



“Solutions for Your Life”

12520 Ulmerton Road
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www.pinellascountyextension.org



Lawn & Garden | Commercial Horticulture | Families & Consumers | Florida Yards & Neighborhoods | 4-H Youth Development | Urban Sustainability

Things To Do in the Landscape November 2008



It's time to give serious thought to your fall gardening chores...

In the Vegetable Garden:

Thin **root crops** such as beets, carrots, turnips, and radishes when they are overcrowded by removing the smallest plants to give the remaining plants room to mature. Radishes and carrots should be about three inches apart and turnips and beets four to six inches apart. It is not too late to plant vegetables. Cool season crops like broccoli, cabbage, greens, cauliflower still have plenty of time to mature before warmer weather returns.

Scout your garden for insect pests. Many **caterpillars** enjoy feeding on the leaves of your fall vegetables. Cabbage loopers, tomato hornworms, cutworms and pickleworms can be controlled by applying *Bacillus thuringiensis* (*Bt*) formulations in products such as Dipel or Thuricide.

Also watch for **beneficial insects** like lady bugs, green lacewings, and minute pirate bugs. These will help control common pests like aphids, whiteflies and mites.

If you find that you need to treat with a pesticide, always try the least toxic method first. Pesticides like Neem oil, fish oil, and insecticidal soaps will control many insects and not contaminate your harvest. Use chemical pesticides with caution in your vegetable garden. Read and follow the label carefully and pay close attention to the number of days you must wait after spraying before you can harvest.

Getting the Most from the Lawn & Garden Diagnostic Help Desk at Extension:

Lawn Problems: We are often asked to diagnose what is wrong with a lawn. When bringing a sample of grass to be examined by our office, **please** be sure that it is approximately an 8 inch square which consists of half green and half damaged grass, along with the **entire** root system. Transport it in a box if possible. If the specimen remains in tack and not jumbled in a bag we will be better able to diagnose the problem.

Plant Identification: If you would like to have one of your plants identified, please bring or send several healthy leaves attached to a stem, along with samples of buds, flowers, fruit, and seeds. When mailing, **please** describe the plant or send pictures.

DO NOT wrap specimens in plastic and/or wet paper towels as they may decompose. Use **dry** paper towels or tissues.

In the Landscape:

You may be noticing premature flower **bud drop** on Hibiscus and gardenia. This can be caused by insects, as well as cultural or environmental problems. Insects called **thrips and midges** can damage the unopened bud. These insects may go undetected until considerable damage has occurred and the buds drop. Thrips and midges are very small, but you can often see them if you open a bud that has dropped from the plant. Many times the best control is a systemic insecticide that contains imidacloprid or acephate. Remember to follow the label directions very carefully.

Temperature and water fluctuations can cause buds to drop and random leaves to yellow. In addition, too much or not enough fertilizer can also stress the plant, resulting in bud drop. Nematodes can parasitize the root system, creating a water and nutritional stress on the plant, also resulting in bud drop.

Hibiscus, especially doubles, are characterized by premature bud drop. Some bloom well during one period of the year and consistently drop their buds at all other times.

Trees are a large part of any landscape and should be selected carefully. Trees give a home its individuality as well as a restful quality. Shade trees should have moderate to dense foliage and should not have large or objectionable fruits, flowers, or seeds. They should have the ability to withstand high winds and be relatively free from insects and disease pests, and of a size suitable for the location. We have all seen the large oaks planted under utility lines and then severely pruned.

There are two types of **shade trees**, those with heavy, dense foliage that will shade the ground and those with small or widely spaced leaves and open branching so sunlight reaches the soil. Grasses, flowers, and shrubs usually grow best under an open-branched tree. You may want to use both deciduous and evergreen trees in your landscape. Evergreens are useful when shade is desired year-round. Deciduous trees are best in areas where shade is needed during warm months and sun during cool weather. Some deciduous shade trees for our area are red maple, pecan, sweet gum, sycamore, water oak, and elm. Evergreen trees include live oak, pine, magnolia, red cedar, and Texas wild olive.

Overgrown **vines** such as wisteria, ivy, flame, coral, honeysuckle and Confederate jasmine can be pruned now. Cut off excess, tangled growth. Prune back 1/3 to 1/2 and remove rooted suckers which are growing in undesirable areas.

A foliar disease caused by the rust fungus, *Oleosporium plumierae*, is a common disease of **frangipani** (*Plumeria spp.*) especially as nights get cooler and humidity remains high. Small, yellow pustules on the underside of the leaves will rupture and release spores which then infect other leaves. Heavy infections may cause premature leaf drop. Fungicides are **NOT** approved for use on this specific disease. Keep the area under the frangipani cleared of infected leaves. Bag them in plastic and dispose of them.

An insect called **twig girdler** is very seldom seen but often very damaging to young trees. The female lays her eggs in the twigs of maple, oak, pine, and pecan trees. She then chews around the twig so it will drop to the ground where the life cycle will be completed. The damage occurs when leaders of small trees are girdled. This changes the apical dominance and may result in a weakened tree. Larger trees are generally not damaged to any extent from the twig girdlers "pruning". The only control measure to take is clean up the fallen twigs and destroy them. This eliminates the next generation.

Many **annual weeds** grow in the cooler months and usually germinate from seed when night temperatures drop below 70 degrees F. In order to prevent annual weed growth, a pre-emergent herbicide (a weed killer that prevents weed seeds from growing) must be applied before the weeds emerge through the soil. Early November is a good time to apply a pre-emergent. You can obtain an herbicide separately or in combination with a fertilizer. If you fertilized your lawn last month, then it is best to apply the herbicide **only**. Be sure the herbicide you purchase is labeled as safe to apply to your type of lawn grass.

Citrus

There is still time to spray your **citrus trees** for the fall. Use horticultural oil, fish oil, or neem oil for aphids, whitefly, and spider mites. You may use Malathion for heavy infestations. Follow label directions carefully. Citrus leaves that are yellowing around the edge and distorted may be lacking a trace element. You can apply the minor elements to your citrus trees, either as a foliage spray or to the soil. To avoid burning plants, use only the recommended amount as stated on the product label. Minor elements will correct yellowing due to deficiencies of iron, magnesium and manganese, and will also supply copper, zinc, boron, and other needed elements.

Fruit splitting and fruit drop may be a problem during the fall. This is a physiological problem of unknown origin. It may be more pronounced just after a period of moisture stress followed by heavy rains. Splitting and drop will usually not be a serious problem if the trees are well cared for and furnished with adequate nutrition and irrigation, but in years when we experience a prolonged drought followed by several heavy rains, there is the possibility of fruit loss.

Upcoming Events at County Extension / Florida Botanical Gardens

(UF-IFAS / Pinellas County Extension, 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo 33774)

Saturday, November 1, 2008 and continuing each Saturday through April 18, 2009

Pinellas County Market in the Park

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Pinellas County Extension Parking Lot

12520 Ulmerton Road

Largo, FL 33774

Cost : **FREE**

Celebrate the second year of this popular farmer's market during this grand opening morning. Shopping bags will be given to the first 100 attendees filling out a "Check Your Green Commitment" form. A food demonstration, 4-H open house and unveiling of a new children's trail make this a fun morning for the entire family. Free admission, on-site restrooms and plenty of room to roam make this Market convenient and accessible. It is located off 125th Street between Walsingham and Ulmerton roads, next to Heritage Village. For more information, call (727) 582-2100 or visit www.pinellascountyextension.org.

Saturday, Nov. 1, 2008

Dedication of Children's Trail at Florida Botanical Gardens

10 a.m.

Florida Botanical Gardens

12520 Ulmerton Road

Largo, FL 33774

Cost : **FREE**

Families will love the new Children's Trail that has its grand opening November 1. To celebrate, children's activities are planned at each of the four viewing stations such as a butterfly release and walking tour. The stations along the trail highlight butterflies, fruit, trees and wetlands. At the dedication, children can paint a butterfly, make a butterfly life cycle with noodles, look through binoculars and plant a live oak seedling. Be

among the first to enjoy this new trail. This dedication is sponsored by the Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation.

For more information, call, (727) 582-2100.

Saturday, November 1, 2008

Rain Barrel Workshop

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Sunken Gardens

1825 4th St. N.

St. Petersburg, FL 33704

Discover how to set up a recycled plastic barrel to collect rain water from the roof with the experts from Pinellas County Extension. Workshop provides set-up instructions and a reference booklet.

To learn more about costs and to register, call (727) 551-3100.

Wednesday, November 12, 2008

Gardening in the Shade Class with Master Gardener

2 p.m. or 6:30 p.m.

Crystal Beach Community Hall

517 Crystal Beach Ave.

Crystal Beach, FL

Cost : **FREE**

Explore the types of shade in your garden and what types of plants can thrive there. The right plants can add colors and textures to the shade and make your garden pop. Master Gardener Cheryl Korschek leads the program. Participants may attend either class.

To register, call Pinellas County Extension at (727) 582-2673.

Thursday, November 13, 2008

Landscape Palm Care Program Sponsored by Pinellas County Extension

6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the

Emergency Medical Services Building

12490 Ulmerton Road

Largo, FL 33774

Cost: **FREE**

Learn tricks and tips to keep palms healthy while battling the new diseases threatening them. Meet Dr. Monica Elliott from the University of Florida Ft. Lauderdale Research & Education Center as she focuses on new palm diseases along with other major diseases and nutritional deficiencies that are affecting palms. Dr. Elliot's main theme is: keep the palms as healthy as possible, so you know when you have a problem or not. This free program is sponsored by Pinellas County Extension. Space is limited and registration is necessary.

You can register online at www.pinellascountyextension.org or call (727) 582-2100.

For more events information:

www.pinellascounty.org/events or call (727) 582-2100

Pinellas County Extension is part of a nationwide network of land grant universities providing unbiased, research-based information to America's citizens. In our state, Extension's land grant link is the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS). Pinellas County Extension serves as a bridge between the research labs of the university and the local community by providing educational opportunities for adults and youth.