

# Healthy Georgia Connections

Issue No. 8

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

## **EXTENSION FEATURE**

### **Is that delivery email or text message legitimate? (Part 1)**

**Sheldon Hammond**

*UGA Extension Northwest District director, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences*

More people are relying on shipping and delivery companies to purchase the items they need. Cybercriminals know this and have stepped up their attempts to infect your computer or your mobile device to steal your account information.

#### **BEWARE OF EMAIL ATTACHMENTS**

A common method consumers should watch for is an email stating you have an invoice due or a delivery notice attached, and you need to open the attached file to view the contents. The attached file will often be a PDF file, spreadsheet, Word document, zip file or a file made to look like one of those documents.

A good general rule is to never open a file attachment you did not expressly ask to receive, even if it is from someone you know.

Most of these types of documents can be created to execute code upon opening and automatically download malicious code in the background to infect your computer. As a preventive measure, resist the urge to blindly open email attachments you were not already expecting.

If you still decide to open the attachment, pay close attention to what you might be asked to do next. Do not answer “yes” or “continue” to notices that ask to make a change to your computer. This is most likely a program trying to install itself. It is possible you will not get this warning, but if you do, pay attention to it.



If you are asked to click on a document, link or button from an unknown source, you are inviting harm to your computer. Most attempts to infect a computer require at least some interaction with you, like opening a file, clicking a link, etc.

If you decide to click a link and the invoice does not immediately appear, it is more than likely a fake notice. If you are prompted to log in or enter a username and password it is very likely an attempt to steal your account information.

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**AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES****Top three issues in vegetable gardens****Robert Westerfield***UGA Extension horticulturist, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences*

Georgia has experienced a cooler than normal spring this year, which is highly unusual for our state. While the cool temperatures have felt great to us, vegetable plants have had a slow start, as they much prefer tropical-like weather.

Now that we are finally warming up, there are some things gardeners need to watch out for to have a successful harvest.

**WATER MANAGEMENT**

While we had a very wet spring, you cannot rely solely on rainfall to supply all of a garden's water needs. Both underwatering and overwatering are common problems in home gardens.

On average, vegetables need about 2 inches of irrigation per week to thrive. Raised beds, which have superior drainage, may require more frequent irrigation.

Vegetables respond better if you water them deeply a few times a week rather than frequent light watering. Water long enough to penetrate the soil 4 to 5 inches. Drip irrigation and soaker hoses are preferred to overhead sprinklers.

**WEED CONTROL**

Weeds can get out of control in the home garden if not controlled. Weed control should begin at the time of planting.

Organic mulches and newspaper can help block weeds from germinating. Landscape fabric can also be effectively used to block weeds while allowing vegetables to grow in small openings cut into the fabric.

Chemical weed-control options are also available, but herbicides should first be discussed with your local Extension agent to pick the proper product and learn to use it correctly.

**INSECTS AND DISEASES**

Warmer temperatures bring an increase in insects and disease issues. Gardeners must be vigilant in looking at plants daily to catch the first signs of insect or disease damage. If control is necessary, begin with organic options and work from there.

Be mindful that even organic insecticides can accidentally kill beneficial and pollinating insects. Spray late in the evening to minimize hitting the good guys.

While there are certainly other items that should be addressed in the home garden, the three discussed above are the highest priority. Paying attention to them should have you eating fresh vegetables in the next month or two.

For more information, contact your county Extension office or see the Home Garden publication series at [tuga.edu/62z](http://tuga.edu/62z).

**4-H YOUTH****Georgia 4-H offers virtual livestock educational resources***Cris deRevere, 4-H public relations coordinator, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences*

As school responsibilities wrap up and summer break begins, youth now have more time for livestock projects and hands-on learning.

Through UGA Extension, Georgia 4-H offers educational opportunities in programs that challenge youth with real-life issues as they learn responsibility through raising, showing and evaluating livestock. These projects provide students the opportunity to practice and acquire new knowledge in the fields of animal science, business, time management and leadership.

With many extracurricular activities sidelined, youth have more time for livestock-related tasks like showmanship practice, developing their record book and fine-tuning their animal show entries.

While social distancing, youth have been introduced to a new way of virtual learning. To ensure that dedication and enthusiasm continue to grow for livestock programs, Georgia 4-H has begun offering virtual instruction as well as online resources at [georgia4h.org/about-us/resources/activity-resources/#livestock](https://georgia4h.org/about-us/resources/activity-resources/#livestock).

To learn more, visit [georgia4h.org/livestock](https://georgia4h.org/livestock).



**FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES****Protecting your home from radon leaks**

Pamela Turner, UGA Extension housing specialist, College of Family and Consumer Sciences



June is National Healthy Homes Month, and as we spend more time at home, many of us have become more aware of the air we breathe indoors.

High levels of radon can be found in new and older homes. Radon is a gas that is formed naturally when uranium in rock, soil and groundwater breaks down. Most of the time, radon harmlessly dissipates into the atmosphere outdoors; however, when radon concentrates inside your home it becomes a problem. It seeps into your home through cracks and crevices, and can even enter through your well water. The EPA estimates that each year around 21,000 people die from radon-induced lung cancer.

You can order a radon test kit from UGA Extension for \$15. The kit is hung in the lowest livable level of your home for three to seven days, then mailed off for analysis. If the test results are above 4 picocuries per liter, you can either test again or consult a radon professional about installing a radon mitigation system to fix the problem. The EPA action level is 4 picocuries per liter, which is the equivalent radiation dose of receiving 200 chest X-rays per year.

**Radon is a radioactive gas that is the leading cause of lung cancer for nonsmokers. It is harmless outdoors but can be very dangerous when found in high quantities in a confined space, such as your home.**

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), indoor pollutant levels can be two to five times higher than outdoor pollutant levels. There are several sources of indoor air pollution, including tobacco products, fuel-burning appliances, building materials, excess moisture, household cleaners and radon.

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Radon is an indoor air problem that can be fixed, so don't delay — test today.

In addition to radon testing, other steps to take to make the indoor environment healthier include not smoking indoors, repairing appliances, using a carbon monoxide detector, repairing water leaks, using kitchen and bathroom fans, following the directions on household cleaners, and choosing less toxic products.

To learn more about National Healthy Homes Month, visit [hud.gov/healthyhomes](http://hud.gov/healthyhomes). For an interactive map of radon levels in Georgia, visit [radon.uga.edu](http://radon.uga.edu).

**Legitimate?** *continued from page 1*

### PHONY TEXT MESSAGES AND OTHER PROTOCOLS

Another method imposters use to try to steal account credentials are fake text messages.

If a delivery company is trying to reach you via text message, it is usually easy to determine what the tracking number is from the text. This will allow you to go to a web browser or use an application on your mobile device and enter the tracking number. If the number is invalid, the message is mostly likely bogus.

Using the same email address and password combination for more than one website or application also puts your data at risk. Identity thieves know that many people do, and once they collect your login information, they will start using it all over the internet.

If you use the same login information for multiple sites, you may have provided them access to what they are looking for. And if you click a link or open an attachment, you may inadvertently allow the installation of malicious software that will collect your login information for other sites and send it off without your knowledge.

Stay alert, pay attention to your own activities and be suspicious of anything online that doesn't look right. And even when everything does look perfect, be cautious if you did not initiate the interaction.



### 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 [Laga.edu/SUB](http://Laga.edu/SUB) 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.*