

Alabama Cooperative Extension System
St. Clair County Office

Extension Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 24

November/December 2009

Inside This Issue

2010 Census Cautions

Brown Selected As New Extension Associate Director

November: National Diabetic Eye Disease Month

Saving Money When Putting Meat on the Table

2010 Money Management Calendars Now Available

Home Preservation of Pecans

Serving Up Less Holiday Cooking Stress

Farm-Client News Now Available

Staff Favorite Holiday Recipes

The Gardening Corner: How to Select a Christmas Tree

Home Bulb Forcing

Master Gardener Wreath Sale

National Farm-City Week

Friend of 4-H Award: Robin Crenshaw

Generator Precautions

2009 St. Clair County Health & Disaster Preparedness Fair

Dear Friends of Extension,

This year we have partnered with the St. Clair County Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) to offer the 2009 Health and Disaster Preparedness Fair on Friday, November 6th. Through this new partnership, our venue has expanded to include disaster preparedness information and exhibits. Be sure to stop by and visit with ABC 33/40 Meteorologist, Ashley Brand, who will provide information about severe weather awareness from 1-1:30 p.m.

In addition to our usual health screenings, UAB will be on hand this year from 9 a.m.—1 p.m. to offer FREE prostate cancer screenings. Remember, early detection can certainly save lives! The Fair will also offer free health-related information, entertainment, door prizes, and much more. Be sure to bring the kids—Smokey the Bear will be there along with Lady Bug the Clown who will offer free face painting for the kids. Also, thanks to our sponsors for making this year's event possible! For more information see page 12.

As we approach the holidays, I wish you and your family a season of joy and happiness! Thank you for reading the *Extension Newsletter* and supporting the St. Clair County Extension office. Merry Christmas and best wishes for a healthy & Happy New Year!

Lee Ann Clark

2010 Census Cautions: Be Cautious About Giving to Census Workers

With the U.S. Census process beginning, the Better Business Bureau (BBB) advises people to be cooperative, but cautious, so as not to become a victim of fraud or identity theft. The first phase of the 2010 U.S. Census is under way as workers have begun verifying the addresses of households across the country. Eventually, more than 140,000 U.S. Census workers will count every person in the United States and will gather information about every person living at each address including name, age, gender, race, and other relevant data. The big question is—how do you tell the difference between a U.S. Census worker and a con artist? The BBB offers the following advice:

- If a U.S. Census worker knocks on your door, they will have a badge, a handheld device, a Census Bureau canvas bag, and a confidentiality notice. Ask to see their identification and their badge before answering their questions. And NEVER invite anyone you don't know into your home.
- Census workers are currently only knocking on doors to verify address information. Do not give your Social Security number, credit card, or banking information to anyone, even if they claim they need it for the U.S. Census. While the Census Bureau might ask for basic financial information, such as salary range, it will not ask for Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers nor will employees solicit donations.

Eventually, Census workers may contact you by telephone, mail, or in person at home. However, they will not contact you by email, so be on the lookout for email scams impersonating the Census. Never click on a link or open any attachments in an email that are supposedly from the U. S. Census Bureau. For more advice on avoiding identity theft and fraud, visit www.bbb.org.



Brown Assumes Leadership of Extension Rural and Traditional Programs

Dr. Paul W. Brown has been selected as the Alabama Cooperative Extension System's associate director for rural and traditional programs, replacing Dr. Samuel Fowler.

Brown will be responsible for providing statewide leadership for Extension's rural programming effort, which encompasses agriculture, community and economic development, family and consumer sciences, forestry and wildlife sciences, and 4-H. These programs are delivered through the system's 67 county offices, six Extension and Research centers and other centers located throughout the state.

An integral part of Brown's efforts will involve working with other Extension administrators and educators and local community leaders to develop a strategic vision for new rural programs in an era of new funding streams for Extension and rapid economic and social change.

"One aspect of my Extension career that has been most satisfying is working with citizen-based coalitions to address important grassroots issues," Brown says. "This is where Extension in the 21st century can have the greatest impact. When Extension personnel act as catalytic leaders, citizens emerge more empowered than ever to address both the challenges and opportunities they face in a challenging economy and society."

While conceding that Cooperative Extension faces some of the most pressing challenges in its history, Brown nonetheless believes that the organization ultimately will emerge stronger and better equipped to meet these challenges. "I'm excited about this juncture in our history and how Extension will provide educational opportunities and information grounded in research-based science to address issues that most significantly impact citizens across a broad range of ages, careers and activities," Brown says.

"Yes, this will require that Extension programming must anticipate and evolve along with the needs of our clientele. To accomplish this, all Extension educators must view themselves as leaders in their field, playing an extraordinary role in Alabama's culture and future." Brown says he was especially drawn to the Alabama Cooperative Extension System because of its legacy of outreach and also because of the success it has had in recent years dealing with rapid demographic changes and developing strong links between Alabama's traditional rural base and its rapidly expanding urban population.

Brown has served as assistant director for Agriculture and Natural Resources for Iowa State University Extension since 2004. In this role, he has focused on ensuring a more entrepreneurial approach to procuring funds through grants, contracts, fees and other sources. "At Iowa State, we were able to develop an entrepreneurial approach of balancing traditional and nontraditional funding streams that ushered in a new era of vitality to Extension programming," Brown says, adding that the approach worked to enhance Extension's relevance as well as its ability to respond more quickly to critical needs.

He has also been a strong advocate for using cutting-edge technologies and other creative approaches to expand the reach and scope of Iowa State Extension programming. Brown has also been a strong advocate of measures aimed at making farming greener and more energy efficient. He is currently involved in a 13-state effort to organize a regional biorenewables conference, which will share content through high-speed Internet communications.

An Iowa native, Brown is a summa cum laude graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, from which he also earned his master's degree. He holds his doctorate from Iowa State University. Married and the father of five children, Brown cites his main hobby as camping with his family. Brown will assume his new role in November.

Extension Office Holiday Closings

Thanksgiving
November 25th-27th



Christmas
December 21st-January 4th

November is National Diabetic Eye Disease Month

November is National Diabetes Month and Diabetic Eye Disease Month. The month is set aside to emphasize the importance of properly controlling diabetes and getting a yearly dilated eye exam.

People with diabetes have a higher risk of blindness than people without diabetes. However, diabetics have nothing more than minor eye disorders if they keep their diabetes in check.

Diabetics are also 40 percent more likely to suffer from glaucoma than people without the disease. The longer someone has diabetes, the more common glaucoma is. Risk also increases with age.

Glaucoma occurs when pressure builds up in the eye. In most cases, the pressure causes drainage of the aqueous humor to slow down so that the drainage builds up in the anterior chamber. The pressure pinches the blood vessels that carry blood to the retina and optic nerve. Vision is gradually lost because the retina and nerve are damaged.

Many people without diabetes get cataracts, but those with diabetes are 60 percent more likely to develop this eye condition. People with diabetes also tend to get cataracts at a younger age and have them progress faster. With cataracts, the eye's clear lens clouds, blocking light.

To help deal with mild cataracts, you may need to wear sunglasses more often and use glare-control lenses in your



glasses. When cataracts interfere greatly with vision, doctors usually remove the lens of the eye. Sometimes the patient gets a new transplanted lens. In people with diabetes, retinopathy can get worse after removal of the lens, and glaucoma may start to develop.

Diabetic retinopathy is a term for all disorders of the retina caused by diabetes. The major types of retinopathy are nonproliferative and proliferative.

Nonproliferative retinopathy is the most common form. In it, capillaries in the back of the eye balloon and form pouches. This type can move through three stages as more and more blood vessels become blocked.

Although retinopathy does not actually cause vision loss at this stage, the capillary walls may lose their ability to control the passage of substances between the blood and retina. Fluid can leak into the part of the eye where

focusing occurs. When the macula swells with fluid, a condition called macula edema, vision blurs and can be lost entirely. Although nonproliferative retinopathy usually does not require treatment, macular edema must be treated. Treatment is usually effective in stopping and sometimes reversing vision loss.

When retinopathy progresses to a more serious form called proliferative retinopathy, the blood vessels are so damaged they close off. In response, new blood vessels start growing in the retina. These new vessels are weak and can leak blood, blocking vision. This condition is called vitreous hemorrhage. The new blood vessels can also cause scar tissue to grow. After the scar tissue shrinks, it can distort the retina or pull it out of place. This is called detached retina.

According to the American Diabetes Association, you can take several steps to avoid eye problems: keep your blood sugar levels under tight control; bring high blood pressure under control; quit smoking; and see your eye care professional at least once a year for a dilated eye exam.

Diabetes patients should see an eye care professional if their vision becomes blurred, if they have trouble reading signs or books, if they see double, if one or both eyes hurt, if their eyes get red and stay that way, if they see spots or floaters, if straight lines don't look straight, or if they can't see things at the side as they used to.

“Give thanks for unknown blessings already on their way.”

~Native American saying



Saving Money When Putting Meat on the Table

Tough economic times have people looking at ways to tighten their food budgets. Dr. Chris Kerth, a meat scientist at Auburn University, says there are a number of ways to reduce costs when buying meats.

Buy a Whole Side or Not?

A quick search of the Internet will turn up a number of sites that advocate buying a side of beef as a way to save money. Kerth says that for many people, purchasing an entire side of beef weighing in between 250 and 350 pounds may not be cost effective. “A side will provide about 30 steaks and six to eight roasts,” says Kerth. “The remainder—about 50 percent—will be ground beef. A side isn’t a good buy if your family doesn’t eat ground beef.”

Another consideration is storing the frozen meat. One cubic foot of freezer space holds about 35 pounds depending on how items are packaged. Three hundred pounds of frozen meat will require from eight to 10 cubic feet of freezer space. “You will need a separate freezer to store your meat in,” says Kerth. If you are trying to save money and don’t already have a separate freezer, buying a side is not a good option.”

Buy in Bulk

Buying in bulk does have merit. He suggests buying fresh ground beef in 5- or 10-pound packages. “The price will be lower than smaller portions. But then divide it at home into smaller one pound portions in quart freezer bags.” Freezing these bags flat will consume less space in the freezer, allowing room for additional items.

Another option is to buy larger cuts, such as a whole beef loin, and have the grocery store butcher cut into smaller cuts. “For boneless cuts, most people would cut into smaller portions themselves.”

Storing Correctly

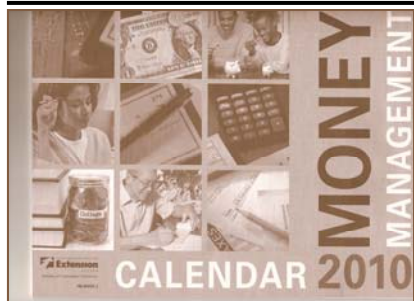
The key to buying bulk from the grocery is storing it correctly. Kerth says that means removing from grocery packaging and rewrapping in freezer bags, foil or freezer paper. “A home vacuum sealer is a great tool. It can extend freezer life by removing air. Air is what causes freezer burn.”

Improve Cooking Skills

Kerth suggests expanding your cooking skills. “No one seems to know how to cook a roast anymore,” he says. “Use dry heat for steaks and burgers. Choose moist heat for roasts and most other cuts.” He adds that most meat packages offer cooking recommendations and that many groceries display recipes near the meat section. Roasts, Kerth says, offer good value, particularly when they are on sale. “Roasts are always less expensive than steaks, and they usually provide more than one meal if you keep portion sizes correct.”

Try Convenience Products

He also suggests busy families check out convenience items found in the meat counter. “The packaged cooked pot roast or beef tips combined with a few sides are generally cheaper and always more healthful than fast food.”



FREE
2010 Money Management Calendars
Now Available



Home Preservation of Pecans

The pecan is a member of the Hickory family and is native to the Mississippi River valley. It grows in much of the southern half of the U.S. providing a beautiful shade tree with the bonus of fall fruit. Although pecans are typically associated with the holidays or fancy candy dishes, there's no need to wait until the holidays to savor the crunchy texture and satisfying flavor of pecans. Pecans are packed with so much nutrition; they should be enjoyed all year long!

Harvesting & Shelling

Pecans are typically harvested in October through December. Pecans are mature and ready to harvest anytime after the shuck begins to open. It is easier to wait and harvest nuts by shaking or thrashing branches after shucks are wide open and partially dried. However, the longer you wait, the more pecans that may be lost to predators. Nuts harvested early in the season have high moisture content and need to be dried before storage. Pecans harvested early can contain 25-30% moisture. Water content decreases in pecans harvested later in the season. Pecans should be stored at a moisture content of about 4%. Dry them in the shell in thin layers on elevated screens or hang them in small mesh bags in a well-ventilated area at room temperature out of direct sunlight. Within 2 weeks the nut meats should be dry enough to snap when bent, an indication they are ready for storage or immediate use.

Storage

Pecans are perishable because of their high oil content and they must be stored properly to maintain good quality. At home, unshelled pecans can be stored in a cool, dry place. Shelled pecans should be either refrigerated or frozen.

Refrigerating or Freezing

Pecan nuts must be stored away from air and light. Pecans will also readily absorb odors from almost any material, including other fruits and vegetables. The best storage conditions can be obtained using vacuum-sealed bags or jars. In the absence of a vacuum sealer, zipper lock bags or airtight containers will work. For flexible packaging be sure and press out all of the air possible before storage. Place sealed bags or vacuum packages in the refrigerator or freezer. When frozen pecans can be thawed and refrozen repeatedly during the two-year freezing period without loss of flavor or texture.

Approximate Storage Times of Pecans

Pantry: 70-80°F—pecans can only be stored for 2 months.

Refrigerator: 38-40°F—pecans can be stored 9 months.

Freezer: 0°F—pecans can be stored 1-2 years.

Unshelled pecans—can be kept in the freezer for up to 4 years.

Canning Nut Meats (Hot Pack/Dry)

Shell nuts. Spread a single layer of nut meats on baking pans and place in a 250°F oven. Stir occasionally heating only until the nut meats are dry but not browned. Watch carefully that they don't scorch. Pack hot nuts into hot, clean jars, leaving ½ inch headspace. Do not add any liquid to the jars. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process.

Option 1—Process in Boiling Water Canner with the water in the canner 1 to 2 inches below the tops of the jars: half-pints or pints—30 minutes.

Option 2—Process in a Dial Gauge Pressure Canner or in a Weighted Gauge Canner: hot half-pints and

pints—10 minutes at 10 lbs.

Frequently Asked Questions about Pecans:

How do I toast pecans?

To toast pecans, spread them on a baking sheet in an oven and heat for 15 to 20 minutes at 350 degrees F.

Are moldy pecans safe to eat?

No. Throw them out. Some people might take a risk and eat moldy foods. In many instances, the individual will simply not feel well after eating moldy food. However, molds on nuts (and grain products) could be a significant hazard. The molds that can grow on nuts can produce mycotoxins. Mycotoxins are highly poisonous compounds produced by molds or fungi. If one sees mold growth, there is a possibility of mycotoxins being present. Molds love moist conditions. Therefore, it is important to keep dry foods dry, particularly nuts and grain products, to prevent mold growth.

How can I tell if my pecans are rancid?

Rancid nuts have a bitter, unpleasant oily taste. Rancid pecans may also have a dark color. A rancid nut can ruin an otherwise perfectly prepared dish, so always taste several nuts from the batch before you use them. Rancidity cannot be reversed. Discard any affected pecans.

For more information on pecans or other food safety related questions, contact Regional Extension Agent, Angela Treadaway at treadas@aces.edu or call (205) 338-9416.



Serving Up Less Holiday Cooking Stress

Do you have guests drop in to visit unexpectedly during the holiday season or a large family who needs something to nibble while waiting for the main meal? Situations such as these can be some of the main causes of holiday stress. Following are various ideas to help reduce holiday stress levels in the kitchen and to add to the time you spend with your family and friends.

The grocery store is a great place to look for convenience foods. Each section of the grocery store offers many possibilities for a well-prepared, low-stress, holiday meal.

In the produce section, look for pre-cut vegetables such as broccoli and celery. Arrange these on a tray with baby carrots and a choice of several dips. No need to fuss with making dip; just fill small bowls with your favorite salad dressings. If the produce section has a salad bar, you can make tossed salad in moments at the store. Then at home just add croutons and maybe a little cheese and the salad is ready for the dressing.

Check out the frozen food section for a variety of treats from chicken wings and meatballs you can spice up with your own sauce to mini burritos and pizzas. Stock up on sandwich makings from the deli. Combine sandwiches with a bowl of soup and perhaps some cole slaw from the deli as well and you've got a complete meal. Check out the deli for main dish offerings, such as roast chicken, or the frozen food aisle for family-sized lasagna.

If your family loves fresh fruit salads, but you don't have time to peel and cut fruit, pick up containers of your favorite fruit already peeled and diced at the market. Your preparation time is cut to just minutes.

The same goes for mashed potatoes; your family loves them, but you don't have the time to make them from scratch. Transform instant mashed potatoes into a taste-tempting side dish by adding grated cheese, fresh herbs and some sour cream.

Desserts are another way you can save time in the kitchen. Check out what's available in your grocery's bakery section. Plus, look in the frozen food section for frozen cakes and pies. Top these with fresh whipped cream or your own chocolate sauce.

While these ideas reduce the time you spend in the kitchen, you will have to pay more for the convenience of the items. Expect this cost increase and rework your food budget to accommodate the increase.

Source: Dr. Barbara Struempler, Nutritionist, Alabama Cooperative Extension System



Farm-Client News Now Available
On the St. Clair County Extension Website
www.aces.edu/StClair

By: Robert Page, Extension Economist

Staff Favorite Holiday Recipes

Annie's Pecan Pie

- 1 unbaked pie shell
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla flavor
- 1/2 cup white corn syrup
- 1/4 cup butter
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup pecans, chopped

Combine sugar, corn syrup, and butter in saucepan and cook over low heat until syrup boils, stirring as it cooks. Add hot syrup a little bit at a time to beaten eggs, stirring constantly. Cool, add vanilla flavor and pecans. Pour into the unbaked pie shell. Bake at 350° F. for 35 to 40 minutes or until its golden brown on top or until it's done. Makes one 9-inch pie.

~Annie Tyree, Administrative Support Associate

White Chocolate Bread Pudding

- 1 lb. French bread
- 1 quart + 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 Tbsp. vanilla
- 2 (12 oz.) pkgs white chocolate chips

Tear bread and pour 1 quart cream over bread. Let stand for 15 minutes. Stir occasionally. Beat eggs. Add sugar, vanilla, and 1 package chips. Stir together and add to bread mixture. Pour into greased 9 x 13-inch baking pan and bake at 350° F for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Melt other chips and 1 cup cream in microwave and pour over pudding.

~Tonya Tomlin, 4-H Agent Assistant

Grape Salad

- 2 lbs. red grapes
- 2 lbs. green grapes
- 8 oz. sour cream
- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Wash and stem grapes. Drain. Cream sugar and cream cheese; add vanilla and fold in the sour cream. Fold in grapes and pour into large bowl. For topping, combine brown sugar and pecans. Sprinkle on top of grape mixture. Chill at least 1 hour.

~Lee Ann Clark, County Extension Coordinator



The Gardening Corner

By: Tony Glover, Regional Extension Agent
Commercial Horticulture
Home Grounds, Gardens & Home Pests



How To Select a Christmas Tree

Question: I love to use real Christmas trees but the needles are always a mess. What type tree has the least problem with needle shedding?

Answer: The quick answer is “the fresher the tree, the better it will hold its needles.” The only way to know you have a freshly cut tree is to cut it yourself, or in my case, I just point to the tree and tell one of my sons to cut it for me. If you buy a tree from a local “choose and cut farm,” it probably doesn’t matter what species you purchase. The key to keeping the needles attached is to get the fresh cut tree stump into water as quickly as possible.

Choosing a pre-cut tree from a sales lot can be a little riskier than cutting the tree yourself, but if you follow these tips your chance of getting a good tree will improve greatly. Purchase a tree as soon as trees are available even if you don’t plan to decorate it for several days. The sooner you can get the tree in water the longer it will last. Most of the trees on sales lots were cut at the same time, so the longer they stay on the lot without water, the less likely they will even take water up when they are placed in home tree stands with water reservoirs. Look at the tree trunk near the base and if you see splitting, the tree most likely has dried so severely it will not absorb water.

Look for a tree with a healthy, green appearance and few dead or browning needles. Run your hand along a branch to see if needles seem fresh and flexible. Needles should definitely not pull free easily. If possible, bump the base of the tree on the ground. You should expect some of the old dead needles to fall off, but if green needles also fall off, the tree is not very fresh.

Once you have chosen that perfect tree and have arrived

back home safely, you should make a fresh cut a couple inches above the original cut. This removes any clogged wood that would prevent water uptake. If you are not ready to place the tree indoors, you may store in a shady area outdoors or in an unheated room or basement. Regardless of where you locate the tree, make sure to check the water reservoir frequently and keep it filled a couple inches or more above the tree’s base. I have not seen any research that proves any concoction added to the water works significantly better than plain tap water.

Another tip to consider involves tree location in the home. Keeping the tree away from heat sources such as air ducts, wood stoves, and fireplaces will prolong the freshness and reduce the risk of fire. Make certain all lights and extension cords are in good working order and turn lights off when the tree is not attended. Because our homes are much drier in the winter when the heating system is operating, a small room humidifier can be good for you, your house plants and Christmas tree.

Some trees are just naturally better at retaining their needles. Douglas fir, Eastern White Pine, Fraser fir, Leyland Cypress, Scotch pine and Virginia pine are considered to have excellent needle retention. Freshness, however, is the key to needle retention.

If you would like some additional tips and a list of the pros and cons of the most popular species, visit this website:

<http://cufan.clemson.edu/hgic/pdf/hgic1750.pdf>



Home Bulb Forcing

Forcing bulbs at home brings the bright colors and the fragrances of spring indoors for the holiday season or for late winter and spring enjoyment. Forced bulbs in decorative containers also make great gifts and they are easy to get started. Start from scratch and assemble your own forcing kit requiring only bulbs, potting mix, containers, and decorative doodads, such as moss, ivy, and ribbons. Expensive containers are not essential; some of the best may be flea market finds.

Most people like to receive bulbs as gifts at the planting stage so they can watch the bulbs grow and flower. Amaryllis and paper-white narcissus can easily be brought into flower in time for the winter holidays if you start about 6 weeks in advance. For those who want their flower to open right away, give the bulbs as gifts just before they start to open. Spring bulbs such as crocuses, daffodils, hyacinths, and tulips can also be given for spring holidays, such as Saint Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, or as spring wedding gifts, but these bulbs do require more planning.

Forcing is causing bulbs to flower in other than naturally occurring conditions. Basically, there are only two types of bulbs for forcing indoors: those that need a cold period and those that don't. Typically, crocuses, daffodils, hyacinths, and tulips are most popular, but other spring flowering bulbs such as bulbous irises, English bluebells, glory-of-the-snows, grape hyacinths, and snowdrops may also be forced using similar procedures. These bulbs require a cold period and are typically forced into flower for late winter and early spring, January through April. Paper-white narcissus and amaryllis bulbs offer more flexible forcing, because, unlike the bulbs previously mentioned, they do not require a cold period to flower.

Bulbs available in garden centers and mass market stores typically arrive in the fall, September through November. Talk with the store's customer service representatives early in the fall to find out when their shipments will arrive so you can get the best selection.

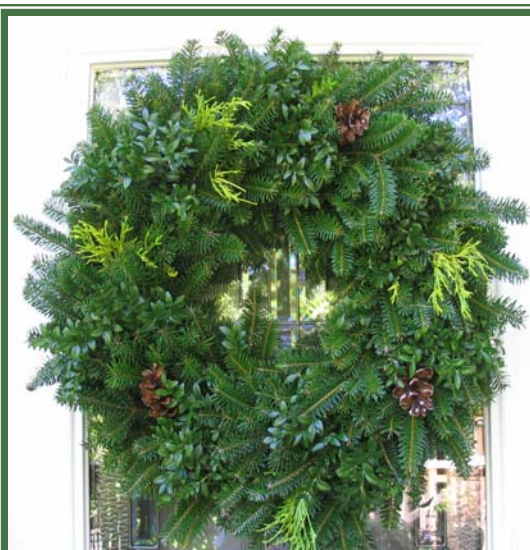
When shopping for bulbs in a local

garden center, imagine selecting onions in a grocery store. Begin with healthy, undamaged bulbs that are firm to the touch, are free of mold or dark, bruised spots, and are the correct size for that type of bulb.

Once purchased, store bulbs in mesh or paper bags (not plastic) or in any container that allows good air circulation and place them in a cool, dry place until you are ready to plant. A dry, cool basement or garage is ideal; bulbs can even be stored in the refrigerator.

For more information about home bulb forcing, visit our website at www.aces.edu/StClair. Just click on publications at the top. Or call the St. Clair County Extension Office at (205) 338-9416 and request a copy of the publication.

Source: ANR-1325 Home Bulb Forcing



St. Clair County Master Gardener Association

Christmas Wreath Sale

Fresh Wreaths Shipped from Western North Carolina

Only \$30 each

To place your order, please contact Adrienne Bourland, St. Clair County Master Gardener at (205) 338-0244. Order deadline: Monday, November 16th. Wreaths will arrive in late November. All orders must be pre-paid. Proceeds from the sale benefit the St. Clair County Master Gardener Association community projects.

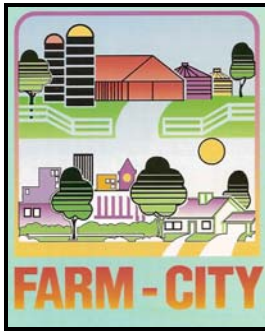
National Farm City Week

November 20–26, 2009

For the past 52 years during Thanksgiving week, the American people have observed National Farm-City Week to express gratitude for the bounty with which God has blessed our land and to recognize the achievements of the farmers, rural townspeople, and city residents who make our Nation's agriculture production and distribution system so successful. Truly this cooperation between rural and city dwellers for mutual benefit helps ensure our country's well-being.

American agriculture, and the many service industries that depend upon it in cities and towns and along all the routes in between, is a story of extraordinary labor creating extraordinary abundance. At this time of year, it is only fitting that all Americans offer some sign of thanks to those who grow, harvest, and bring to our Nation's tables the fruits of sun, seed, and soil.

~Excerpt from National Farm City 2009: A Proclamation



Alabama's Top 5 Commodities

1. Poultry and eggs.....\$2.4 billion
2. Cattle and calves.....\$400 million
3. Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod Production....\$291 million
4. Cotton.....\$184 million
5. Catfish.....\$99 million



Friend of 4-H Award

Mrs. Robin Crenshaw



St. Clair County 4-H is proud to announce Mrs. Robin Crenshaw as this issue's winner of the *Friend of 4-H Award* in recognition of her outstanding volunteer service.

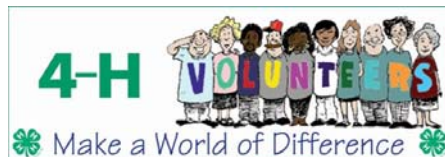
Robin started volunteering in St. Clair County thirteen years ago. She believes that 4-H is very important because it gives children the opportunity to learn about and become successful in things new to them. This builds self-confidence and gives them an outlet to share what they've learned with others. I love how 4-H makes healthy competitions and outstanding trips available to our youth. Four-H is about learning and becoming your best at whatever you're interested in. When asked why she

enjoyed volunteering for 4-H she replied, "I never tire of watching children work hard on a project, putting forth their very best effort and seeing the look of pride on their faces when they present it to others. It is so exciting to see them grow."

Robin is originally from Pell City where she was a 4-H'er and Mrs. Louise Littlejohn was her 4-H Agent. She lives in Pell City with her husband, Ronnie and they have 3 daughters: Kristen who is now married (24), Kaitlin (19), and Kameron (15). She has homeschooled her three daughters through Crossroads Christian School since 1995 and attends New Hope Baptist Church. Robin loves to read, crochet, knit and make crafts.

Congratulations Robin and thank you for the countless hours you have dedicated to St. Clair County 4-H!

If you would like to be a 4-H volunteer or nominate someone for this award, please contact the St. Clair County Extension office at (205) 338-9416.

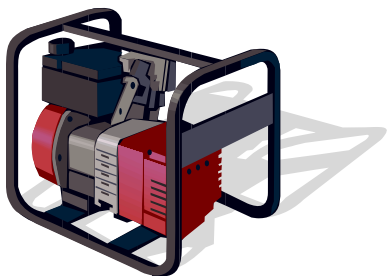


Keep Your Generator O.A.D.* So You Don't Become D.O.A.*

*Outside, Away & Dry

*Dead On Arrival

Generators quickly produce high Carbon Monoxide (CO) levels that may cause death. You can't see or smell CO.



- ◆ NEVER use a generator indoors or in partially enclosed spaces like garages.
- ◆ OPENING doors and windows or using fans WILL NOT prevent CO poisoning.
- ◆ LOCATE generators outdoors, away from doors, windows, vents that attach to the side of your house, and air conditioning units that could pull the CO indoors.
- ◆ USE battery-operated CO alarms in your home that have met the latest safety standards.
- ◆ FOLLOW the manufacturer's instructions for generators and CO alarms.
- ◆ TEST CO alarms frequently.
- ◆ GET fresh air IMMEDIATELY if you feel sick, dizzy or weak and call your Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222.

Source: Florida Department of Health

2009 St. Clair County Health & Disaster Preparedness Fair Sponsors

Gold Level Sponsors

ALACARE Home Health & Hospice
Coosa Pines Federal Credit Union
Golden Living Center—Pell City
Gorbel
Honda Manufacturing of Alabama
Metro Bank
Quality Plus Medical Services, Inc
St. Clair County Extension Office
St. Clair County Head Start
St. Vincent's Health System
Sunrise Healthcare Management
Village at Cook Springs

Silver Level Sponsors

Ashville Family Dentistry, LLC
Bath Fitter
Care First Home Health & Hospice
Countryside Hospice
Home Option, Inc
Lakeside Hospice
MediRest, Inc
MidSouth Home Health
Walgreens Pharmacy—Pell City



THANK YOU

St. Clair County

HEALTH & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FAIR

FREE ADMISSION

TUNE INTO YOUR HEALTH FOR
WELLNESS & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Friday, November 6th

9A.M. - 4P.M.
PELL CITY CIVIC CENTER



**Alabama Cooperative Extension System
St. Clair County Office**

1815 Cogswell Avenue
Suite #103/B04
Pell City, Alabama 35125

Phone: 205-338-9416
Fax: 205-338-9417
www.aces.edu/StClair