

DIRTY DIGS

Autauga County Master Gardeners Association Newsletter

March , 2020



President's Message

These are some scary, uncertain times. I have spent the last few days passing along cancellations of events, public education programs and speaking engagements. I am trying to keep everyone informed to the best of my ability. On one hand, it's very sad that we have to cancel events we've been working to provide, but on the other hand, it is important for all of us to remain calm and safe to make it through this pandemic. Even though we need to remain physically isolated, it doesn't mean that we need to be socially isolated. That's one of the wonderful things about technology. We can stay connected through phone calls, social media and e-mail. Please take advantage of those avenues to stay connected. If you are struggling, please let us know. We want to help because we are family.

That being said, we still plan to work in the gardens for the near future. We can work together because we are outside and can control physical distance. Plus, there is the added benefit of fresh air and sunshine! If this changes I will let you know.

I plan to spend the next few weeks catching up on several items that have been set aside in all of the craziness that we call life! I started making a list so that I can be productive during this forced down-time. My garden will surely benefit from some extra TLC and attention!



It's about six weeks until the plant sale (April 25th) and I am potting plants like crazy. I hope each of you are doing your own dividing and propagation so that we have a great sale to finance all of our community operations. Hopefully, life will return to normal by then and we can have our sale on schedule. We distributed plant sale signs at the meeting last week. If you need one for your yard or a busy intersection, please contact Ange Trimble. The current plan is to start advertising April 1st.

Always remember, life began in a garden,

Debbie



Master Gardening at Marbury Middle School

By: Nancy Waggoner, Debbie Boutelier

*"Why try to explain miracles
to your kids when you can just have them
plant a garden"*

-Robert Brault

Since January 2018, every other Wednesday, Glenn Huovinen, ACMGA Advanced Master Gardener, Director of the ACMGA Demonstration Garden and former high school science teacher has held gardening classes for sixth to eighth grade students at Marbury Middle School. In collaboration with science teacher Spring Brunner, the neglected outdoor gardening space at the school was completely refurbished to get it ready for use. Seasonal vegetables and flowers have been planted, cared for and harvested by students. It is a hands-on experiential learning program with goals of developing knowledge of where food comes from, appreciating the environment, understanding nutrition for good health and acquiring basic knowledge of horticulture. From outside dig-in-the dirt activities to classroom presentations, students have been exposed to a variety of gardening related topics.

Several ACMGA members have pitched in to assist and teach. Debbie Boutelier's Pizza Garden was a great activity to not only understand where the basic ingredients in pizza come from, but to grow, harvest and eat them in a pizza. As part of the indoor lesson, the students learned how long it takes to grow the pizza ingredients. While most ingredients can be grown in six to eighteen months, the longest time necessary to grow one of the pizza ingredients is at least five years which is how long it takes to get an olive tree from a seed to a tree producing olives! Quite a difference from calling the pizza shop and having it delivered in 30 minutes!

Charlie French, a beekeeper in Autauga County, presented a lesson on bees as pollinators. Rita Nichols introduced students to plant classification, Bionca Lindsey taught nutrition; composting/recycling was taught by Sondra Henley and Rose McCauley and Paula Seamon introduced vermicomposting. Glenn Huovinen's topics were: Carnivorous Plants, Invasive

Species and Pollinators in the Garden. Glenn starts a new class of students next week with Vegetables A to Z. Hopefully, successes with projects like these can boost confidence and self-esteem in young students and instill a love for the natural world.



Marbury Middle School students proudly display their garden signs



Hands-on experiential learning means digging in the dirt!



Junior Master Gardener class displaying their propagation handiwork



Students applying their what they learned about propagating



Propagating a rose in a what?

OUR SISTER COUNTIES L&L SCHEDULES

Capital City Master Gardeners Association

LUNCH & LEARN 2020
1ST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

12:00-1:00 P.M.

FREE PROGRAMS

Armory Learning Arts Center
1018 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36104

- 8 January **Healthy Trees**
Dr. Beau Brodbeck, Specialist, ACES
- 5 February **Hay Bale Gardening**
Eric Schavey, Horticulturist, ACES
- 4 March **Landscape Design**
Renee Thompson, ACES
- 1 April **Shade Gardening**
Mary McCroan, Advanced Master Gardener
- 6 May **Fruits in the Backyard**
Mallory Kelley, Horticulturist, ACES
- 3 June **Hydrangeas**
Mary Long, Master Gardener
- 1 July **Happy Hostas**
Bionca Lindsey, Master Gardener
- 5 August **Hype on Hemp**
Jessica Kelton, Agronomist, ACES
- 2 September **Succulents**
Barbara Witt, Master Gardener
- 7 October **Container Gardening**
Tracy Britnell, Petals From The Past
- 4 November **Composting**
Karin Carmichael, Master Gardener
- 2 December **Decorating for the Holidays**
Anna Owen, Master Gardener

For more information, contact
Montgomery County Extension Office (334) 270-4133
BRING A SACK LUNCH DRINKS PROVIDED

Central Alabama Master Gardeners Association

LUNCH & LEARN 2020
2ND TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

12:00-1:00 P.M.

FREE PROGRAMS

First Presbyterian Church
100 West Bridge Street, Wetumpka 36092

- 14 January **Soils of Alabama**
Dr. Charles Mitchell, Retired Professor, AU
- 11 February **Houseplants**
Elizabeth Leatherwood
- 10 March **Gardening With Climate Change**
Lee & Amanda Borden, Adv. MG's
- 14 April **Invasive Plants**
Nancy Lowenstein, Professor, AU
- 12 May **Southeastern Natives**
Dr. Sue Webb, Petals From The Past
- 9 June **Herbs**
Betsy Smith, Master Gardener
- 14 July **Fermentation**
Deborah Kelso, Master Gardener
- 11 August **Bulbs & Tubers**
Karen Weber, Horticulturist & MG
- 8 September **Coping with Aging Gardens & Gardeners**
Mike Rushing, Master Gardener
- 13 October **Bugs In and Around the Home**
Dani Carroll, Horticulturist, ACES
- 10 November **Holiday Decorating**
Anna Owen, Master Gardener
- 8 December **Transplanting Trees & Shrubs**
David Doggett, Master Gardener

For more information contact
Elmore County Extension Office (334) 567-6301
BRING A SACK LUNCH TEA & WATER PROVIDED

Hummingbird Award

The Hummingbird Award recipient for March was absent at March's meeting so the award was postponed until the April meeting.



Hello Central Alabama Master Gardeners,
What a last couple of days it has been!!!

I know the last few days of weather makes every person who loves plants excited to use this time of social distancing to get out in the landscape. I want each of you to know, we will be offering some fun ways to inspire and keep gardening learning alive in the coming days and weeks. To kick it off, see below a link to register for a Virtual Beekeeping Course.

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/bees-pollinators/stay-at-home-beekeeping-series-distance-learning-for-beekeeping-clubs/>

In addition, we are going to offer Bi-weekly, 30-45 minute gardening programs that anyone can join and more information on that is coming soon, but here are the preliminary details.

If you are a MG or Advanced MG who would like to do a 30-45 minute program for this series, please email me your topic as we would love to have you join in and teach! I can give you the instructions from there and We have lots of GREAT talent so don't be shy!

WHAT: SMART YARDS WEBINAR SERIES

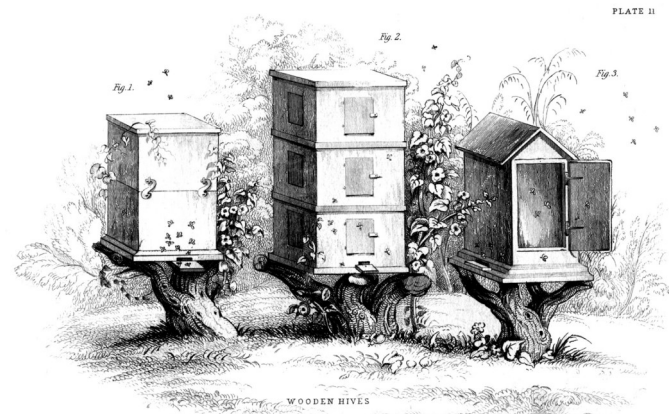
WHEN: Wednesdays and Fridays at 11:00 am (about 30 -45 minutes) leaving 15 minutes for questions or as long as they have them.

This is for Master Gardeners, but also for oth-

ers in the community who might be interested so please pass these links along to your friends, neighbors and others if you think they would be interested.

Everyone stay well and I hope to see you all back in person very soon!

Mallory Kelley



Stay at Home Beekeeping Series – Distance Learning for Beekeeping Clubs



In light of recent COVID-19 developments, the CDC recommends that people practice social distancing. This will help reduce transmission of the virus, particularly to vulnerable individuals. As a result, the Alabama Extension beekeeping team developed the Stay at Home Beekeeping Series.

This series will promote educational information for beekeepers during the coming weeks. It is encouraged that beekeeping clubs cancel their scheduled, on-site meetings over the next 30 days. Instead, clubs should direct their members to participate electronically in this online series

Dates and Times

Each meeting will be held at times when most beekeeper clubs typically meet in order to encourage participation. All meetings are from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Central Daylight Time (CDT). The three events currently scheduled are

- March 19: Minimizing Swarming – Phillip Carter
- April 2: Ten Mistakes that Beginners Make – Lonnie Funderberg
- April 7: Coping with Pesticides – Jack Rowe

How to Participate

To participate in this online series, register on the [Auburn University website](#) or watch the event live on the [Lawrence County Alabama Extension Office](#) Facebook page.

For more information on the Stay at Home Beekeeping Series, contact either [Jack Rowe](#) or [Allyson Shabel](#).

ALERT FROM AUBURN UNIVERSITY, Ala.

Ready to get those gardening gloves dirty again? A break in the rainy weather may be the perfect time for pruning some of the plants in the flowerbed. However, a big chop to ornamental shrubs and trees could leave gardeners with naked plants for the remainder of the year.



To Prune or Not to Prune

[Mallory Kelley](#), an Alabama Extension home grounds, gardens and home pests regional agent, said it is a good idea to think before bringing out the shaping shears or pole saw. “It is important to think about the individual species of plants in the flowerbed before pruning,” Kelley said. “Pruning at an incorrect time will remove buds that are already in place for flowers.”

The May Rule

Kelley said the best guideline for pruning is to follow the May rule. If a plant blooms before May 1, prune it as soon as its flowers are spent. Early spring flowers—before May 1—are produced on last year’s “old wood” growth. Pruning during the winter would remove the current bloom buds. For plants that bloom after May 1, pruning should occur when the plant is dormant during late fall or winter. Summer flowers produced after May 1 are on “new wood” growth. Kelley said pruning stimulates new growth and greater flower production for the following year.

Late-winter and early-spring blooming ornamentals should not be pruned until after the spring blooming

Continued on pg. 8



Become an Autauga County Master Gardener!

Do you love plants?

Then you are a great candidate for the Master Gardener Intern Training!

You do not have to be a garden expert, just come with a desire to learn and grow!

As part of the Master Gardener intern class, you will receive horticultural training specific to Central Alabama's soils and climate, training materials, and best of all, you will make great new friends, and have an opportunity to give back to your community through volunteering.

2020 Session: September 2 – November 11 – Wednesdays 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Free Lunch Provided at Each Class

Application Deadline August 7, 2020

The course fee is \$150 – Early Bird registration gets a \$25 discount

Early Bird registration deadline July 10, 2020

***You will be contacted for a class orientation prior to the start date.**

The eleven-week Master Gardener training course is held at the
Autauga County Extension Office, 2226 Hwy 14 West, Autaugaville, AL 36003.

Classes are taught by professors and specialists from Auburn University, Extension agents, and veteran Master Gardeners.

More information, can be found at <http://mg.aces.edu/autauga/>
or by contacting Natalie Rimel at 334-361-7273

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM- Autauga County Master Gardener Intern Class

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail address: _____

Return Pre-Registration Form by August 7, 2020 to:

Autauga County Extension Office
2226 Hwy 14 West, Suite E
Autaugaville, AL 36003

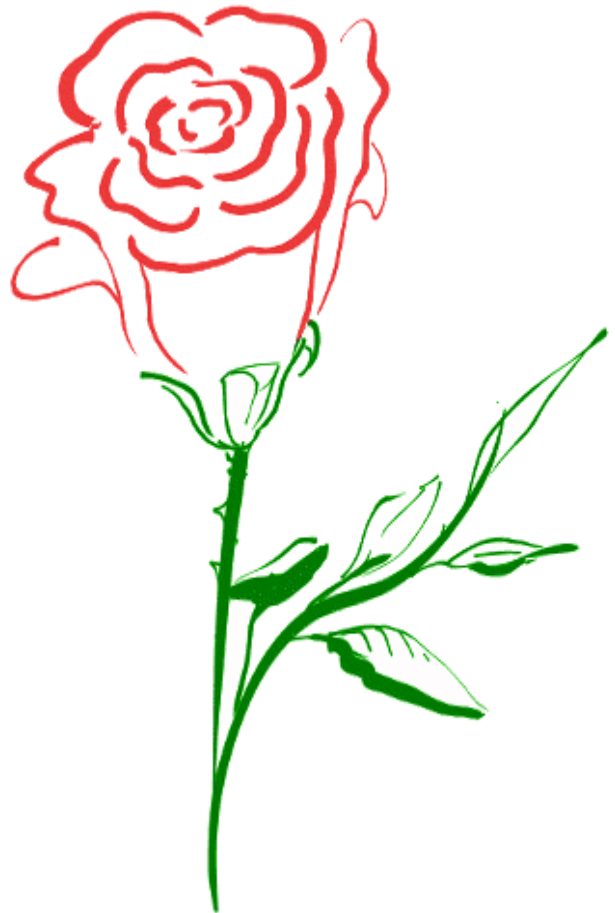
**Autauga County
Master Gardeners Association**
Gardening Lunch & Learn
2020

BRING A SACK LUNCH FREE PROGRAM DRINKS PROVIDED
THURSDAY, 2 April
12:00-1:00 P.M.

Trinity United Methodist Church
610 Fairview Avenue, Prattville 36066

Backyard Tomatoes
Strategies for Success

Mallory Kelley
Regional Extension Agent



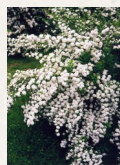
For more information, please contact
Autauga County Extension Office
(334) 361-7273



Old Wood Ornamental Shrubs and Trees

cycle is complete. These plants bloom on “old wood”—or growth that occurred in the summer and fall of the previous year. Even a small pruning job would likely remove all of the buds, resulting in a bush without flowers. Plants considered early-spring bloomers include:

- forsythia
- camellia
- spirea
- viburnum
- azaleas



Kelley said these plants should be pruned immediately after flowering and definitely before June, as the plant will begin setting new buds for next year's flowers in the late summer months.

New Wood Ornamental Shrubs and Trees

If a shrub or tree flowers during the summer or fall, it blooms on “new wood”—the growth that occurred throughout spring months. Kelley said these plants should be pruned once they go dormant in the winter and before leafing out in the spring. “Fertilizing in the spring months will encourage new growth, which will create blooms in the late summer and fall,” Kelley said.

Summer and fall bloomers include:

- crapemyrtle trees
- gardenia
- lilac chaste-tree
- butterfly bush
- clematis



Hydrangeas

“Hydrangeas can be tricky as there are so many different types available now,” Kelley said. “Pruning timing should be determined according to variety.”

Limelight varieties generally do not start blooming until around July 1. Kelley said the limelight varieties do not start blooming until July 1, so those should be allowed to go dormant. Gardeners can enjoy those dried blooms throughout the fall and early winter. Pruning should occur before spring growth begins.

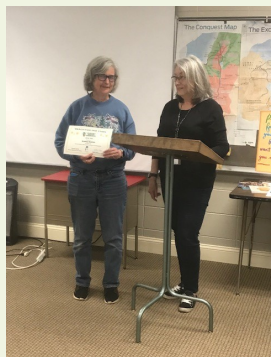
Flowerbed Clean-Up

Fall and winter months are the best time to prune in the yard and flowerbed. This is a good time to prune plants to the ground and discard dry, spent plant material from ornamental grasses, annuals and perennials.

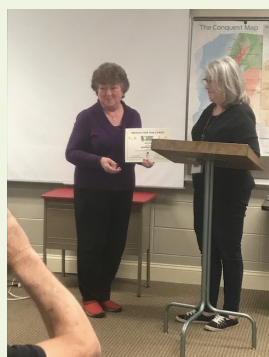
Kelley said bulbs may need some TLC in the spring.

“After spring bulbs stop blooming, it is okay to remove spent flowers,” she said. “However, be sure to leave foliage until it begins to turn brown and die down.”

REACH FOR THE STARS



Reach For the Stars silver star Kathy Quinn



Reach For the Stars gold star Cindy Salyer

Alabama Extension Continues to Serve During Coronavirus



AUBURN UNIVERSITY, Ala. – The Alabama Cooperative Extension System has temporarily closed its county and state offices in response to coronavirus control protocols from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. During this time, Extension follows guidance from Auburn and Alabama A&M universities, the two parent universities of the agency.

“In light of recent developments surrounding the spread of COVID-19, it has become clear that the world is facing an unprecedented health event,” said Gary Lemme, director of Alabama Extension. “The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is working to continue providing the unbiased information you expect during these challenging times.”

Extension Going Digital

To meet the needs of Alabama residents, while also expressing concern for public safety, Alabama

Extension offices will close from March 17 to April 10. However, Lemme said Extension professionals will continue to be accessible to and working for the public.

“Social distancing is an important tool to control this outbreak,” Lemme said. “Our staff are working from home, and we have temporarily halted face-to-face meetings. Advance planning has allowed Extension agents to continue offering information by web, social media, e-mail and phone.”

Allen Malone, Extension 1890 director at Alabama A&M University, said Extension meetings will only be held by digital delivery methods.

“All Extension meetings are cancelled or postponed,” Malone said. “We are only hosting online meetings to reduce the risk of exposure. Contact your Extension agent if you are requesting a farm or home consultation.”

At this time, there is no link between cases of COVID-19 and Alabama Extension offices or activities.

COVID-19 Resources

Alabama Extension offers resources for families and businesses to protect themselves from COVID-19. There are also resources on recovering from a virus exposure.

“Please go to the Alabama Extension website, www.aces.edu, or www.AlabamaReady.info for the latest information, informative articles and videos,” Lemme said. “Contact information for individual agents, specialists and regional agents is available in the Directory section of the Extension website.”

Alabama Extension will release additional information daily to media outlets, the Extension website and over social media. Also, with schools closing, Alabama 4-H will conduct video activities around popular 4-H projects to keep youth active. The activities are available to all youth not just 4-H members.

“In spite of the current challenges with coronavirus, Extension is here to help you,” Lemme said. “We are working to find ways to serve your needs and we appreciate your patience.”



Master Gardeners Plant Sale

Saturday, April 25th

8:00am – 12:00pm

Prattville Garden

Located behind 143 1st Street

For more information 334-361-7273



Perennials,
Herbs, Roses,
Shrubs, Trees,
Bulbs,
Houseplants
and much
more!

Gardening
Items & Yard Art

Soil Test Kits

Ask a Master
Gardener

NUMBERS OF WOMEN IN AG ON THE RISE

By Katie Nichols



AUBURN UNIVERSITY, Ala.—Lauryn Bryght of Macon County is part of an expanding group of farmers—women farmers. From 2012 to 2017, the number of women involved in U.S. agriculture grew by nearly 27 percent. Out of 3.4 million farmers nationally, more than 1.2 million are women.

The most recent Census of Agriculture shows a dramatic increase in the number of women in agriculture—a statistic that Jessica Kelton, an Alabama Cooperative Extension System regional agent, says is due in part to a census that better reflects operation diversity.

“This census does a good job of documenting multiple family members, both male and female, who are involved in some aspect of decision making on the farm,” Kelton said. “Whether in the day-to-day management or financial management, more farms are reporting more than one primary operator.”

Alabama’s Women in Ag

More than 22,000 women are counted as part of Alabama’s almost 65,000 farmers. According to the census, more than 42,000 men are involved in agriculture.

“While numbers may not be equal, women have a higher representation than they used to,” Kelton said. “Even more importantly, more than half of the women—14,393 to be exact—are reported as principal operators. These women are part of the decision-making processes on the farm.”

Kelton said these numbers are good indicators for women who are active, integral parts of their opera-

tions. It debunks the stereotype of the farmer’s wife who is not active in the operation.

Dr. Paul Brown, Alabama Extension associate director, said women play a vital and irreplaceable role in modern agriculture.

“Over the past few decades, women have entered the agricultural industry in unprecedented numbers. Increasingly, women own farmland, are new farmers, or have become more involved in all aspects of agriculture,” Brown said. “They are farmers and farm workers, agricultural researchers and educators. Women contribute to local food systems, direct farm marketing, and farm business planning/management and more.”

Bryght, a Macon County grass farmer, is preparing her land to receive cattle. Bryght has attended multiple Alabama Extension workshops.

“I’m overwhelmed by the quality and amount of information available online and in person from Extension,” Bryght said. “Because becoming a farmer is such a hands-on profession, I’m grateful for the opportunities to get hands-on experience.”

She is also encouraged by the rise in numbers of women in agriculture—whether they are beginning on their own or taking over the family business.

Alabama Extension Programs Foster the Future

Alabama Extension offers several programs offered for women who are involved in agriculture.

Annie’s Project

Annie’s Project is a program Kelton and Allie Corcoran, the Barbour County Extension coordinator, guide in Alabama. Annie’s Project is a national program, shared locally through state groups. The six-week course is designed to help women learn more about farm finances and risk management.

Women in Ag

Brenda Glover, an Extension animal science regional agent, has conducted Women in Ag programs for two years. The first event, held at the Black Belt Research and Extension Center in 2017, was developed to help women master on-farm basics.

A one-day workshop will take place June 14 at the Black Belt Research and Extension Center in Marion Junction. A two-day workshop will follow in



ANNIE'S PROJECT
EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Continued on pg. 12

Hello Everyone,

We are starting a Gardening Smart Yard program through ZOOM and it is MONDAY-FRIDAY at 11:00 for 45 Minutes!

Please see the flyer attached and post on your facebook pages, send to all Lunch and Learn attendees, include in county newsletters, and of course all the Master Gardener Groups! Really, just help us post it around everywhere to get the word out!

Here is the link to join ZOOM to get started as you will need to download the program and then just click the link!

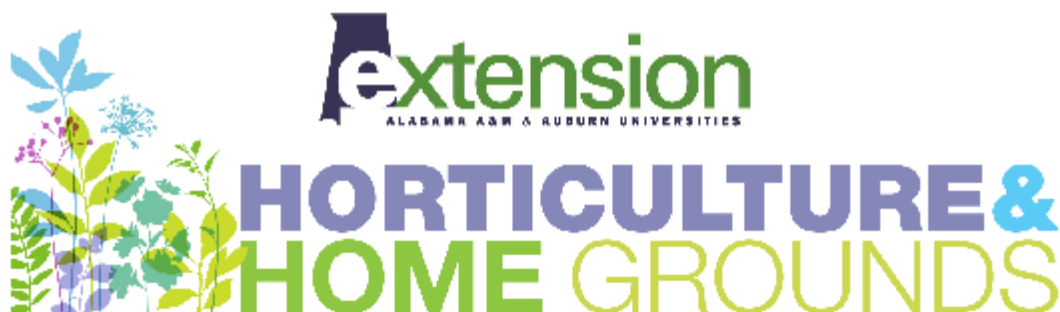
Mallory Kelley is inviting you to a scheduled Auburn University Zoom e-meeting. If you're a new participant, we have a quick start guide here: <https://aub.ie/zoomquickstart>

You can also download the app on your phone and join in, just type in the numbers at the end of the url to join the meeting room!

This is the zoom link for our meeting:

<https://auburn.zoom.us/j/834500888>

Mallory Kelley



Get Outside with Alabama Smart Yards!

Free Webinar Series (45 minutes)

Weekdays @ 11:00 am

Connect: <https://auburn.zoom.us/j/834500888>



W, March 18 Common Mistakes in the Landscape, David Koon
H. March 19 Small Homemade Dutch Bucket Hydroponics, Tony Glover
F, March 20 Dos and Don'ts of Mulches in our Yards, Bethany O'Rear
M, March 23 Proper Planting Techniques, Taylor Reeder
T, March 24 Wildflowers are for Landscapes Too!, Allyson Shabel
W, March 25 Basics of Home Lawn Maintenance, Dr. Dave Han
H, March 26 Managing Wildlife Around Your Home and Garden, Bence Carter
F, March 27 Rain Water Harvesting, Rhonda Britton
M, March 30 Let's Get Fruity, Lucy Edwards
T, March 31 Top Lawn Invaders and Management, Tim Crow

Master Gardener Helpline (887) 252-4769

www.aces.edu

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RECIPE IDEA

BISCUICK PUMPKIN BREAD

HELEN ALLEN

INGREDIENTS:

1/3 Cup vegetable oil
1 Can pumpkin
3 Eggs, beaten
1 1/4 Cups sugar
2 1/2 Cups Bisquick
2 tsp Cinnamon
1/2 tsp Ground Cloves



Directions:

Mix all the ingredients with a fork, beat vigorously for 1 minute. Pout into greased loaf pan and bake at 350° for about 1 hour.



Continued from pg. 11

October.

Glover said programs like the Basic Hands-On Training are important because they empower women to embrace leadership roles on-farm, as well as enable them to be a capable farmhand when the need arises.

"There are many reasons women are becoming more involved in agriculture," Glover said. "Whether they've inherited a farm or whether they're starting one on their own, it is important to provide them the tools they need to be more independent, take ownership and be successful."

ForestHER

Extension also has the ForestHER program—a hands-on workshop to help women learn about forests and forest resource management. Dr. Becky Barlow, an Extension forestry specialist, developed the program in an effort to educate and embolden female landowners. Whether a primary landowner, a secondary landowner or an heir, there is a need for education.

Barlow's program was born out of a desire to help women avoid being taken advantage of—something that happened to a family member—while also expanding the outreach of Extension programming.

"Our goal is to provide quality, consistent information at each ForestHER event," said Barlow, who is also a professor in Auburn University's School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences. "Land is often left to women, but they aren't sure of the next steps if that situation arises. We work to give women a basic understanding of forestry and woodland management so they can better understand forest inventories, mark property lines and make good business decisions."

For More Information:



Contact your [county Extension office](#) to find programs near you.



Monthly Meetings

Second Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church, Prattville (unless otherwise notified)

- ⇒ All odd-numbered months: January, March, May, July, September, November will have 6:00 p.m. meetings.
- ⇒ Most even-numbered months: February, April, June, August, October will have 9:00 a.m. meeting.

Things to do.....

Continue strawberry and grape plantings.

Start planting blackberries.

Fertilize shrubs (except azalias & camellias) according to soil test.

Watch shrubs for harmful insects/

Fertilize established lawns.

Watch new growth on roses for aphids.

Begin a spray or dust program.

Plant gladiolus every 2 or 3 weeks if a long blooming season is desired.

Plant hardy crops recommended for January & February/

After danger of frost is past plant tender vegetables.

Control lawn weeds with chemicals.

Delay pruning early flowering shrubs until after flowering.



**Autauga County Master Gardeners
Assoc.
c/o Autauga County Extension Office
2226 Highway 14 West
Autaugaville, AL 36003**

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

To: