Pruning Demonstration Workshop
Thursday, February 20th
UA Fruit Research Station, Clarksville

In this workshop, you will learn about the principals of pruning along with a hands-on demonstration for pruning apples, blueberries, brambles, grapes, and peaches. Registration will begin at 1 pm and the workshop to follow at 1:30 pm and end at 4:00 pm. Please call 479-754-2406 to pre-register, or to get further information. When you call, please state either you are a commercial producer or a homeowner. There will be a $5.00 charge collected on the day of the event. Call the Extension office for directions to the Fruit Station.

Varieties to Try this Year!

**Tomato Varieties**

**Celebrity**-AAS winner, crack resistant, determinate vine, large firm fruit. More disease resistance than any other tomato recommended in Arkansas.

**Big Beef**- Huge tomato but another AAS winner. Indeterminate fruit up to 2 pounds. Outstanding taste

**Better Boy**- globe-shaped fruit, vigorous plant growth with good production, indeterminate vine. Has significant disease resistance.

**Pepper Varieties**

**Sweet**

**Giant Marconi**-green to red with a thick walled structure-great for roasting or stuffing-AAS winner

**Carmen**-sweet Italian red pepper shaped like a bull’s horn. Excellent for salads and roasting-AAS Winner

**Gypsy**-elongated, 3-lobed beauty performs well in hot and cool regions. Great for frying or in salads. Ripens from light greenish yellow to orange to red-AAS winner

**Keystone resistant**-large, blocky bell pepper with heavy foliage to reduce sunscald with thick stems. Heavy yield producer

**Hot**

**Mariachi**-high quality mild chile pepper that blends well for salsas, sauces, or roasted whole on the grill. Ripens from white to rose color to red-AAS winner
Pepper Varieties – Con’t

Numex Suave Orange- Developed in the New Mexico Chili Institute to have the habanero flavor with less heat and an orange-lemony overtone. The flavor concentrates in the mouth and throat and not on the lips and tongues like many peppers.
Jalapeno-M- Dark green with a thick walled green structure and is very hot to the taste.
Tam-Mild Jalapeno- Medium sized green to red jalapeno with a mild heat with less pungency.

Wanting to try new Varieties in the Garden?

Look for AAS Winner Varieties when selecting plants for the garden. The term AAS stands for All American Selection which is a genetically advanced variety with superior garden performance judged by impartial trials in North America. AAS Mission Statement: "To promote new garden varieties with superior garden performance judged in impartial trials in North America."

The goal of the AAS is to:
1. To test new, unsold cultivars
2. To inform gardeners about the AAS Winners
3. To earn gardeners’ trust in the AAS Winners

All-America Selections is an independent, non-profit organization that tests new varieties then introduces only the best garden performers as AAS Winners.

If you would like to view winners for All-American Selections, go to their website at www.aaswinners.com

Is Pruning Sealer Recommended for Wounds?
Michael Sullivan, Franklin County Extension Agent

The answer is no, it is not recommended to apply pruning sealer for trees if a wound is exposed or a tree becomes damaged. It is not uncommon to associate our own human perspective in regards to open wounds but trees react differently to this scenario than we do. In a natural environment, branches break from trees on a regular basis and do not have a gardener touching up their open area in the wild. Sure these can cause some problems but the natural defense mechanisms kick in to manage the dilemma. As we have our wounds heal, a tree’s exposed area reacts differently. The tree seals the damaged area internally but separately from healthy tissue to reduce further injury or spread of disease. In extreme cases, the damage to the tree can cause it to rot internally but such damage could not be prevented by a pruning sealer either.

Another misconception is that pruning sealer will prevent a tree from “bleeding to death” but trees do not have blood. The sap of a tree is not as vital to their system as blood is to animals. Trees can lose a significant amount of sap without it being considered to be a major injury. This reaction is more of an irrigation process. Pruning sealers do not
substantially affect the reduction of dripping sap because the tree will naturally cease to drip once the wound has sealed.

The compounds contained in these sealers are often soaked with chemicals that do not help the tree in healing but pose more of a threat than they do aid in healing process. Lighter colored materials do less damage but any petroleum-based solvent can be damaging to the newly developing cells. Research has proven time and time again that pruning sealers continue to not be necessary to trees exposed to wounds. Many companies sell this service to clientele but it is not necessary. Proper pruning technique is more effective to allow a tree to fully utilize its protective mechanisms to protect itself.

**Spurweed** (lawn burweed, stickerweed, sandbur) is a winter annual and is often confused with sandbur. Spurweed germinates in the early fall months as temperatures cool and remains small or inconspicuous during the cold winter months. Sandbur is a summer weed and resides on poor ground and is not common in the lawn setting. As temperatures warm in the early spring, spurweed initiates a period of rapid growth and begins to form spine-tipped burs.

Spurweed can be easily controlled during the winter months. December, January and February are ideal months to apply herbicides for the control. However, the weed can also be effectively controlled in March in most areas of Arkansas. Pre-emerge herbicides that are effective on controlling spurweed are Aatrex (a Restricted Use Herbicide), simazine (Princep, others) and Sencor Turf. This group of herbicides should not be used on bermudagrass over seeded with a cool-season turfgrass or on tall fescue, as they are injurious to cool-season turfgrasses. The best option to control spurweed by homeowners is a post-emergence application of one of the various two and three-way mixes of 2,4-D, dicamba and MCPP. Trimec is one of the most common trade names in this category. These products can be used on tall fescue, fall over seeded bermudagrass in which the over seeded cool-season grass has been mowed four to five times and non-over seeded bermudagrass. This group of products should be applied on a warm (air temperatures at least 55 degrees Fahrenheit), sunny day. Two to three weeks after the initial application, spurweed control should be evaluated. If control is not acceptable, an additional application may be necessary.

The key factor to effectively controlling spurweed is to apply an appropriate herbicide during the winter months. Spurweed is small and easier to control at this time of the year than in April and May. Also, turfgrasses are not actively growing during the winter months and have better tolerance to some herbicides. Spurweed can be controlled in late-March, April and early May. Spurweed begins to die as late spring temperatures approach 90 degrees Fahrenheit and the plant is harder to control once the spiny burs or stickers have formed. Multiple herbicide applications are usually necessary, which increases the risk of temporary injury to the turfgrasses. Once a herbicide has been applied, it takes time for the chemical to react and for the dead spurweed to decompose. Therein lies one of the main problems with late treatments. Dead spurweed plants still contain hardened burs. Dead or alive, the spiny burs still present a problem of late treatments. The only recourse at this point is to allow time for the plant to decompose or to fertilize surrounding grasses to create a greater buffer between the hardened burs and grass canopy.
Preemergence Herbicides
Weather and rainfall will affect the longevity of preemergence herbicides but most average about 100 days of weed control. Applications must be made before weeds emerge or poor control may result. Such preemergence herbicides include atrazine (AAtrex) and simazine (Princep) and control a wide variety of weeds in the home lawn setting. Time of application for our area ranges between Feb 15-March 1.

Postemergence Herbicides
After weeds have germinated, an application of 2-3 way mixed or broad spectrum herbicides can knock out problematic weeds. Many products such as 2,4-D+mecoprop+dicamba(Trimec) or metsulfuron(Manor) work well if properly sprayed. Weed control is much more effective when weeds are young and tender so timing is crucial for a more effective control program.

Turf Grass Sensitivity
Be careful in what herbicide you choose on your lawn if you have grasses like St. Augustinegrass, Zoysiagrass, and Centipedegrass. Most preemergence herbicides are relatively safe due to the dormancy at the time of application but be sure to read the label for sensitivity issues. Postemergence herbicide poses a much greater threat to turfgrasses so it is vital that the label is strictly adhered too. If you have any concerns prior to application, call the Extension office for advice.

---

2014 Graduating Class of Franklin County Master Gardeners!

Rosana Asbeck  Mary Ann Melson
Richie Phillips  Suzanne Post
Veronica Post  Gary Pritchard
Scott Trotter  Theresa Trotter