

## **New Ginger Display Garden Installed at Cane Creek Community Garden**

By Hayes Jackson, Urban Regional Agent in Horticulture (August 2010)

Ginger Lilies are a wonderful tropical perennial for Alabama gardens. The flowers come in a variety of colors including yellow, white, pink, and orange. The flowers are typically fragrant ranging from gardenia-like to a fragrance similar to wild honeysuckle azaleas. Some orange flower types lack fragrance, but are still garden worthy due to the bright colored flowers that attract hummingbirds. Originally from Southeast Asia, India, and the lower elevations of the Himalayas. The pest-free, sturdy plants grow quickly when provided ample water and fertilizer.

The Ginger collection involves mostly *Hedychiums*, but includes other ginger species such as *Globba*, *Curcuma*, *Costus*, *Zingiber*, and *Alpinia*. The collection consists of over 160 species and varieties. The first planting phase was installed at CCCG in early July by Dr. David West, Laurie Pitzer, Jane Auiler, and myself. The garden will feature gingers collected in Vietnam and Thailand, Collections shared by Waimea Botanical Garden in Hawaii, and my personal collection from garden here in Anniston. The plantings will be labeled with signs provided by funds from the Calhoun County Master Gardeners.

The Ginger collection will be one of the largest collections of *Hedychiums* in the country. The flowering season begins in July and lasts until frosty weather which is typically in November. A frost will force the plants in to dormancy until spring arrives. The plants benefit from frequent mulching and division and will reward the grower with an abundance of dramatic flowers and tropical foliage.

