing in your garden? At the Urban Gardening site, we are still enjoying basil, banana peppers, eggplant, okra, lima beans and are looking forward to harvesting our peanuts, sweet potatoes and Seminole pumpkins next month.

We just harvested our last batch of black eye peas even though they were still producing, because it's time to start preparing the garden. We cut back the vines and will chop the roots and turn them into the soil to improve fertility and structure allowing a few weeks for decomposition before planting.

Tomatoes were planted in grow buckets as part of the grow bucket project at our demonstration site that is maintained primarily by our Master Gardeners. If you find it challenging to grow tomatoes, planting in grow buckets may change all of that. The grow bucket not only contains everything the tomato requires to grow, but it can also be moved to accommodate sun requirements and eliminates the challenge of not planting tomatoes in the same spot over and over again, which can lead to disease and pest issues. Check out our WEB site for directions: "Making a Grow Bucket" http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/lg_urban_gardening.shtml



Tomato, Verona
Picture taken 8/25/15

For those that came to our "Seed Starting Class" on August 22nd, thank you. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I and our Master Gardener volunteers did. For those that were not able to attend, we discussed the importance of knowing what grows when, the freedom and choices you have when starting your own transplants, when to get them started and how. As an additional bonus, participants had an opportunity to purchase tomato transplants that are ready to plant, which were grown by our Master Gardeners. With this head-start, they can be enjoyed before our temperatures start to drop and production stops.



Okra, Gold Coast, compact plants that have spineless pods and are nematode resistant
picture taken 8/25/15

Fall is on its way and for many, including myself, it is considered the best time to grow vegetables in North Florida. The vegetable garden has traditionally been located in an area separate from other parts of the landscape. With proper planning, there is no reason the garden can't be both functional and attractive. Consider incorporating edibles into your landscape. Several of our cool season vegetables are very attractive, adding texture and color.

Now is the time you want to start planning for your fall garden, whether you grow your own transplants from seed or purchase them. You don't want to get caught off guard.

For more details, I hope to see you at our "Cool Season Vegetable" workshop on September 19th.

A Successful Garden Starts With a Plan

To have a successful garden, it takes planning.

Location, Location, Location:

- Full sun; ideal 6-8 hours of sun.
- Make it convenient and near water source.
- Avoid tree roots.

Size:

- Depends on available space.
- What do you want to grow?
- How many people are you growing for?
- Consider how many hours and dollars you want to spend.

Plan Layout:

- How much space does each plant require?
- Consider crop rotation.
- Plant taller plants in back, smaller in front.

Test soil pH:

- Vegetables grow best in slightly acidic soil (5.8-6.5).
- Do not guess, bring a soil sample to the Duval County Extension Office for a free test.
<http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/documents/Howtotakeasoiltestsamplesweb.pdf>

Amend Soil:

- Work top 10-12" at least three weeks before planting.
- Spread a minimum of 3-4" of organic matter into top 6-12" (composted animal manure; leaves; compost).

Raised Bed:

- "Gardening in Raised Beds" See publication, <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/EP/EP47200.pdf>
- Consider if dealing with poor soil or drainage.

Container Culture:

- "Minigardening (Growing Vegetables in Containers)" <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/VH032>

Select the Vegetables:

- Choose varieties recommended for our area.
- Choose disease resistant varieties.
- Start your own transplants from seed (check Table 3, "Transplantability" in the "Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide" which crops transplant easily or prefer to be direct seeded).

- Start with transplants if you don't have time to start your own.

Take Inventory of Supplies:

Pots, potting soil, fertilizer and seeds.

Test Germination of Leftover Seed:

- Place ten seeds on a damp, folded paper towel.
- Place towel and seeds into a plastic sandwich bag and seal.
- Leave at room temperature for about a week.
- Count how many seeds germinated. 10=100%; 9=excellent; 8=good, 6-7= poor and 5 or less=plant multiple seeds per hole & consider buying fresh seed.



Order your Seeds:

A few of **many** seed sources:

- Standard Feed
1236 Kings Road 32204
- Southern Exposure Seed Exchange
<http://www.southernexposure.com/>
- Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds
<http://www.rareseeds.com/>
- Johnny's Selected Seeds
<http://www.johnnyseeds.com/>
- Tomato Growers
<http://www.tomatogrowers.com/>

Follow UF Recommendations:

- "Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide" <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>
- Planting dates.
- Defines crop rotation and identifies plant families.
- Which vegetables transplant well or require direct seeding.
- Plant spacing.
- Depth of planting when using seeds.

Tropical Sod Webworm By Terry DeValle

Lawn caterpillars are really, really bad this year and will become more numerous going into fall. The most common Florida lawn caterpillars are tropical sod webworm, fall armyworm, striped looper, and fiery skipper. To inspect for lawn caterpillars look at the grass blades to see if there are notches chewed along the sides. Grass blades may be completely stripped in patches and areas will turn yellow to brown.



Tropical sod webworms (<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in968>) feed at night and rest in a curled or C-position on or near the soil surface during the day while armyworms (<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in702>) feed during the

day. Look at the soil/thatch area for the caterpillars, for silken webs, or for small green or brown pellets of excrement (frass).

Still can't find them during the day? Try checking the lawn at night with a flashlight when sod webworms

are actively feeding. Another way to inspect for insects is to flush the affected area with soapy water using two TBSP of lemon liquid dishwashing soap in a two gallon sprinkling can full of water and drench a two square foot area.

Avoid using water soluble, quick-release nitrogen fertilizers to make the lawn less succulent. Good maintenance practices like mowing at the proper height will help the lawn bounce back from caterpillar feeding.

Inspect for beneficial insects that feed on caterpillars like ants, ground beetles, rove beetles, spiders and parasitic wasps. Any pesticide control methods should target the small caterpillar stage, not the large caterpillars or the moths. Treatments are most effective if applied at dusk or early evening when the caterpillars are just beginning to feed. Microbial insecticides are less harmful to beneficial insects and include *Bacillus thuringiensis* K (Bt) and Spinosad (active ingredients). Instructions on the label will likely suggest to avoid watering or mowing for 24 hours after application. Be aware that Bt is harmful to all caterpillars including butterfly larva.

Mosaic Disease of St. Augustinegrass By Terry DeValle

As if we needed another problem, add sugarcane mosaic virus to the list of problems affecting our lawns. At this time, the disease only affects the variety 'Floritam' which is the most widely planted variety in our area.

As seen in the photo, the symptoms include yellow blotches or streaks in the leaf which may resemble a nutrient deficiency. The end result is not good. As the disease advances, there is severe dieback and there is not much one can do to prevent it from spreading once the lawn is infected. There are no fungicides for control....it's a virus.

In south Florida, the disease was most obvious in the fall and continued to get worse throughout the winter until warm weather returned. Some lawns showed some recovery during the warm growing season. Sp fall is the time of year that we need to inspect

'Floritam' lawns to see if it has moved into northeast Florida.

The virus is easily spread by lawn mowers and weed trimmers. Insects like aphids may also transmit viruses but they don't know if this is the main vector for spread. Buying infected sod is an easy way to introduce it into your landscape.



To prevent the spread, mow infected areas last and sterilize equipment with a dilute bleach. Replace lawns with varieties other than 'Floritam'. Info and photo taken from: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pp313>.

How to Kill the Tree You Just Bought

By Larry Figart

The average life span for an urban tree is only about 15 years. The greatest factor in the successful outcome of a young tree is whether or not it is planted correctly. There are lots of articles out there that help you plant a new tree correctly. Yet poorly planted trees are very common. This article will try a new approach. Perhaps if we concentrate on what not to do, we may actually end up planting correctly.

#1 Plant the tree too deep:

If you want your tree to fail, plant it too deep. Deep planting suffocates roots by restricting their oxygen supply. We can plant our tree too deep by doing the following. Make the planting hole deeper than the container the tree is growing in and pile soil on top of the root ball to even things out. Even better, if we make sure our topmost root is below the soil surface we can be sure the tree will be too deep. As the planting media the tree has been growing in decomposes, the tree will sink even farther. You know you have successfully planted your tree too deep when after planting there is no sign of a root flare.



The owners of this tree have ensured its untimely death by digging the planting hole too deep.

#2 Don't provide enough water

One of the most important steps you can overlook in order to kill your tree is to not water it. Just rely on natural rainfall and irrigation from your pop up sprinkler. That should be plenty to kill it. We don't want to waste the initial 2-3 gallons of water per day on a typical new tree. After all, the most drought tolerant trees are the dead ones.



Putting a watering bag on a tree but not filling it up is a common practice when killing a tree.

#3 Don't worry about that pot-bound tree

Killing a tree is easy when you do not worry about roots circling the outside of the container. Just pull it out of the container and stick it right in the hole. Ensure that the roots will not grow out away from the tree by not removing or shaving the circling roots. The tree will either never become established or it will blow over in the next wind storm.



Notice that there are no roots growing out of this root ball and the tree blew over in the wind. NOT cutting circling roots made sure this tree would fail.

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How to Kill the Tree You Just Bought Cont. from pg. 7

#4 Make the Mulch Volcanoes Big and Tall

Most folks agree that adding mulch around the rootball of a tree is a good thing. However, if you want to see your tree fail, you can make a good



Big mulch volcanoes create a great place for roots to grow assuring that circling or girdling roots will be formed. Photo Credit: Ed Gilman

thing bad by piling more around the base of the tree every few months and never removing any of the old mulch. The higher the mulch volcano the better. This way moisture is held close to the trunk allowing disease and decay to take hold. An added bonus is that new roots will find the mulch volcano a great place to grow. These roots will spiral upward in the mulch pile creating girdling roots that will strangle the tree later. That is if it survives the mulch volcano.

Now before you decide to call the office wondering if I have lost my mind, I must admit that I am using a little bit of satire in order to make a point. My reason for writing this way is perhaps to use a little bit of humor and satire to make us think a little differently. We often times do things out of habit or because someone tells us to do it without thinking if it is good for the tree or not. To read about how to plant a tree correctly go to: <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/planting.shtml>.

Once you have read this newsletter, turn "A New Leaf" and pass this information on to a friend.

Terry B. DelValle

Extension Agent-Environmental Horticulture

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