News From The Extension Office

Our offices will soon be going through some much need remodeling and updating. We will have an improved facility with remodeled lobby, an additional classroom and better restrooms. The main entrance will face Woodlea Road and will have a covered entryway. Hopefully, the project will be completed by May 2006.

The Friends of the Horticultural Learning Center are continuing to raise funds for a building in the gardens to house additional restrooms. This will be a great help for groups visiting our gardens.

Lake County Extension Agents

Deborah Boulware – County Extension Director and Family and Consumer Sciences

Julie England – Family and Consumer Sciences

Sarah Hensley – 4H

Charles Fedunak – Urban Horticulture

John Jackson – Multi-County Citrus

Juanita Popenoe – Commercial Horticulture

Bill Price – Livestock and Natural Resources

Teresa Watkins – Florida Yards and Neighborhoods

Do you have plant or consumer questions? Call or come by to speak to an agent. Our offices are open Monday through Friday from 8:30AM to 5:00 PM.

Need a speaker on financial matters, nutrition or food safety? Our newest program is Identity Theft-How To Minimize Your Risk. Contact Julie England, Family and Consumer Sciences agent.

Know what you are looking for or just want to browse for useful information? Look at the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences website for online publications: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu.
Moisture and Mildew

With our rainy weather this spring and early summer, we can expect a bumper crop of mildew in our homes. Mildew is the most complained about indoor air problem in Florida. It grows best with moisture, nutrients and oxygen. Light is not required for mildew to grow.

There is no way to completely eliminate mildew from our homes. Mildew spores are always present, waiting for good conditions to multiply. The best way to prevent its spread is by keeping your home clean and dry. The most common spots for mildew growth are: bathrooms, closets and bedrooms.

In the Bathroom

- Clean shower and bathtub regularly. Remove mildew as soon as it appears.
- Wipe off or squeegee water down the drain after showering.
- Turn on exhaust fan as soon as you start to shower and let it run 10 to 15 minutes afterward. Turn it off after that to avoid bringing in too much outside air into the house.
- Cooler showers put less moisture in the air and require less energy.
- If you have a severe mildew problem, remove your damp towels and allow them to dry elsewhere.

Bedrooms

- Maintain low indoor humidity. Dew point or outside temperature should be 60°F or below.
- Keep air circulating in the room. Leave the door open if there is no return air duct in the room or if the heat or air conditioning is not on.

Unfortunately, we can’t always keep mildew from returning. The best way to control it is to keep things clean and dry. There are many commercially available products that claim to control or eliminate mildew. Always read the label before using and choose one that is recommended for your specific problem. Most mildew inhibitors contain chlorine. Chlorine kills the mildew and darkens the mildew filament. Some scrubbing and rinsing is usually required. Be sure to protect your hands and eyes.

For further information on protecting your home from mold and mildew, order or download the following University of Florida publications.

Publications can be ordered online at [http://edis.ifas.ufl](http://edis.ifas.ufl) or by calling Lake County Extension at 343-4101. The publication FCS 3042 “How to Prevent Mold and Mildew” has excellent information and a listing of ways to remove mildew in many areas in and around your home.

Other publications:
- FCS 3241 Mildew on House Paints
- FCS 3242 Algae Growth on Roofs
- FCS 3244 Welcome (?) Mildew Months

Adapted by Julie England From FCS 3042 “How to Prevent and Remove Mildew” and FCS 3198 “Indoor Air Quality in Florida: Mildews and Molds.

Desiccants, materials like calcium chloride that absorb moisture, are of little use in a closet if the rest of the house is humid. The space to be dehumidified is too large for the moisture holding capacity of these materials.

Keep damp clothes or shoes out of closets.

Closets

- Louvered doors help ventilate the closet and keep it drier. Leave solid closet doors open to encourage air movement.
- Open shelving allows better air circulation.
- Keep items off the floor. Moisture can be trapped under them.
- Use a low voltage light bulb to add heat. This will raise the temperature and reduce humidity. Place light away from anything that might ignite. A low placement is best because heat rises.
Plant Tips
Charles Fedunak, University of Florida
Environmental Horticulturalist

We received more than 2 ½ times the average rain fall for June. It was one of the wettest Junes in history. The effect of all this moisture is showing in our landscapes in various ways. Lawns seem to need mowing every other day and the weeds; we don’t want to go there. I made a promise a few years back, when we were praying for a good rain, not to complain about getting a rainy day. So, instead of complaining about the rain, try these helpful hints for your landscape:

First, remember that a heavy rain, around two inches or more, basically flushes all the fertilizer through the soil. So, never apply fertilizer prior to a chance of heavy rain. Many times the lawn area may develop a little green or even yellow color during the summer months. An application of iron, either granular or liquid, will green up the area with out causing excessive growth.

Second, excessive moisture in the lawn will bring on opportunist weeds such as dollar weed and sedges. These weeds need the extra moisture to thrive. If you have these weeds in your landscape, look at the frequency your of your irrigation. An application of ¼ inch of water, either from rain or irrigation, is adequate. Then your lawn should be good for at least 5 days during the summer months or longer during the cooler months.

Third, the combination of moisture and warm temperatures will increase fungus and other leaf diseases. It is very difficult to control these problems as long as the rain and warm temperatures persist. If you are going to try an application of fungicide, remember to apply it mainly to new growth or leaves that do not show any symptoms. The best you can hope for is to reduce or prevent the disease from spreading. Also, symptoms may continue to appear even after fungicide has been applied. This is because fungicide only prevents new entry; it does not kill what is already in the plant.

Then… relax and enjoy your yard!

The University of Florida Master Gardeners staff the Lake County Plant Clinic Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 4 PM to assist you with your landscape questions. You can call (353) 343-4101 or bring your sample or questions into the clinic.

Discovery Gardens are open 9 AM-4PM weekdays.

Avoid dehydration. Remember to drink lots of fluids when working outside and take plenty of breaks! Water and sports drinks are good choices.

Try to work early in the day, before it gets too hot. Wear a hat with a wide brim and light colored, loose fitting clothing.
Back To School!

Once again, summer vacation has flown by and it is almost time for school to start. Starting or changing schools can be stressful for students and parents alike.

Not all stress is bad. Stress can have positive affects by motivating children or making them adapt to new situations and experiences. But, stress can also make children anxious or fearful. Parents can help children prevent or reduce stress by first recognizing it. After recognition, they can then help their children manage stress.

Signs of stress among children include:

- Head and stomach aches
- Nightmares or bad dreams
- Noticeable changes in behavior such as withdrawal or increased aggression.
- Crying or temper tantrums.
- Eating disorders.
- Drug or alcohol abuse.
- Keeping to themselves, spending excessive time on the Internet.
- Focusing on unusual interests or cultures.

Supportive parents can help their children deal with stress. Parents should:

- Help children prepare for change. Explain what they may expect from school. Attend school orientation and parent’s nights if available.
- Talk about school and teachers in a positive way.
- Maintain your usual routines.
- Encourage your child to make new friends and maintain old friendships.
- Spend family time together. Be especially supportive during the first weeks of school.
- Help children be organized. Organizational skills learned early will help them throughout their lives.
- Help others. Give your children a sense of purpose and community.

Children need their parents to help them cope with new or changing situations. Children who learn to solve problems and handle difficulties are better able to deal with problems as they happen. Parents should encourage their children to think things through but also to ask for help when needed.

Most importantly, communicate with your children. Listen to their problems, fears and anxieties. Congratulate them on their successes. Be available to them. Children of all ages need to know they can talk to their parents. Show that you believe in and love them.

Adapted by Julie England from “Starting School: Stress and Success” by Dr. Suzanna Smith, UF Associate Professor, Human Development and Family Relations.

The Power of Youth
Sarah Hensley, 4H Extension Agent

The new 4-H year starts September 1st and it is going to be a blast!!!! Youth between the ages of 5-18 are welcome to join 4-H. We have over 40 clubs in Lake County and diverse projects ranging from Beef to Biology and everything in between. If you are interested in joining, please visit our website: http://lake.ifas.ufl.edu/4-H or call the office at 352-343-4101 and ask to speak with a 4-H staff member.

Some schools in Lake County use school enrichment programs in classrooms. There are a wide variety of great materials available. Ask your child’s teacher to offer 4-H school enrichment materials.

See Ya Soon ☺
Barbeque Food Safety

Picnic safety becomes especially important during Florida’s hot summer weather. Remember to keep hot foods hot and cold food cold. Another important thing is to keep your hands clean. Following these principles will stop the majority of food borne illnesses.

- **Food safety starts at home.** Proper storage, especially of meat items, is essential. Don’t cross-contaminate foods. Store raw meats separately from other foods. Promptly wipe and disinfect any surfaces that meat juices have touched.

- **Before grilling, completely thaw meat and poultry so that it cooks evenly.** It is best to slowly thaw food in the refrigerator, but you can thaw sealed packages in cold water. If you must thaw in the microwave, cook immediately after thawing.

- **Always marinate meat and poultry in the refrigerator.** If you reuse any of the marinade as a sauce, bring it to a boil before using to destroy any harmful bacteria.

- **Use an insulated cooler with enough ice or cold packs to keep food at 40°F or below.** Remember, a full cooler maintains its temperature better than a partially filled one. Keep cooler in the coolest part of the car and place in a shaded area on arrival. If possible, store perishables in a cooler separate from drinks. The constant opening of a cooler to remove drinks will raise the cooler temperature.

- **Cook food to the proper internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria.** Use an instant read food thermometer. Safe temperature for cooked meats are:
  - Whole poultry - 180°F.
  - Poultry pieces - 170°F.
  - Ground beef - 160°F.
  - Ground poultry - 165°F.
  - Beef steaks or roasts - 145°F.
  - All cuts of pork - 160°F.

  If you don’t have a thermometer, cut the meat to check for doneness. Hamburgers should be brown in the middle. Chicken should have no pink inside.

  Try to do most food preparation at home. This has two-fold advantage. You’ll have more time for fun at your BBQ and will have access to better sanitary facilities.

- **After cooking, keep food hot until serving by keeping it on the side of the grill.** Keep food temperature at 140°F or warmer. The general rule of thumb is not to leave leftovers out for more than 2 hours. On hot days, with temperatures over 90°F, don’t leave perishables out for more than one hour. If in doubt, throw it out!

Practicing good sanitation will keep your BBQ safe and enjoyable.

"Is it done yet?"
Use a food thermometer to be sure.
Adults ages 60 and older are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Yet many older adults find it hard to believe that they have the power to prevent or delay the disease. That’s exactly what scientists found in a major research study on diabetes prevention. In fact, adults over 60 were more successful at preventing or delaying the onset of type 2 diabetes than were all other age groups. The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) wants older adults to know that it’s not too late to prevent type 2 diabetes.

Almost 40 percent of adults ages 40 to 74 - or 41 million people- have pre-diabetes, a condition where a person’s blood glucose (sugar) level is higher than normal but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. Pre-diabetes raises a person’s risk for developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. The risk of getting diabetes increases as you get older—almost one in five people over age 60 have diabetes.

The good news is that the landmark Diabetes Prevention Program study showed that type 2 diabetes can be delayed or even prevented by losing a small amount of weight by following a low-fat, low-calorie meal plan and exercising for 30 minutes a day, five days a week. The study showed that lifestyle changes are more effective than the use of a diabetes medication for people aged 60 and older, with a 71 percent reduction in the development of diabetes.

Losing 5 to 7 percent of your current body weight, if you are overweight, through healthy eating and exercising regularly, can help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. For a 200-pound person, this equals 10 to 15 pounds. Now is the time to take control of your health, for both yourself and your family. And, help your friends, loved ones and community prevent diabetes by starting on a new, healthier lifestyle.

NDEP offers free booklets and tip sheets designed to help at-risk older adults stop diabetes in its tracks. For example, take a walk around the neighborhood instead of watching television. Buy healthy snacks instead of keeping cookies and chips in the cupboard for grandkids. Visit the park on a nice day, or have a dance party in your living room. These are small steps, but the rewards are big.

For more tips on how you can prevent type 2 diabetes, visit www.ndep.nih.gov or call 1-800-438-5383 and ask for the “It’s Not Too Late to Prevent Diabetes” tip sheet. It’s not too late to prevent diabetes, especially for older Americans. Take your first step today!

Adapted by Dr. Linda Bobroff, UF Professor and Extension Nutrition Specialist

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