

Healthy Georgia Connections

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NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM **UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA** COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

EXTENSION FEATURE

Record-setting hurricane season is just getting started

Pam Knox

UGA Weather Network director, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

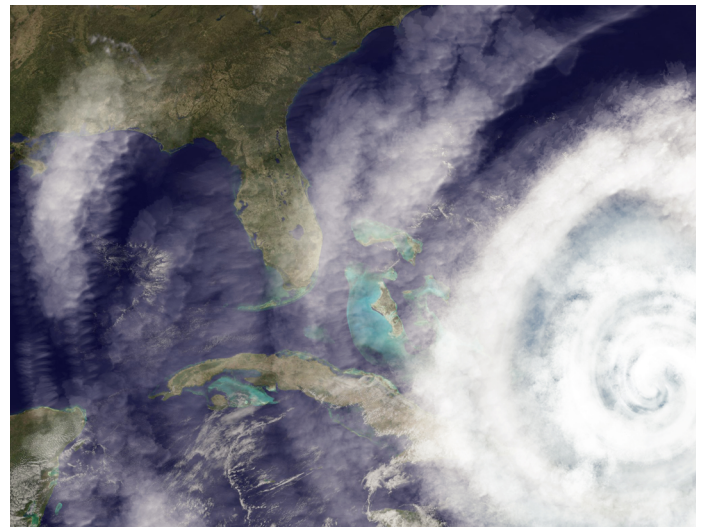
This year's Atlantic hurricane season is off to a record-setting start, with the earliest named "J" storm developing on August 13. The previous earliest "J" storm was Tropical Storm Jose on August 22 in 2005, another very active year.

The latest National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration seasonal forecasts for 2020 storms in the Atlantic includes 19 to 25 named storms, 7 to 11 hurricanes, and 3 to 6 major hurricanes. This includes the 10 named storms and two hurricanes we've already had this year. That means we can expect another 10 or so named storms and five to nine hurricanes later this season.

Since 1 out of 4 storms directly affects the Southeast, Georgia is likely to see more storm activity as the season ramps up later this summer and fall. The season officially ends on November 30, but in an active year, it is not unusual to get storms that occur in December.

Where should you look for information on preparing for and monitoring these storms? At t.uga.edu/6dV, UGA Extension has many publications available that describe how specific groups like livestock producers can get ready available. UGA Marine Extension also has a new publication for homeowners that describes what to do to prepare for extreme weather at gacoast.uga.edu.

Careful preparation is especially important this year with the additional impacts of COVID-19, which will affect what



you should put in your emergency kits and how you make evacuation plans. A recent [Extension webinar on hurricane preparedness](#) also provides some great information.

If you need to monitor the storm as it approaches Georgia, the National Hurricane Center (www.nhc.noaa.gov) provides general storm forecasts and the National Weather Service (www.weather.gov) provides the best local weather guidance, along with your local emergency managers.

continued on page 5

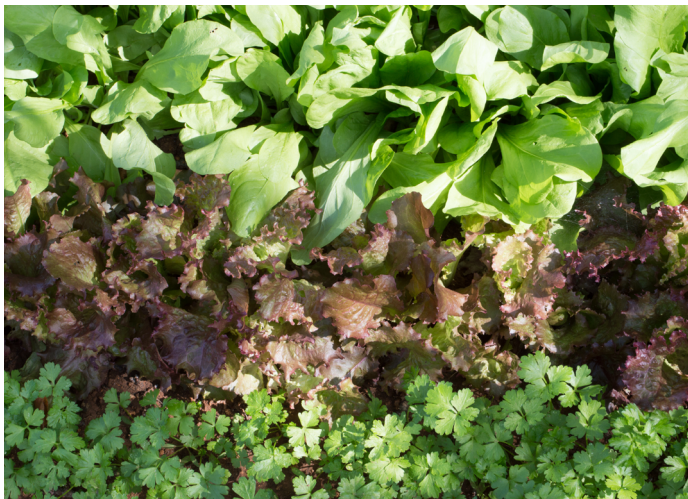


UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION



AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES**Extend your garden season by planting now**

Robert Westerfield, UGA Extension horticulturist, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences



By the time the hot summer comes to a close, many gardeners are tired of battling weeds, insects and disease along with the sweltering heat. While it is easy to give up and seek a cool and comfortable seat in the house, you would be missing one of the best gardening times of the year.

Cool-season vegetables thrive in Georgia's mild fall temperatures, but they must be started in the garden soon. With a little preparation now, you can enjoy fresh vegetables all the way to the holidays.

Favorite fall vegetables include [broccoli](#), [cauliflower](#), [Brussels sprouts](#), cabbage and a multitude of greens. Some vegetables in the fall garden such as collards, turnips, [lettuce](#) and [Swiss chard](#) can be directly seeded into the soil. Other vegetables like broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and cauliflower do best as transplants, which are usually available at garden centers from late August through the end of September.

Before planting, remove all nonproducing summer vegetables and till the area thoroughly. Consider taking a soil test to determine the pH and fertility needs of your garden site. This can be done through your local Extension office.

Space seeds and transplants according to their label and packet instructions. Fertilizer can also be added at this time. It's a good idea to mulch around your plants with pine straw, wood chips or wheat straw to help prevent winter weeds and preserve moisture. Water the seeds and transplants daily for the first week or so to help them acclimate and germinate. Once plants are established, irrigation may be done less frequently.

While there are fewer issues with insects and disease during cooler months, watch with a careful eye to ensure that plants stay healthy. Cabbage loopers are particularly pesky on many winter vegetables, but they can be controlled with labeled garden insecticides.

In addition to the common cool-season vegetables, consider adding some herbs to the fall garden as well. Many herbs actually prefer cool temperatures and will not grow in the hot Georgia temperatures. Cilantro and parsley are great culinary herbs that can be used in a number of dishes. Other good choices include [garlic](#), chives, leeks and arugula.

Most herbs can be started from seed or purchased as transplants. Planting them close to the kitchen in containers or small raised beds makes convenient access while cooking. Leafy herbs can be harvested over and over again throughout the garden season. Garlic will not be ready for harvest until the following spring.

While not an herb, lettuce is often grown in the fall garden alongside herbs. Leaf-type lettuces such as buttercrunch or romaine do best in the Georgia climate.

Regardless of what you choose to grow, don't give up too early on your vegetable garden. While it may be hot right now, the fall garden becomes more pleasurable as the temperatures begin to cool as fall begins. Many vegetables will continue to produce until we hit extremely cold and frosty temperatures. If you're still hesitant, dedicate a small amount of your garden to winter crops and plant a beneficial cover crop in the rest. To read more about home gardening, visit t.uga.edu/602.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES**Organizing a home to live, work and learn****Pamela R. Turner***Professor and Extension specialist, Department of Financial Planning, Housing and Consumer Economics*

Over the past few months, our homes have also become offices and schools. This has changed the way we think about and live in our homes. As we transition seasons, members of your household may still be working or taking classes remotely. This presents unique challenges as you reimagine your home as a place to live, work and learn.

You may have already decluttered and reorganized to create work and study areas in your home. If so, that's great! For those of you who still feel disorganized and overwhelmed, this is a good time to take charge and create designated work and study areas in your home.

Everyone has a different organizational style, so focus on figuring out what works for you and members of your household. Start by eliminating some of the clutter in your home so you have space for work stations. Some prime sources of clutter include papers (mail, bills, etc.), books and magazines, toys and games, hobby materials, shoes and clothes, tools and hardware, cleaning supplies and laundry.

The following are some suggestions to get your work or study space ready:

- **Define individual work areas for each person** in your household who is taking classes online or working from home. It often works best if people are in different rooms; if that isn't feasible, then create work stations.
- **Keep each person's work and study materials separate**, including pens, pencils and headsets.
- **Organize the space using clear containers.** Each at-home worker and student should have at least one box that contains their materials. This will help keep track of papers, especially when people share spaces and computers.
- **Create a schedule** — including beginning, break and ending times — and ensure others in the household know about and respect daily schedules. This will be very helpful if you have shared work and school areas.
- **Designate an area of your home that is a work-free zone.**
- **Post signs on each work station** to help remind household members to wash their hands regularly and sanitize shared electronics.

Once you have set up work and school areas, take some time to create drop stations or areas in your home for those items you use regularly for specific activities. For example, a dog-walking area with everything you need to take the dog for a walk. You may have other drop stations for exercising, gardening or grocery shopping.

Being organized can help provide you with a sense of control over something in your life, and you will save time by not having to search for lost items.

For more ways you can reduce clutter in your home, visit [FIND.uga.edu](https://find.uga.edu).

4-H YOUTH**Balancing screen time with outdoor activity***Kasey Bozeman, UGA Extension 4-H specialist*

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, families and young people struggled to find time in their busy schedules to be outside. Coined in 2005 by Richard Louv, “nature-deficit disorder” is a nonmedical term used to describe the disconnect more and more humans are experiencing with nature. Hunter-gatherer and agrarian societies were directly tied to the land. With the industrial age and advancements in technology over the last two centuries, humans are spending less time outside and more time on electronic devices.

When young people spend time outdoors, they gain a greater appreciation for the natural resources around them. They can explore and be creative and curious — whether that means observing a worm wiggling on the pavement, looking at the different shapes of tree leaves or spending time digging in the dirt. A growing body of research suggests that there are numerous physical and mental health benefits to spending time outside, such as reduced stress, greater cognitive functioning and increased physical activity.

Technology is powerful. Children and youth can read books, listen to podcasts, access the news, watch educational videos and even play cognitive games. These devices have been important tools during this time of quarantine and social distancing, connecting friends and family members through online meeting spaces. With many school systems switching their delivery mode to a virtual or hybrid model, there is even more concern for young people to have intentional time for screen disengagement. The following are some easy ways to take breaks from screen time.

- **Make time to be outside.** Can youth take their devices outdoors for instruction time? Can they read a book sitting on a bench in the public park or build a homework fort in the backyard? Finding intentional ways for kids to be outside while completing their required studies can help provide clarity and focus.



- **Schedule breaks.** Sitting in front of a screen for too long can cause eye strain and anxiety. If children are participating in virtual education, consider building in time for breaks. Even a quick stretch or walk around the block can increase their focus once resuming a task. Using a timer or device to schedule breaks can add fun and spontaneity.
- **Involve the entire family.** Instead of a Friday night movie, plan a hike instead. Create a fun and healthy snack to enjoy on a blanket in the backyard instead of eating at the kitchen table. Could you meet a relative or friend at the park for a picnic dinner? Engage in a civic science project — like monitoring the weather — that families can complete together.
- **Allow unstructured play.** It’s great for kids to complete an outdoor scavenger hunt or try to identify birds based on their songs and calls, but allowing some

continued on page 5

Hurricane season, continued from page 1

Once the storm gets close to Georgia, the UGA Weather Network is a great resource (weather.uga.edu), especially if you are concerned about winds above 35 mph, which shut down the use of most emergency vehicles. Our station at Donalsonville recorded a wind gust of 115 mph as Hurricane Michael moved through the state in 2018. Information about potential and impending storms is also posted at site.extension.uga.edu/climate.

Don't wait to prepare for the next storm! Do it now before the next hurricane approaches, and help keep your family, home and businesses safe.

Balance, continued from page 4

unstructured playtime outside encourages exploration. If the environment is safe, have young people simply wander and use their observation skills. Turn over a fallen log and see what is living under there. Dig in a hole in the dirt and feel the soil. Run around and enjoy the natural surroundings.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S., Richard Louv, co-founder of the Children and Nature Network, compiled a list of activities to help families at childrenandnature.org.

As with anything, having an intentional approach is the key to success. Start with small, incremental changes and track your family's progress over time. Involve children and youth in the decision-making process — perhaps they have some ideas of their own. Helping young people to realize that technology can be beneficial but must be balanced with outdoor time is critical to their development.

EXTENSION PUBLICATIONS

Georgia Fireflies

Georgia is home to over 50 species of fireflies, more than any other U.S. state. To protect fireflies and ensure that we continue to enjoy their presence in the landscape, it is important to understand their lifecycle and habitat needs: uga.edu/5a9

LOOKING ^{TO BUY} LOCAL?
Let Us Connect You!



AG PRODUCTS CONNECTION

In collaboration with Georgia Grown and other industry partners, UGA Extension is using its network of county offices to connect agricultural producers with consumers looking for fresh, Georgia-grown products. Visit uga.edu/508 for more.



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Our purpose: We translate the science of everyday living for farmers, families and communities to foster a healthy and prosperous Georgia.