

**2019-2020
Club Officers:**

President: Marty
Bowlin

V.P.: Ryan Sinclair

Secretary: Vickie
Padgett

Treasurer: Donna
Johnston

Les Walz
County Extension
Agent- Agriculture

Cleveland County
Extension Office
501 East Magnolia
Rison, AR 71665
870-325-6321
lwalz@uaex.edu

UofA
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

**In this issue**

What is going on today? **P.1**

The 411 on Hot Peppers. **P.2**

What is going on today? County Agent's report.

Well, we made it to May and everyone is still alive in my house, so far. This social distancing thing has long gotten old. But, this too shall pass.

So what's been going on in the county and what am I getting calls on:

- Spurweed is here in full force. You remember this one; most call them lawn stickers. That little thorn (haha) in our side you're supposed to treat between Thanksgiving and Christmas and again in February or March. Yep, I'm making a lot of people's day with what I have to tell them now. "Nothing" YOU CAN DO NOW.
- I had my first tomato disease come in this week. Turned out to be bacterial speck. With the wet weather we are having, preventative measures should be taken. This means treating heirloom tomatoes with copper products and fungicides weekly. This will help. Be on the lookout for "Early Blight." It should be showing up any minute now.
- I have also had calls on "Cutworms." Because of the wet weather, many have not been able to plow and this has
 - contributed to more cutworm incidence in the garden. Sweet corn and tomatoes are where I get most of my calls. Cutworms usually cut plants off near the ground, so they are pretty easy to identify. Plowing and use of labeled pesticides can help control them.
 - Looked at some dying "Yoshino" Cherry trees. Turns out they have "Bacterial Canker," a known offender for cherry, peach, nectarine, and plum. A common bacterial disease usually showing up in stressed trees. Copper products might help a little before bloom but usually not. It is better to make sure your trees are planted in a happy place under good management practices. Pruning out affected limbs; and dipping pruning equipment between cuts, may help.
 - Lastly, rabbits in petunias. What can I say; rabbits like to eat petunias and petunias are a perfect place for rearing young. Exclusion fencing may be your best option here.

May-June

Calendar:

- Most everything is still cancelled or postponed.
- Stay tuned for updates.

May-June to do list:

1. Continue planting warm season vegetables.
2. Move houseplants outdoors gradually.
3. Prune spring blooming shrubs after bloom.
4. Cut foliage off your spring bulbs 6 weeks following bloom.
5. Blueberries begin to ripen in June.
6. Keep moisture levels even around tomatoes to prevent blossom end rot.
7. Deadhead annuals and perennials to keep them blooming.
8. Fertilize annuals regularly.

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs and services without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.



In recent years I've gained a fondness for a little heat in my food. Occasionally I enjoy jalapeños on my hamburger pizza, jalapeños on my Italian Sub from my local Pizza establishment, and jalapeños on my "Loaded Grilled Chicken" from our famous greasy spoon (you all know where this is). But jalapeño is about my limit when it comes to spicy hot food. There are others though, who dabble in the insane when it comes to hot peppers. So what makes a pepper taste hot? How is that heat measured? Which pepper is the hottest? How do I grow these little dragons? Stay with me as we answer these questions.

Why peppers taste hot?

There is a colorless, odorless, oily chemical found in peppers called capsaicin. Capsaicin, when consumed, binds with certain sensory neurons which "trick" your body into thinking it is being burned or at least experiencing excessive amounts of heat in the area that the capsaicin contacts, even though no actual physical burning is taking place.

So how is pepper heat measured?

There is a scale for measuring hotness of peppers, the "Scoville Organoleptic Test" or "Scoville heat units" (SHU). This scale was developed by chemist Wilbur Scoville. The hotness is measured in multiples of 100 units, and refers to how much sugar-water is needed to dilute a pepper to the point where your brain is no longer tricked into thinking you are being burned.

The 411 on "Hot Peppers."

"Food for the body is not enough.
There must be food for the soul."

Dorothy Day

Which pepper is the hottest?

There are some mighty big numbers on the Scoville scale. It ranges from a zero (this is where we find the Bell Pepper), all the way into the millions; yep MILLIONS. Just as a baseline for reference: as mentioned, the Bell Pepper is a 0; tabasco sauce is 2,500-5,000; the jalapeno is just 2,500-8,000; standard US grade pepper spray is 2,000,000-5,300,000; and pure capsaicin is 15,000,000-16,000,000. The **Carolina Reaper** at 2,200,000 SHU is officially the hottest pepper in the world, according to Guinness World Records but there appears to be a new number one on the horizon that goes by the name of "Dragon's Breath!!" This new pepper measures nearly 2.5 million on the Scoville scale, which is a full 1,000 times hotter than the famous jalapeño and comes with a disclaimer to possibly take life if consumed.

How to grow peppers?

If you're feeling adventurous and would like to grow some of these fire crackers, they're actually pretty easy. Our Extension Fact Sheet FSA6015

(<https://www.uaex.edu/publications/PDF/FSA-6015.pdf>) can guide you through the process.

As always; if you have questions please contact your local County Extension agent and don't forget to check out our website for other great information at www.uaex.edu. Be safe everyone.