

UGA Extension Meriwether County ANR E-Newsletter

January 19, 2018

THE SCIENCE OF PRUNING MUSCADINES

I mentioned pruning muscadines in the first week of March the other day to someone and was told that muscadines should be pruned earlier or they would bleed. Research has shown that bleeding does no harm to muscadine vines and does not impact production. It's also usually hard to avoid; in a really mild winter you won't be able to keep them from bleeding. Bleeding in grapevines is as much a result of warm soil temperature and adequate soil moisture as it is the pruning. These conditions trigger water uptake in actively growing roots. The pruning cut creates the pressure that pulls fluids through the xylem tissue much in the way that evapotranspiration in leaves does during the growing season. Or in some cases osmosis may be the cause as an equilibrium between moisture in the soil and moisture in the roots is created. If our soils remained below 45° F and we experienced dry winters bleeding would be less likely to occur. But we don't. I've pruned muscadine vines during really cold weather only to have the vines bleed a week later when the temperatures warmed up. So avoiding bleeding is not the real concern. What is actually more important is pruning too soon.

Last winter was one of the mildest on record. Despite that claim, on March 16th temperatures plummeted to the low twenties causing damage to flowering peach trees and blueberry bushes throughout Georgia. Our winters overall have been getting milder over the past years but severe cold temperatures are still occurring late into March and even into April. Pruning coupled with mild temperatures can trigger plants coming out of dormancy earlier than they normally would. Pruning stimulates the production of plant hormones that stimulate new growth. If that happens and we still have severe cold snaps occurring all of that new growth will be damaged. The plant will have to dip into stored energy reserves to produce more shoots. Muscadines are normally one of the latest fruits to come out of dormancy so they can also be one of the latest to be pruned. My usual recommendation for pruning of any fruit trees or vines is to try and have it done by mid-March. Commercial producers don't have the luxury of pruning at the "best" time. Most start when they have the time and the labor. If mechanical pruners aren't used and the acreage is extensive pruning may take months. Waiting for a time when the vines won't bleed isn't going to happen and yet commercial orchards still produce fruit year after year.

The two most common problems that I've come across in the past twenty years that impacted production in the home garden were over pruning and growing only imperfect flowered cultivars. When pruning vines you should leave at least two fruiting spurs on one year old shoots growing off the cordon or arms. I've seen folks prune all of the spurs off. No spurs; no fruit. I've also spoken to folks who had no idea that muscadine varieties can be self-infertile. Usually you know this is a problem if someone tells you they have a plant that flowers but never produces fruit. If they received the plant from a reputable nursery than more than likely it's a female flowering variety that needs a self-fertile or a male flowering plant for pollination to occur. If it's one they removed from the wild then it's a toss-up whether it's a male or female flowering plant. Typically, male flowering plants are more common. Examination of the flowers will tell. Buying from a reputable nursery and paying attention to pollination needs is more likely to bring you fruit faster though. Muscadines are one of the most forgiving of plants. They are well adapted to the

southeast and are typically very vigorous growers. If you mess up pruning one year there should be plenty of growth next year to correct mistakes.

To learn more about pruning muscadines and other fruits please visit:
https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%201087_2.PDF

To learn more about bleeding in grapevines, please visit:
<http://articles.extension.org/pages/65035/grapevine-bleeding>

For a list of muscadine varieties for our area and information on their flowering type, please visit:
https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20949_7.PDF

UPCOMING LOCAL UGA PROGRAMS

Pesticide Class: Managing Common Weeds of Pastures, Forests and Lawns

January 29, 2018 7:00-8:00 PM

UGA Extension office located at 1250 Terrell Street, Greenville GA 30222

One recertification credit is offered for private applicators and commercial applicators in categories 21-plant agriculture, 23-forestry and 24-ornamental and turf. Anyone interested in the topic is welcome to attend; you do not need to possess a pesticide applicators license.

For more information or to register please call the office at 706-672-4235 or email scj24262@uga.edu.

Egg Candling Certification Class

For Meriwether, Troup and Harris Counties

Brad Pitts with the Georgia Department of Agriculture will be the instructor.

If you plan to sell your eggs to individuals, or at a farmers market, an egg candling certificate from the Georgia Department of Agriculture is required. The class will last about four hours, including one hour of classroom instruction, followed by a written examination and a hands-on candling examination. If you want to review the recommended study materials for the written examination and candling examination before the class, please see:

The Georgia Egg Law can be obtained from the Georgia Department of Agriculture online at:

<http://agr.georgia.gov/egg-candling-class.aspx>

Tuesday, January 30, 2018 from 10:00 am-3:00 pm.

The class will be held at the Harris County Extension office located at 121 North Old College Street, Hamilton, GA 31811.

There is no charge for the class but pre-registration is required by Friday, January 26th. Please contact the Harris County Extension office at 706-628-4824 or email uge2145@uga.edu

There will be a one-hour lunch break on your own.

Small Ruminant Meeting with Dr. Niki Whitley

Please put the evening of Thursday, May 3rd on your calendar for a question and answer session with extension specialist, Dr. Whitley. I will let you know where as soon as I have confirmed a location.

OTHER UGA PROGRAMS

2018 ServSafe Manager Certification Training and Exam

Madison, GA January 30 8:30-5:00 and January 31 8:00-5:00

Cost is \$140.00 for class, book and exam

For more information please contact Leigh Anne Aaron at 706-342-2214 or laa@uga.edu

2018 Georgia Corn Short Course

Tuesday, February 6 8:00 AM-5:00 PM

UGA Tifton Conference Center at 15 RDC Road, Tifton, GA 31794

Cost is \$5.00 in advance or \$10.00 at the door

Topics to be covered:

- Fertility
- Irrigation
- Diseases, Pests and Weeds
- Precision Management

For more information or to register please visit:

<http://www.caes.uga.edu/campuses/tifton/conference-center.html> and click on the "See More Events" button. Scroll down to Feb 6 and click on 2018 Georgia Corn Short Course.

2018 Northeast Georgia Beef Cattle Short Course

February 7, 2018 at the UGA Livestock Instructional Arena located at 2600 S. Milledge Avenue, Athens, GA 30605. The cost is \$25.00 which covers lunch and materials. Topics to be covered are:

- Management Practices to add Value to your Calf Crop
- Controlling the Breeding Season
- Understanding Feeder Calf Grading
- Improving Your Herd Genetics
- Hay vs. Baleage

Attendees will be eligible for three hours credit towards Beef Quality Assurance recertification, one hour private pesticide credit, and one hour commercial pesticide credit.

For more information and to register please visit: <http://www.caes.uga.edu/extension-outreach/commodities/beef/programs/athens-beef-cattle-short-course.html>

UGA Hosts Inaugural Hay and Baleage Production Short Course

February 22, 2018 at the Carroll County Extension Office

March 8 and 9 at the Burke County Extension Office (Waynesboro, GA).

Stored forages, such as hay and baleage, are a critical component of agriculture in Georgia, carrying livestock producers through times when forage is scarce. This year, the UGA Forage Team is debuting a new event format for hay and baleage producers. The program will focus on techniques for producing high yields of high quality hay and baleage in the Southeast. This Short Course will be valuable for serious hay producers looking to enhance their production system and learn more about modern hay and baleage-making techniques and technology. UGA specialists and researchers will present information on the hay and baleage-making and storage techniques, as well as provide updates on current research. Registration for the short course is \$65. Registration includes a 300+ page Hay and Baleage notebook, a weed ID book, lunches and refreshments.

For more information or to register please visit:

<http://georgiaforages.caes.uga.edu/events/HBSC18/documents/HBSCAgendaFeb2218.pdf>

GEORGIA GROWN

The **Georgia Grown** program is a marketing and economic development program of the Georgia Department of Agriculture. The goal is to aid the state's agricultural economies by bringing together producers, processors, suppliers, distributors, retailers, agritourism and consumers. Businesses involved in agriculture and/or horticulture can create a free profile on the Georgia Grown website. Consumers can then find your business by using the Georgia Grown locator. Members can use the Georgia Grown logo to advertise their business and products. Businesses that are eligible to join must fall in one of the categories below:

- Non-processed agriculture products grown in Georgia
- Processed or manufactured agriculture products if the key ingredient is grown in Georgia
- Georgia based companies that are a part of or support the Georgia agriculture community

To learn more please visit: <https://www.georgiagrown.com/>

CATTLE

Young Cattlemen's Council Farm Tour

The GCA Young Cattlemen's Council and UGA Beef Team are offering a day-long bus tour to visit three outstanding operations in Northeast Georgia and an opportunity to have lunch hosted by Commissioner Gary Black at his farm. The date of the tour will be Saturday, February 17th, 2018. The cost is only \$20. This tour is a sponsored by the GCA Young Cattlemen's Council and is thus restricted to cattlemen between the ages of 18 and 40. To register, please call the Georgia Cattlemen's Association office (478-474-6560) by February 1, 2018.

Young Cattlemen's Council Farm Tour Itinerary

- 9:00 a.m. Meet at UGA Livestock Arena (2600 S Milledge Ave, Athens, GA 30605)
- 9:30-11:00 a.m. Still Water Farm tour
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch at Commissioner Black's farm
- 1:30-2:45 p.m. Potts Brothers Farm tour
- 3:15.-5:00 p.m. Elrod Farms tour
- 6:00 p.m. Return to UGA Instructional Arena

Elrod Farms is a purebred cattle operation in Jackson County operated by Cole Elrod.

Potts Brothers Farm is a stocker and purebred cattle operation in Jackson County operated by Kyle Potts.

Still Water Farm is a commercial cattle operation that has won numerous pasture management awards operated by Terry Chandler in Madison County.

LOCAL EVENTS

Georgia Arbor Day

Officially the date for Georgia Arbor Day is the third Friday in February but there will be events throughout Georgia on February 15th and 16th including a tree planting celebration at the town complex on Wortham Road in Luthersville at noon.

For other planned events in Georgia please visit: <http://thegrove.americangrove.org/state-groves/georgiagrove#.Wmly86inHct>