



# “What’s Growing On...”

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## Inside this issue:

Rutgers on the Radio	1
From the Desk of...	1
34th Annual Home Gardeners School	2
Master Gardener Classes Continue	2
Soldier Flies in Compost Piles	3
Perennial Plant of the Year for 2010	3
Extension Center Evening Classes	4
Build a Rain-barrel Workshop	4
2010 All American Selections	5
Bee Keeping Courses	6
Plant Those Peas	6
All About Beans	7
Pruning Figs	8
Small Fruit Production	8
Caladiums	9
ECO Fair	9
Things to Do in March	10
Things to Do in April	11
Things to Do in May	11-12
Rutgers Fact Sheets	13
Late Blight Update	Back



## RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION ON THE RADIO

For agriculture news and horticultural tips, listen to me, Viola Carson, on the RCE Agricultural Program on Monday, Wednesday & Friday on WSNJ AM 1440 & 1240 at 12:15 pm announcing local workshops, seminars, and horticultural tips.

The Master Gardeners will be available at the Extension Office Tuesdays through Fridays to answer your gardening questions. They will be answering questions from 9:00 a.m.—12:00 noon at 856-451-2800 starting April 15th through October 15th.



## FROM THE DESK OF VIOLA CARSON

South Jersey gardeners truly can't wait for spring this year. As I write this there is still a foot of snow on my vegetable garden and 3-12 inches are forecasted for tomorrow. The cure: take two tickets to the Philadelphia Flower Show and call me in the morning. The theme this year is Your Passport to the World.

In the past, the Victory Garden campaign was begun during World war II when food rationing was in place. I challenge you to plant a Victory Garden in 2010. The vegetable plot should be made in that part of your back yard where vegetables will grow best. This location should enjoy six hours full sun a day, is well drained, and has suitable soil. Know where the water source is and how to get water to the crops. Choose what you like to eat. The Master Gardener program is patterned after the victory garden.

Join us for classes listed in this newsletter. Also, be sure to return your newsletter renewal and check the box to receive the newsletter by mail or email no later than May 3, 2010.



## 34th Annual Home Gardeners School

Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education, 102 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ will be holding the 34th Annual Home Gardeners School on March 20, 2010.

For 2010, they have reunited the Spring and Fall sessions into ONE expanded program featuring more workshops, 10 new topics to choose from and a new LOWER price. **First session topics:** Canning Fruits & Vegetables, Perennials for Specific Sites, Coleus: The Rainbow Foliage, Establishing and Maintaining the Home Lawn, Backyard Composting, Amazing Annuals, Common Plant Diseases of Ornamentals, Vegetable Gardening and Best Management Practices: Proper Planting Techniques. **Session two topics:** Fertilizer Use in the Landscape, Accessorizing Your Landscape, What's Wrong with My Plant?, BJB's Rules of Green Thumb, Attracting Butterflies to Your Garden, Shade Gardening, Do's and Don't's of Purchasing Plant Material, Heirloom Tomatoes and Four-Season Woody Plants. **Session three topics:** Vines and Espaliers, Ornamental Grasses, Designing Great Container Gardens, An Appreciation of Wine, History of NJ Cranberries and Harvest, Bulbs for Different Seasons, Five Easy Steps to Better Garden Soil, Native Trees and Shrubs of NJ and Decoding the Landscape. **Fourth session topics:** Fresh Flower Arranging: Hands-On Workshop, Renovating and Rejuvenating Established Landscapes, Organic Berries for the Home Gardener, Garden Projects for You and Your Child, 25 Most Commonly Used Landscape Plants, The Benefits of Attracting Bees to your Landscape, Harvesting Rain Water in your Garden, Arranging Plants in the Landscape and Best Management Practices: Proper Pruning Techniques.

Admission will be on a **first-come, first-served** basis. Register early to ensure your preferred choices. List your three top choices for each of the four listed time periods when you register. All check-in activities will take place in HICKMAN HALL between 8:00 am—9:00 am. Coffee/tea will be provided. You will receive room assignments when you arrive for registration. Confirmation and directions will be sent via e-mail only.

Four convenient ways to register: call 732-932-9271, visit: [www.cpe.rutgers.edu](http://www.cpe.rutgers.edu), fax a registration form to 732-932-8726 or mail: Registration Desk, NJAES Office of Continuing Professional Education, Rutgers University, 102 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8519. Please make check payable to: **Rutgers University**.

### Master Gardener Classes Continue

The Cumberland County Master Gardener Class of 2010 continues to hold classes every Tuesday morning from 9:00-12:00 at the Extension Education Center, 291 Morton Avenue in Rosenhayn. Below is the schedule of those classes (classes with pesticide credits in bold):

<b>March 2</b>	<b>Vegetable Garden (2 PP2 credits)</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
March 9	Plant Propagation ( <u>not held at the Extension Center</u> )	\$15.00
March 16	Turf Culture	\$15.00
<b>March 23</b>	<b>Turf Pest Control (6 3B and PP2 credits)</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
<b>March 30</b>	<b>Pesticide Safety (6 CORE credits)</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
<b>April 6</b>	<b>Tree Fruit &amp; Grapes (3 1A and PP2 credits)</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
April 13	Small Fruit Production	\$15.00
April 20	Soil & Fertilizer	\$15.00
<b>April 27</b>	<b>Plant Diseases (4 3A and PP2 credits)</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
<b>May 4</b>	<b>Weed Management (6 3A and PP2 credits)</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
May 11	Native Plants	\$15.00
May 18	Diagnosing Plant problems	\$15.00

If you would like to join us for these exciting classes, please call Vi Carson at 451-2800 to register.

## Soldier Fly Larvae in Compost

Soldier flies larvae found in a compost bin can be alarming especially if found indoors during the winter. They are large, ½ inch long, black and as wide as a pencil but flat. Adult compost-dwelling soldier flies are black and about 5/8" long. They have smokey black wings that are held over the back when at rest. The first abdominal segment has clear areas. Adults feed and lay eggs on food waste (such as in a composter or uncovered compost pile) especially where conditions are moist. Questions concerning this matter that have come in are: Would keeping them in a garage help? Would they be OK in an unheated garage or a compost pile outside? What other adjustments could be made to the indoor bin?

Soldier flies are voracious consumers of nitrogen dominant decaying materials, such as kitchen food scraps and manures. These flies inoculate the compost with beneficial bacteria from other sources. These flies don't eat the worms or their eggs so they aren't predators of the worms.

If you want to avoid having these large flies and their maggots in your compost pile, make sure you have enough leaves, dry grass, shredded paper and other organic "brown" material in the pile to cover the nitrogen food sources and be sure to bury food scraps at least six inches down. You can further discourage these flies by putting window screen over any holes in the bin and gluing it down with a waterproof caulking (like an exterior household caulk) on the inside of the bin to help exclude the flies in their egg laying stage.

If you aren't too grossed out by the maggots, you can feed them to wild birds. Birds love soldier fly larvae so they can be removed and fed to chickens or just tossed on the ground and other birds will find them. They are actually very high in protein.

To learn more about these insects, visit the Texas Cooperative Extension Website at <http://citybugs.tamu.edu/FastSheets/Ent-1015.html>

## Perennial Plant of the Year for 2010

*Baptisia australis*, blue false indigo is an Eastern US native. The name of the genus, *Baptisia* is derived from the Ancient Greek word, *bapto*, meaning to dip or immerse, while the name of the species, *australis*, is Latin for southern.

Blue false indigo grows three to four feet tall and three to four feet wide in an upright habit. It will reach full size in three years. It grows best in full sun, but can survive in partial shade. If not in full sun it will need to be staked. Full sun is best to keep fungus down. This perennial has a tap root and should be planted in a permanent location. Some clumps are 20 years old and have not been divided. This is a low-maintenance plant.

This spring flowering shrub-like perennial is easily grown in well-drained soil and is drought tolerant after it is established.

The blue pea-like flowers are followed by inflated seed pods that are useful for dried flower arrangements. In earlier times the pods were popularly used by children as rattles.

This is best grown from seed. Like other legumes it has a hard seed coat and must be scarified. This is done by filing or scratching them with sandpaper, then soaking them in water. Seedlings may be transplanted when small. Dividing of full sized plants is not advisable due to the tap root.

## Evening Garden Class Series

There will be an evening garden class series at the Extension Education Center, 291 Morton Avenue in Rosenhayn. The classes are being held the second Thursday of the month. The classes will run from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and cost \$10.00 per person.

Our first class will be **Cool Season Vegetables and Small Fruit** (Raspberries, Blackberries, Blueberries, Strawberries, Gooseberries and Figs) on March 11, 2010. Shirley Kline of Happy Valley Berry Farm will share how she has successfully harvested a wide variety of vegetables and small fruit for sale at several farmers markets in the area. She will show how to extend the growing season.

As an added bonus, Shirley will be teaching how to add small fruits to the yard this spring for an edible landscape. This will be a hands on workshop with plant materials, peat moss, mulch, etc. working outdoors for the first 30 minutes.

The following is the schedule for the remainder of our classes:

April 8th, Warm Season Vegetables  
 May 13th, Begin to Compost  
 June 10th, Grow Roses in the Landscape  
 July 8th, Enjoy the Butterfly Garden  
 August 12th, Preserve your Harvest by Canning and Freezing



To register for one or all of these classes, please call Viola Carson at 451-2800 or email: [violaca@co.cumberland.nj.us](mailto:violaca@co.cumberland.nj.us)

## Build-a-Rain Barrel Workshop

Rain barrels are a great way to capture and recycle rain water for gardening. Join us for a hands-on workshop designed to educate participants on the benefits of rainwater harvesting. Workshop participants will build a rain barrel to take home.

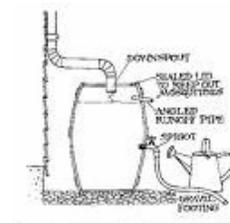
**When:** March 6 or March 17, 2010

**Where:** Cousteau Center at Bridgeton, David Sheppard House, 31 W. Main Street, Bridgeton

**Time:** 9:30 - noon

**Cost:** \$35.00 registration fee includes instruction and materials for building one rain barrel.

**Register:** Call 856-575-5580 or register on-line at [www.jcnerr.org](http://www.jcnerr.org). Please send check payable to **Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey** to the Cousteau Center at the above address by March 1 to reserve your space. Limit two participants per registration.



## All American Selections 2010

### Flower Award Winners:

1. 'Pow Wow Wild Berry' Echinacea purpurea - This flower has deep rose 3-4 inch flowers that retain color on the plant longer. This first year flowering perennial has superior performance including a basil branching habit, resulting in more flowers per plant.

2. 'Mesa Yellow' Gaillardia F1 - This flower is the first hybrid blanket flower with a controlled plant habit and prolific flowering. The 3 inch blooms are good for cut flowers or if left on the plant will attract butterflies. Judges noted improved plant habit with mature plants reaching 20-22 inches in full sun. The plant has a neat mounded shape good for small gardens or containers.

3. 'Moonsong Deep Orange' African Marigold F1 - This hybrid has an intense deep orange flower color. The flower size is large from 2½ to 3½ inches and has full double blooms. This plant has vigor, tolerating stress of heat and drought.

### Cool Season Award Winner:

'Endurio Sky Blue Martien' Viola - This is a spreading and mounding viola that looks delicate but delivers tough as nails performance in the garden. Plants are 6 inches tall, 10-12 inches wide with ¾ inch sky blue flowers covering the plants.

### Bedding Plant Award Winners:

1. 'Twinny Peach' Snapdragon - This plant is a double or butterfly flower form. The blend of peach tone colors also makes it unique. The soft shades of peach, yellow and light orange are distinct and no other snapdragon offers these colors. Match the peach tones with blue salvia or purple foliage plants and your garden will be a knockout. In the full sun garden there will be abundant flower spikes to enjoy as a cut flower for bouquets. Grows to 11½ inches tall.

2. 'Double Zahara Cherry' Zinnia - This plant is leaf spot and mildew resistant. The flower blooms are 2½ inches on a 12 inch plant. Great combined with other sun lovers in container plantings.

3. 'Double Zahara Fire' Zinnia - This flower is a warm red zinnia with a double flower on a 14" stem with leaf spot and mildew resistance. Best in full sun, thrives in summer heat.

4. 'Zahara Starlight Rose' Zinnia - This plant combines a rose and white bicolor and is leaf spot and mildew resistance. 2½ inch flowers sit atop 12-14 inch stems on a 12-14 inch wide plant.

### Vegetable Award Winners:

1. 'Cajun Belle' Pepper - This small 2-3 inch bell pepper on a 24 inch plant is early to mature. When left on plant, fruit will change color from scarlet and finish red, filled with vitamin C. Cajun Belle plants produce a high yield of peppers due to vigor and excellent fruit set.

2. 'Shiny Boy' Watermelon F1 Hybrid - This plant can be grown vertically to save space in the small garden. High yield and early sweet red fruit ready 75 days from transplanting, make this watermelon stand out. Plant in mid May, harvest the end of July. If planting seeds in the ground harvest in 90 days or middle of August.

Information source: All America Selections Winner, 1311 Butterfield Road, Suite 310, Downers Grove, IL 60515-5625. website: [www.aaswinners.com](http://www.aaswinners.com)



## Bee-ginner's Beekeeping



"A-Z information on beekeeping and Hives!" This two and a half-day program is designed to provide the necessary information needed for **new** beekeepers to start and care for a honey bee colony. Whether you have little or no experience in beekeeping, or you are a veteran already working with bees, you will gain valuable insights on disease and mite prevention, hive management and honey production. Class being held in Bordentown, NJ.

**When:** May 6, 7 and 8      **Course Code:** AE0401CB10      **Cost:** \$150.00

### Beyond the Basics: Practical Hive Management Tools for Beekeepers

This two-day hands-on instructional program is designed as the **next step** for apiarists who have knowledge of the industry and have kept a colony for at least one (1) full year. Attendees should have a general knowledge of the language and terminology of beekeeping as well as a basic understanding of the biology of Honey bees. Fundamentals of beekeeping will not be covered. Class being held in Bordentown, NJ.

**When:** June 18 and 19      **Course Code:** AE0403CB10      **Cost:** \$150.00

**To Register or for more information call 732-932-9271 or visit: [www.cpe.rutgers.edu/bees](http://www.cpe.rutgers.edu/bees)**



## Plant Those Peas

Peas need the cool temperatures of March, the rains of April and 60 days or so later the gardener can harvest the little green gems called peas. They are not too picky about their soil, a light sandy soil is better than a waterlogged area, as this will promote rotting. Mulch the young plants throughout the spring to keep the soil cool and give good growth.

To give peas a head start in the garden, soak the seeds in water, half covered, until they sprout, they grow quickly, so plant immediately. By planting just before a rain you will get the same effect. Fertilize the plants well when they are 1½ inches tall. Peas profit from phosphorus and potash, so add 3 pounds of bone meal and 10 pounds of wood ashes per 100 feet. Add lime as soil test indicates to bring pH to nearly neutral about 6.5. Peas belong to the legume family and make their own nitrogen.

Remember to rotate the place the peas are planted every year to cut down on disease. Do not return peas in the same ground for at least three years says Crow Miller in his book "Let's Get Growing". This is hard in a small garden but important. If you have to omit planting peas for a year to give the soil time to rest, do it.

If your peas have a pink treatment on them this is red copper oxide to help control damping off. A pea fence helps with picking. Put a stake every three feet and attach wire to it. Plant a row of peas down the base of the wire fencing. If you've already planted without a fence, there is still time to put up a fence. It will be worth it later.

Garden peas come in two forms; dwarf and climbing. There are many varieties of each form including the sugar or snow peas, which have tender, sweet, edible pods.

Garlic deters aphids which some times attack peas. Some nitrogen-fixing bacteria in soil form a "you scratch by back and I'll scratch yours", association with plants. One such symbiotic relationship that is very important to agriculture is the nitrogen-fixing rhizobia group of bacteria that live inside nodules formed on the roots of legumes. When peas are done and the vines are pulled up these nodules will be on the roots. These bacteria provide nitrogen in a form that leguminous plants can use, while the legume provides the bacteria with sugars for energy. These bacteria tend to do better in well-aerated soils. A single teaspoon may contain 50 million bacteria. They make nutrients available to the plant.



## All About Beans

There are three types of beans: Snap, green shelling and dry shell. Snap beans are named after the sound they make when pods are broken. Green shelling beans, Limas, and pole beans are eaten young or frozen. Dry shelling beans are dried in the pod on the vine before they are shelled.

All beans belong to the legume family, as do peas, lupines, sweet peas and baptisia. Legumes have the ability to fix nitrogen in the soil, which makes that nutrient readily available to plants.

People have cultivated beans for thousands of years, but before breeders developed string less beans, beans had fibrous strings along the seam of the pod and were tough. They had to be cooked awhile to soften them. Prior to the late 19th century, most beans grown by home gardeners were raised for shelled, dried beans, not fresh green beans.

Beans are not hybrids. They are produced as open pollinated crops. Improvements are made when breeders select a parent that has a desirable trait, such as virus resistance. Breeders then fix that trait, making the new variety genetically identical through many generations of self-pollination.

Bush vs. Pole bean. Bush beans produce a lot of pods in a short time. They take up more space than pole beans. Bush beans rarely have trouble with insects and pests because they are not in the garden long enough. A second crop can be planted after the bush beans are pulled. Pole beans take up less space. They take a longer time to bear but continue to bear slowly through the summer.

How do you grow great beans? Beans are warm season vegetables. Wait until all danger of frost has passed and soil and night temperatures remain at 55 degrees or higher. They may be started in individual pots indoors 4 weeks before they are to be set out in the garden. Beans do not adapt well to transplanting. Beans prefer a light, well-drained soil with a pH of 6.0-6.8. Dig to a depth of 6-8 inches and mix in organic matter, either compost or dried manure. Sow bush beans 1 to 2 beans every 3". If you plant in single rows, allow 18" between rows. A traditional method is to sow a double row and space it 18 to 24" apart. Spread compost down the middle of the row after you sow to give the plants a boost in nutrients. Thin 3-4" apart.

Put pole beans on trellises or teepees on the north side of the garden so they do not block the sun from the other crops. Sow 6 to 8 beans in a circle around each pole of a teepee, 1 pole bean seed every 3" along a trellis. Spread compost in a broad circle around a teepee.

Beans require 1" of water per week. Water early in the day, so foliage can dry by evening. Avoid working around or harvesting from the beans when they are wet to prevent disease.

Clean up garden refuse at years end and rotate crops from year to year.

Mexican bean beetle can be a problem. It resembles the ladybug except yellow as is the eggs and larvae. They skeletonize the leaves. Interplant potatoes and beans; each repels the other's pest. Plant resistant varieties. Plant white geraniums among the beans; an element in them poisons the Japanese beetle. Handpick from leaves or knock them off into a jar of soapy water.

One of the best known examples of companion planting is the Native American Three Sisters Garden includes corn, beans & pumpkins. The beans climb the corn stalks. The pumpkins cover the ground.





## Pruning Figs

The best time to prune fig trees is when they are dormant. The reason for this is they bleed badly. Be careful when pruning that the white sap does not get on your skin. Some people are very sensitive to it.

White and brown figs bloom and bear only on new wood, so they can be cut back severely for better production. Prune black figs more like other fruits, by cutting back the wood that is over one year old. If you forget nature will do it for you every five years or so. Many people do not know the variety of their figs so be on the safe side. The fig tree can be trained to a single trunk or multi-stemmed tree.

Figs grow from 25-40 feet tall. They can stand heavy pruning. When a tree has been not pruned for some time it is best to prune in stages. The rule of thirds is a good one to follow. Only prune a third of the tree at a time. A good idea is to keep the tree picking size, unless the shade is desired.

Root pruning is sometimes necessary to promote fruiting if the figs have been growing in over fertile soil. The fact is fig trees do better when the soil isn't too rich.

Use the "4 D" pruning rules. Take out anything dead, then anything damaged or diseased, lastly go for design. For this last step stand back and visualize the shape desired. Keep the center of the tree open to allow light penetration to encourage better fruiting. As a reminder do not prune heavily in late spring or summer, prune figs when dormant. Pruning then will expose the bark to strong sunlight and result in sunburn injury to the trunk and main branches.

Rutgers FS188 General Information and & FS189 Culture and Management provides useful information.



## Growing Small Fruit in the Landscape



I have received many calls on this topic. Many gardeners are interested in growing small fruit such as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries and blueberries. Rutgers has several good fact sheets related to these subjects. FS419, Blueberry Cultivars for the Home Garden, FS101 Bramble Spray Schedule, FS750 Establishing Blueberries in the Home Garden, and FS214 Raspberries in the Home Garden.

Also Penn State University has a guide on small-scale fruit production for the homeowner that is very informative.

Shirley Kline of Happy Valley Berry Farm will have small fruit for sale at WheatonArts Eco Fair this May 1, 2010 and she's at local farmer's markets. Please support our local growers.

Walker Brothers Jersey Asparagus Farms is a local grower that sells raspberries and blueberries along with asparagus and strawberries.

The Penn State Guide advises that the wild raspberries serve as a host for many insect and disease problems that spread to domestic plantings. Removing wild brambles will reduce the need for insect and disease control. Buy plants from a reliable nursery. This is a key to bramble fruit production. The disadvantages of poor stock can never be overcome by a good site or good cultural care.

Prepare the site by growing cultivated crops at least a year before planting cane fruits. Add organic matter. Have soil tested and adjust. Plants are usually planted in early spring. Brambles should not follow tomatoes, potatoes, eggplants, peppers, strawberries, raspberries, or stone fruits for five years, since these crops may harbor the Verticillium Wilt fungus, which is very severe on brambles.

Blueberries can be planted in and around rhododendrons and azaleas as they like the same soil. Edible landscapes are a very good use of space. Blueberries are perennial with a shallow root system. The root system is very fibrous with many fine feeder roots but no root hairs. The absence of root hairs makes them very sensitive to changing soil-water conditions. In nature, blueberry plant roots are colonized by a fungal symbiotic that forms mycorrhizae "fungus roots". This symbiotic relationship allows the plant to better absorb nutrients, particularly nitrogen, and occurs to a lesser extent when blueberry plants are conventionally cultivated.



## Caladiums

Caladiums are grown for their beautiful foliage. Most like shade or partial shade, but some varieties can be grown in sun. They like warm weather, so plant in the late spring after soil is 70°F. Plant the tuber 1½ to 2 inches below the soil with the eyes up and 8-12 inches apart. Mulch and keep moist. Fertilize every 6 weeks with a 6-6-6 fertilizer, or slow release fertilizer at a teaspoon per tuber.

Caladiums are tubers. A tuber differs from the true bulb and the corm by not having a basal plate from which roots develop and not having a protective tunic covering. The caladium tuber has buds scattered over the tuber surface from which shoots and roots develop. Other tubers are oxalis, anemones, and potatoes.

Dig when foliage turns yellow or after frost has killed foliage. Cure by air-drying with remaining foliage for a week and store in sphagnum peat or vermiculite. Soak tubers in a fungicide solution before storage. Remove any decayed tubers. Store at 50-55° F.

To make more caladiums, divide clumps in the spring. Using 80°F bottom heat helps the tubers to form roots. You can divide offsets any time, and pot in a loose mixture with plenty of sand.

Caladiums can be enjoyed indoors. Adequate humidity must be provided. The leaves are thin and it doesn't take much dry air to brown them. A large terrarium would be a great way to provide humidity. Daily misting and or a tray of pebbles with water would work.



### Master Gardeners Come to the ECO Fair

**What:** ECO Fair

**Where:** WheatonArts, 1501 Glasstown Road, Millville

**When:** Saturday, May 1st

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Admission:** Free

This is an exciting event for the beginning gardener to the expert gardener! Can't find an answer to that nagging garden question from last season, this is the place to get your answers.

Come visit the Master Gardeners for an exciting tree tour, a composting demonstration and how to make a rain garden . They will also have many wonderful items for sale. There will be plants that attract beneficial insects, Rutgers Ramapo tomato plants, Master Gardener cookbooks and plants that grow in a rain garden, just to name a few. There will be Master Gardeners on hand throughout the day to answer your many gardening questions.

## Things to do in March

Spring is almost here! After this dreary winter, I'm ready for some nice weather. Here's a list of tasks for the month:



- Till or turn the vegetable garden soil when it's at the proper moisture level. FS129
- Add lime to lawns and gardens only when a soil test recommends it. FS797
- Sow seeds of dahlia, snapdragon, verbena, leaf lettuce, cabbage and broccoli indoors.
- Use dormant oils to combat scale insects and mites when the temperature is above 40°F and when freezing temperatures are not predicted for a few days and before the buds begin to open. FS866
- For a full-sun border, try mixing colors of perennial coneflower and Shasta daisy with annual globe amaranth. Place the taller coneflower toward the rear of the bed and Shasta daisy toward the front with the globe amaranth mixed in between.
- Rake and remove debris from the lawn when it's dry, have lawn mower serviced and blades sharpened.
- Keep the bird feeder filled.
- Fertilize your lawn. Call the Extension office at 451-2800 for a fact sheet. FS633
- Remove dead asparagus shoots from last year's growth. NE221
- If you want to raise fruit in your garden, try grapes, raspberries, or strawberries. It is much less difficult to succeed with them than with tree fruits, and you'll get much faster results. FS214 , 97 & 98
- Submit a soil sample for testing to determine how much lime and fertilizer your lawn and garden areas will need. Soil sampling packets with instructions are available at the Extension Office for \$15.00 for full analysis or \$3.00 for pH level testing.
- Prune grapes, raspberries, blueberries, fruit trees and summer-flowering shrubs early in the month when the temperature is above freezing.
- Remove black knot fungus 18" below the growth on cherry, peach and plum trees.
- Grapevine prunings can be made into attractive wreaths.
- If the soil dries out against a house under the eaves where rain rarely reaches, water well during a thaw to prevent loss of plants.
- Pinch off early buds from developing pansies to encourage plants to branch and form more buds.
- Watch for sale prices on fertilizers and pre-emergent crabgrass killer.
- Cut back the dried foliage of ornamental grasses.
- Particularly good choices for your cutting garden are phlox, daisy, dahlia, cosmos, aster, gladiolus and lily.
- Avoid walking on grass or ground covers while they are frozen.
- Start broccoli, cabbage and other cabbage family crops indoors by the middle of the month. They should be planted outdoors between the middle and end of April.
- Check stored bulbs, tubers and corms. Discard any that are soft or diseased.
- Many herbs including chives, parsley and thyme are also well-suited to baskets.
- Plant pea and spinach seeds and onion, shallot and garlic sets on St. Patrick's day, weather permitting.
- Branches of forsythia, spirea and dogwood can be forced for indoor bloom. Make long, slanted cuts when collecting the branches and place the stems in a vase of water. Change the water every four days. They should bloom in about three weeks.
- Mulch heaved perennials; replant them when the weather is more settled.
- Late winter is the time to prune many deciduous trees. Look over your plants now and remove dead, dying, unsightly parts of the tree, sprouts growing at or near the base of the tree trunk, crossed branches and V-shaped crotches.
- Repot and begin fertilizing houseplants, woody plants and fruit trees.
- Purchase new 40 watt, cool white fluorescent bulbs for starting your seedlings. Check seedling requirements. Tomatoes need 16 hours of light.



### Gardener's Checklist for April



This is the first month for serious outdoor gardening! Check out the tasks below:

- Seed bare spots in the lawn early in the month. FS584 and 108
- Prune ornamental grasses.
- Prune your roses, except for the climbing varieties. FS944
- Remove the winter mulch from roses after the middle of the month. FS 944
- Follow Extension's fruit spray schedules. FS 101, 112, 113, 114, 115 and 116
- Divide summer and fall-blooming perennials.
- Rake winter debris from your lawn before mowing.
- Apply dormant oil sprays for insect control when the temperature will be above freezing for 24 hours.
- Start celosia, cosmos, marigold, annual phlox and zinnia seeds indoors at mid month.
- Repot your houseplants; begin fertilizing them.
- Are those swarming insects termites or ants? Can you tell the difference? FS338
- Apply pre-emergent crabgrass killer when forsythia is in full bloom.
- Fertilize established trees and shrubs. FS31
- Harden-off or condition transplants prior to moving them to the garden. Plant of cabbage, broccoli and collards the third week.
- Direct seed beets, carrots, leaf lettuce, mustard greens, bok choy and radishes around the middle of the month. FS562
- Plant strawberries, rhubarb, asparagus and small fruit plants as early in the month as possible.
- Plant gladiolus corms.
- Plant daylilies, delphiniums, painted daises and phlox.
- Remove spent flowers from spring flowering bulbs. Fertilize with 5-10-10 at 2 lbs. per 100 square feet.
- Sharpen the lawn mower blade. Mow the lawn no shorter than 2 1/2". FS119
- Sow hardy annual flowers like calendula, clarkia, larkspur and sweet pea.
- Turn the compost pile and keep it moist. FS74 and 117
- Protect well-developed strawberry buds from frost injury by applying straw mulch when freezing temperatures are forecasted.
- Start eggplant, pepper and tomato seeds indoors at the middle of the month. FS787
- Do not fertilizer newly planted trees or shrubs.
- Prune early flowering shrubs immediately after flowering and before new growth begins.
- Eco Fair, May 1st at WheatonArts, 10-5:00. Free Admission. Food, music, green venders and info.
- *Have a great April!*



### Gardener's Checklist for May

Gardening gets into full swing this month! Here's a list for your monthly job jar:

- Mow the lawn at a height of 2½ to 3 inches while never removing more than 1/3 of the leaf blade. Leave clippings on the ground.
- Your lawn needs one inch of water per week during dry periods. FS829
- Apply broad-leaf herbicides to control weeds in the lawn. FS119
- Check your lawn insect pests and apply the correct control according to label directions. FS814
- Remove seed stalks from rhubarb as soon as you see them. Harvest rhubarb through early June.
- Harvest mature asparagus beds for 6 to 8 weeks only.
- Lift and divide old chrysanthemum plants or set out new plants purchased or grown from cuttings. Pinch back mums when they are about six inches tall for bushier plants.



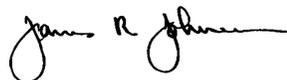
- Continue to pinch back the mums until mid-July.
- Remove daffodil and tulip flowers as they fade. Leave the foliage in place until it turns brown and dies. Dig bulbs for storage after the leaves die.
- Plant dahlia and canna tubers mid to late May.
- Control euonymus scale now before their hard shells form.
- Prune spring-flowering shrubs after the flowers fade.
- It is not too late to sow directly into the soil seeds of sunflower, zinnia, morning glory, portulaca, marigold, cosmos, periwinkles and gourds. Achimenes and other summer-flowering bulbs can also be planted in May.
- Pinch back the terminal growth on newly planted annual and perennial plants. This will result in shorter, more compact, well branched plants with more flowers.
- Time to plant caladium tubers, impatiens, coleus, begonias and pentas in shady areas.
- Replace mulch materials in flower beds and borders to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth.
- Prune climbing roses as they complete their spring bloom season. Remove dead or weak wood as needed.
- Take a critical look at your landscape while at the height of summer development. Make notes of how you think it can be better arranged, plants that need replacement, overgrown plants that need to be removed and possible activity areas that can be enjoyed by family members.
- Check for insects and diseases. Destroy badly infested plants. Spider mites can be especially troublesome at this time. Select a chemical or organic control or use insecticidal soap.
- Start with your tools. Use the right tool for the job and make sure each is in top working condition. A sharp edger makes short work of edging walkways and borders, whereas a dull one can double your time and make it look like a boy with a bad haircut.
- Start your flowers now. They will be much easier to train.
- Weed now to eliminate an abundant crop of weeds later. Use a solution of scalding water and vinegar to kill many down to the roots.
- Transplant on cloudy days and make sure you keep the delicate exposed roots of your seedlings and plants protected from drying out.
- Harvest some of your well rotted compost to make high grade soil for your transplants. Make compost teas and give a good bit to your young plants after transplanting. Use it immediately. It doesn't keep.
- If you see pests on shrubs or plants, eliminate now. If you aren't familiar with the bug you see, bring it to the Extension Office.
- Geraniums that weathered the winter indoors need to be cut back and repotted with new soil or have some good compost worked in.
- Put markers out for your plants. Often late maturing plants are forgotten and dug up inadvertently which can sometimes destroy them.
- Tender annuals can be direct sown now, but don't delay. Try your hand this year at impatiens or gaillardia from seed. Definitely sow abundant amounts of zinnia seed of several varieties for bright color in the late summer. Asters are wonderful too and make great, long lasting cut flowers.
- Remove and destroy bagworms from trees and shrubs.
- Stay on top of the weeds by pulling them as soon as you see them, once a week, after a rain, or whatever works.
- Once there is no threat of frost, usually by mid-May, plant tender plants such as tomatoes, corn, peppers, eggplant and vine crops.
- Make successive plantings of beans and sweet corn to extend the harvest.
- Thin seedlings of early planted crops to spacing specified on seed packet or plant tag.
- Harvest early plantings of radishes, spinach and lettuce.
- *Have a magnificent May!*

## Rutgers Cooperative Extensions Fact Sheets

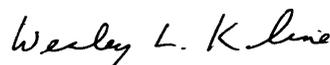
FS #	Fact Sheet Name
Fact Sheet 31	How to fertilize shade trees
Fact Sheet 58	Mulches for vegetables
Fact Sheet 74	Backyard leaf Composting
Fact Sheet 97	Strawberries in the home garden I: Establishing planting
Fact Sheet 98	Strawberries in the home garden II: Maintenance
Fact Sheet 100	Grape Growing in the home garden pest control
Fact Sheet 101	Bramble Spray Schedule for home gardens
Fact Sheet 108	Renovating your lawn
Fact Sheet 112	Apple pest control schedule for NJ home orchards
Fact Sheet 113	Peach/nectarine pest control schedule for NJ home orchards
Fact Sheet 114	Pear pest control schedule for NJ home orchards
Fact Sheet 115	Cherry pest control schedule for NJ home orchards
Fact Sheet 116	Plum pest control schedule for NJ home orchards
Fact Sheet 117	Using leaf compost
Fact Sheet 119	Weed control in home lawns
Fact Sheet 129	Planning a vegetable garden
Fact Sheet 188	Figs in the home garden I: general information
Fact Sheet 189	Figs in the home garden II: culture and management
Fact Sheet 214	Raspberries in the home garden
Fact Sheet 221	Asparagus Beetles
Fact Sheet 338	Subterranean termites
Fact Sheet 399	Vole ecology
Fact Sheet 419	Blueberry cultivars for the home garden
Fact Sheet 560	Growing sweet potatoes in the home garden
Fact Sheet 561	Growing cole crops in the home garden
Fact Sheet 584	Seeding your lawn
Fact Sheet 633	Fertilizing the home lawn
Fact Sheet 678	Growing tomatoes in the home garden
Fact Sheet 679	Growing potatoes in the home garden
Fact Sheet 787	Starting vegetable seeds indoors
Fact Sheet 797	Soil testing for home lawns and gardens
Fact Sheet 750	Establishing blueberries in the home garden
Fact Sheet 814	Managing diseases of landscape turf
Fact Sheet 829	How to protect water quality & have a beautiful lawn: 10 steps to proper fertilization
Fact Sheet 866	Using horticultural oils
Fact Sheet 944	Roses and their care
Fact Sheet EB296	Insects of Beans, Peas, leafy vegetables and carrots family (\$1.00)

**Call 856/451-2800 ask for Viola Carson. When calling to request a fact sheet refer to the Fact Sheet by FS# or by name.**

*What's Growing On* is prepared by Viola Carson, Horticultural Assistant, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cumberland County.



Sincerely,



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## LATE BLIGHT UPDATE 2009-2010

2009 - "Please bring in plants for disease identification. We want to know the variety and where purchased. If identified, plants must be destroyed so spores do not spread. Do not compost or just drop on the ground. Wrap up and put in the trash."

2010 - Last year this was our instructions for dealing with Late Blight. Potato tubers and tomato refuse that was not completely composted over the winter can re-infect new seedlings with late blight. To be safe, pull up and destroy volunteer potato and tomatoes. It is best to buy certified seed potatoes for best results

*Phytophthora infestans* does not seem to survive on dead plant tissue in the soil, but it does persist in infested potato tubers used as seed, on volunteer plants from tubers left in the soil, or plants from tubers in potato refuse piles.

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