

Beauty's Only Dirt Deep

Howard County Horticulture Newsletter

Howard County
Extension Office
421 N. Main St.
Nashville, AR 71852

870-845-7517

sbeaty@uaex.edu

August 2008

Jean A. Ince
County Extension
Agent – Staff Chair

Sherry Beaty
County Extension
Agent – Agriculture

Sherry Wenta
4-H Program
Assistant

Cecilia A. Butler
Administrative Office
Supervisor

Ask and you shall receive! If you are receiving this newsletter, it means we have you signed up on one of our horticulture type mailing lists. First, let me apologize for neglecting you. I hope to do better in the future. This is the first horticulture newsletter in Howard County. I welcome any suggestions on articles you might want to see in this newsletter. I will be covering ornamentals, lawns, gardens, fruit and nuts all in one handy dandy newsletter. I hope that you will enjoy it. For suggestions or comments, you may contact me at the Extension office at 845-7517 or by email sbeaty@uaex.edu.



Pecan Crop is Fair

by John Turner

Miller County Extension Agent-Agriculture

In Southwest Arkansas, it appears to be a small crop of pecans this year. Looking back over the last three years, pecan trees have produced fairly large crops. In 2007, there was an average pecan crop but several production problems occurred, such as Embryo Rot and Viviparous.

These conditions caused very low quality in Improved

Varieties. Remember, usually when there is a small crop, insect pressure appears to be more damaging.



With all of this in mind, it is time to start scouting for pecan weevils that emerge after the first good rain (1 – 1½”). Knowing the life cycle of an insect is very important in their control. The pecan weevils damage pecans in two ways: 1) adults feed on nuts in the water stage, resulting in nuts dropping from the trees; and 2) females placing eggs in nuts between gel and shuck split stage.

A single female will lay about 60 eggs, place and an average of 3 – 4 eggs in each infected nut. The eggs hatch and larvae feed inside the pecan while the pecan develops from gel to hardening stage.

The larvae emerge from the nuts about 42 days after the female has laid the eggs and enter the soil under the tree. About 90% of the weevils which survive will emerge as adults 2 years later to repeat the life cycle. The other 10% emerge 3 years after entering the soil.

For more information on when weevils are emerging, please contact the Extension Office at 870-845-7517.



Herb Gardening is not Hard

If you can grow tomatoes, or a row of marigolds to brighten the shrubbery in your yard, if you have a sunny patio or window in your apartment, if you are a farmer or if you live on the street and have access to soil, you can be and probably already are....a herb gardener.

If you can grow tomatoes, you can grow herbs...

Basil is a good companion to tomatoes. They grow well and taste good together. There are 160 species from which to choose. The seed needs warm medium to germinate. Grow in full sun in good garden soil. Some good ones are:

Sweet Basil

Globe Basil (makes a great border planting)

Lemon Basil (good on fruit and fish)

Opal Basil (leaves are pretty in food and vinegar)



Dill...in the cabbage patch. It supposedly repels cabbage moth. Use the weed in bread, salad, potato salad, on carrots and in yogurt. The seed is good in pickles and in vinegar. Sow dill anytime where you want it grow. The following season it will come up when it pleases and when it reseeds, where it pleases. Dill wants full sun and regular garden soil.



Low growing annual herbs include **Coriander** (seed) and **Cilantro** (weed). Sow this one in the fall, winter, and early spring. Use the seed in baking. The leaf is used in Chinese, Turkish, Indian and Mexican cooking (especially salsa).



Parsley looks great in the border and on the plate. Please don't limit its use to plate garnishing. Parsley is high in vitamins and minerals. Its flavor is fresh and goes well with many of the more pungent herbs. Soak parsley seed overnight. It can be started anytime. The plant is quite hardy. The seed may take up to six weeks to germinate. Just don't forget to keep the medium moist until the plants emerge.



Selecting and Locating Shade Trees

The most lasting work you do in the landscape plan is the selection and location of shade trees. A tree is seldom moved once it is planted. Trees are important because they form the background of the entire landscape planting.

A shade tree should be comparatively free of diseases and insects. There should be no drooping twigs, seed pods or fruits to the extent that they become a nuisance.

Fast-growing trees are not generally considered good shade trees as they break easily under wind and ice. Twelve inches of stem elongation a year is considered medium and 18 inches or more is fast.



Deciduous Trees

Evergreen trees are not desirable for shade trees as it is most desirable to have shade in summer and sunshine in the winter. Therefore, deciduous trees should be used. Some of the better shade tree types are Southern red oak, white oak, willow oak, hackberry, Ginkgo, sugar maple, ash (white and green), pecans (need deep, well-drained soils).

Location of Trees

Plant the first tree 15 to 20 feet southwest of the house. Use your 2:30 p.m. summer shadow and allow it to point to that portion of the house where shade is most desired. Tree number two should be located 30 feet to the southeast, and use your 11:00 a.m. summer shadow. Tree number three should be set 40 to 50 feet to the northeast. The fourth tree should be set 50 to 60 feet to the northwest.



Now's the Ideal Time to Plant Fall Garden

Mid-summer may seem like a strange time to plant a fall garden, but between now and September 15 is the ideal time to plant both warm and cool season vegetables for fall harvest. You can replant warm season crops such as Southern peas, squash, tomatoes, peppers, beans, and cucumbers. And you can have a second planting of cool season crops such as Irish potatoes, carrots, turnips, spinach, lettuce and radishes.

The major problem facing fall gardeners are diseases and insects. They've had all season to build up. If you're not going to plant until the end of August or in early September, you have time to use soil solarization to organically sterilize your soil. Till the soil as deeply as you can, wet it thoroughly, and cover it with clear plastic. Make sure there's good contact between the soil and the plastic.



The recommended period for soil solarization is four to six weeks, but you could get some results in a shorter period. The heat generated under the plastic will hopefully be enough to kill any disease organisms, weed, seed, insect larvae or nematodes in the soil.

Four to six weeks still gives you time to plant crops such as radishes, lettuce, greens, turnips and spinach in mid-September.

If you have good soil, you can go ahead and plant warm season plants as well as cabbage, collard and broccoli—if you can find the plants. Garden centers usually begin stocking vegetable transplants again in August.

Pests aren't your only concern if you plant a fall garden. You'll have to water like crazy to get the plants established. If you're establishing plants from seed, you'll need to water daily to keep the soil moist. Transplants will need to be watered every day or two until the plants are rooted and established. Mulching around plants will help conserve moisture and regulate the soil temperature. If you can get your garden established, you can harvest right up to frost.



All meetings and activities announced in this newsletter are open to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally-protected status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (large print, audiotapes, etc.) should notify the county Extension office as soon as possible prior to the activity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sherry Beaty". The ink is a light grey or blue color.

Sherry Beaty
County Extension Agent-Agriculture

