

UGA Extension Meriwether County ANR E-Newsletter

January 27, 2017

SMALL RUMINANTS

Economics and Marketing Meeting

Levi Russell, UGA Professor of Agricultural & Applied Economics, will be visiting us to talk about small ruminant economics on February 21, 2017 at 7 PM. As a group, we will also discuss marketing opportunities.

Paul and Bonnie Parker are kindly letting us meet at their business, the **County Line Café** at 7 E. Oak St in Luthersville.

Please call Susan at 706-977-0882 or email her at scj24262@uga.edu if you plan to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

PASTURES

Weed Management

Since the weather was too dry last fall to get pre-emergent herbicides out when they should have been applied, growers will need to be timely with their post-emergent applications. I walked some pastures about a 1 ½ weeks ago to see what weeds I could find. The one weed that I found in every pasture was henbit, *Lamium applexicaule*. Other common annual weeds that I saw were mouse-eared chickweed, *Cerastium glomerata*, and common chickweed, *Stellaria media*. Some fields also had wild radish, *Raphanus raphanistrum*.



An excellent time to manage weeds with a post-emergent application is when they are between 2-4 inches tall. If you read post-emergent herbicide labels carefully they all say to apply when weeds are small and actively growing. As you can see in the photo above on the left, not all weeds germinate at the same time or grow at the same rate. Growers should know what weeds are most difficult for them to manage in a specific field and time their herbicide applications for when those difficult weeds are small. In the field where this photo was taken, the henbit is ahead of the chickweeds in growth. In trying to maximize the benefit of an herbicide application the grower might be inclined to wait until the chickweeds have grown a little more. But waiting means that the henbit will be bigger also. If henbit is the more problematic weed, then the herbicide application

needs to occur while it is still small. You don't ever want weeds reaching a flowering or seeding stage before an application. Waiting that long can drastically reduce the efficacy of the herbicide and, with some weeds, you won't get any control. According to Patrick McCullough, UGA Extension Agronomist, products containing **metsulfuron methyl** will give good to excellent control of the weeds above. Such products are Chaparral, Cimarron Max, Cimarron Plus and Pastora, Pastora is labeled only for **established bermudagrass** pastures and can cause some yellowing during the growing season, so dormant applications are safer. Check the labels of the other products for use restrictions on **other established grasses** such as tall fescue. This chemical is **not** a fast-burn down product and it may take longer to work in cold weather. It also needs some moisture to move it into the soil profile to activate pre-emergent control but you don't want rain right after an application. As always, please read the pesticide label before you 1) purchase one 2) read it again before you use one and then 3) follow the directions for use!

PRUNING

I've had multiple requests recently for information on pruning fruiting plants. Below is information on pruning rabbiteye blueberries, muscadines and neglected apple trees. Now is an excellent time to be pruning despite the ups and downs of our temperatures. If you can't get to it now, try to have it done by late February. Also, a good publication on pruning in general is available at:

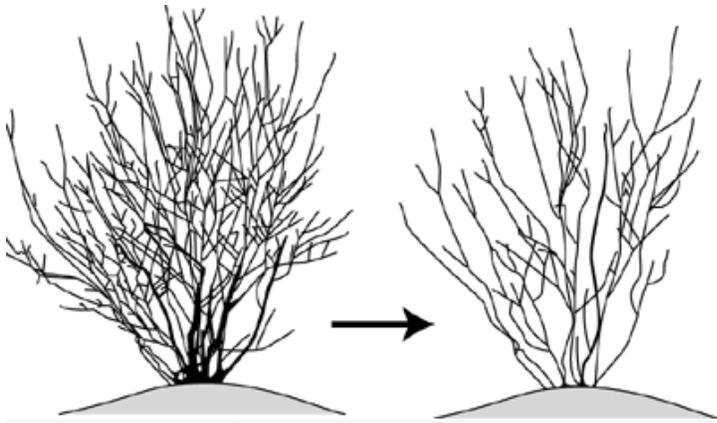
http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%201087_2.PDF

Winter Pruning Bearing Rabbiteye Plants

"Rabbiteye blueberries over five years old usually benefit from cane renewal pruning. Cane renewal pruning involves removing about 15% of the canopy by cutting one to three of the oldest canes each winter about one or two inches from the crown, with loppers. Also during this process, remove as much dead wood as feasible....On rabbiteye cultivars such as Climax that have few canes, remove only a portion of a cane each year. Flower bud numbers and fruit set on rabbiteye blueberries are often lower than on highbush. For this reason, it is seldom necessary to do detailed hand pruning on rabbiteyes".

From the Southern Region Small Fruits Consortium:

http://www.smallfruits.org/SmallFruitsRegGuide/Guides/2007/3_21_07SR_BlueberryHortGuide.pdf



Figures above: Cane renewal pruning and branch thinning of highbush blueberries 4 feet and taller, before (left) and after pruning. Remove low, spreading branches and excessively twiggily growth with too many flower buds.

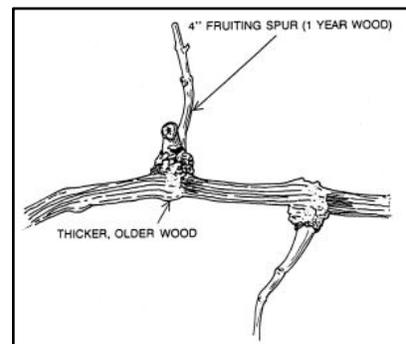
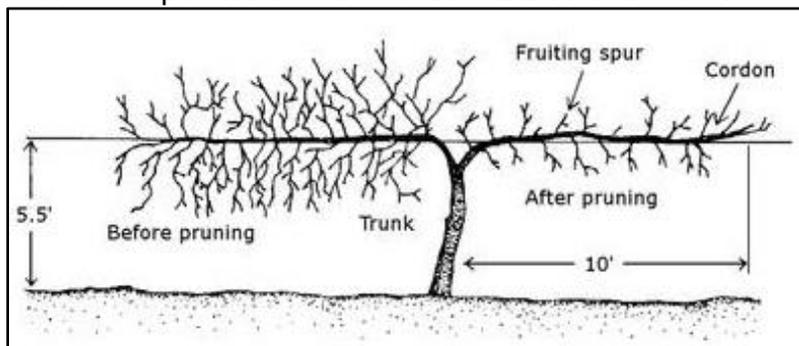
These images show more than a 15% reduction so your bushes should not look this thinned out. It does illustrate very well, though, that most of the cuts should be made at the base of the plants removing the whole branch.

From UGA Extension Home Garden Blueberry

http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20946_3.PDF

Dormant Pruning Established Muscadines

Prune back last year's growth to where you have spurs (with 3-4 buds) of 1-yr-old wood protruding from the main cordon or previous season's wood. These spurs will bear the flowers and fruit for this season. Usually when I have someone ask me why their vines didn't produce fruit it's because they pruned too severely and removed most or all of the buds. Be sure to look for and leave enough of those buds! Select the spurs that are at the top of the cordon if possible. These spurs should be spaced 4-6 inches apart. As the vines age, remove some of the older spur clusters (try removing every other one) when crowding occurs. Be sure to remove any old fruit that may still be on the vines as they serve as a potential source of inoculum for disease.



From UGA Extension Home Garden Muscadines:

http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20949_7.PDF

http://www.smallfruits.org/SmallFruitsRegGuide/Guides/2016/2016muscadineIMG_02mar16.pdf

Dormant Pruning Neglected Apple Trees

“The main objective in pruning such a tree is to try and open up the interior to allow good light penetration. The first step is to remove all the upright, vigorous growing shoots (at their base) that are shading the interior. As with young apple trees, it is necessary to select three to five lower scaffold branches with good crotch angles that are spaced around the tree. Limbs with poor angles and excess scaffold limbs should be removed at their base. In some cases it is advisable to spread the corrective pruning over two to three seasons. When severe pruning is done in the winter, do not fertilize the trees that spring”.



“The remaining limbs can be pruned back by one fourth of their length to a side limb if it is desired to stiffen them. If you don’t cut them back, the limbs may bend and/or break under a heavy crop load”.

From Uga Extension Home Garden Apples:

http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20740_6.PDF

Last year was a bad year for fire blight on apples (and pears). Trees affected with this bacterial disease can be a management challenge. Older trees may survive any damage they incur; young trees may not fare as well. If there are multiple cankers present throughout a young tree (on the trunk as well as scaffold limbs) it may not be worth trying to save. Recommendations for managing fire blight is to cut out the damaged wood making cuts at least 8 inches below the cankers into sound, healthy wood. It is best to do this pruning during the dormant period since the disease is not active then. Every time you make a cut, you will need to sterilize your pruning tools with rubbing alcohol or a 10% bleach solution. Obviously, if there are cankers on the trunk that would mean removing most of the tree. It would be better to remove the whole tree and plant another apple tree, or better yet, plant a type of fruit tree that will grow well in our area.

A great publication for recommendations for more unusual fruits to plant can be found at: http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%201087_2.PDF



The image on the left shows fire blight damage on an apple tree last May. The image on the right shows a large canker encircling the trunk and a shepherd's crook, a classic symptom of fire blight where the tip end of a shoot is bent. This picture was taken two weeks ago.

4-H PROJECT SAFE

**Modified Trap (Shotgun) and Archery Teams-Meriwether County
Skills for Life - Activity for a Lifetime**

Practice for the Meriwether County 4-H Shotgun Team will begin this Sunday. Any student in the 7th-12th grade can participate in either the Junior or Senior Division. For more information about joining the shotgun team, please contact **Terry Strickland** at 706-881-2414 or tstrickpig@aol.com.

The new coach for the archery team is **Drew Pike**. Practice for archery started this month too. You can reach Drew at 678-708-6277.

For general information about Project Safe please visit:
<http://www.georgia4h.org/safe/disciplines/shotgun.htm>

EGG CANDLING CLASS in HARRIS COUNTY

Thursday February 16, 2017 10:00 AM-3:00 PM
Harris County UGA Extension office
121 N College St
Hamilton, GA 31811

There is no cost but you must preregister by February 10, 2017. Please call 706-628-4824 or email uge2145@uga.edu

LOCAL MARKET

Strickland Brothers Farm

Beautiful cabbages, carrots, beets, kale, and collards are still available. You can contact Terry at 706-881-2414



If you are producing an agricultural product in Meriwether and you would like to see it advertised here please let me know. You can contact me at 706-977-0882 or scj24262@uga.edu.

Have a wonderful weekend,
Susan