

Forsyth Field Notes

Forsyth County Cooperative Extension News

August 2019

In this Issue

Lawncare Safety
August Lawn and Garden Tasks
Fall Stay-cation Ideas
Extension Events &
Opportunities

Maintain your health as you maintain your lawn

By Heather N. Kolich
Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent
UGA Extension Forsyth County



Hazard identification and safe practices can prevent lawn mower injuries.

Throughout the year, Forsyth County Extension gets calls from people with questions about maintaining healthy lawns. While we're happy to answer those questions, it's also important to talk about how to stay healthy while maintaining that lawn.

Power equipment helps us complete lawn care tasks in less time and with less labor.

Unfortunately, this convenience carries increased risk of injury to lawn mower operators, bystanders, and youthful "helpers."



Using data from 96 hospitals, the Consumer Product Safety Council's [2018 National Electronic Injury Surveillance System](#) (NEISS) report estimates that over 91,800 people in the U.S. received emergency room or hospital treatment for injuries related to lawn mowers. Another study reviewed emergency department injury coding data from 2006-2013 and concluded that the most common lawn mower-related injuries were lacerations (46.7 percent), fractures (22.4 percent), and amputations (21.5 percent) of the wrist or hand (65.4 percent) and foot or toe (19.8 percent). According to the studies, most injuries happened between April and September.

Awareness of risk factors and using safe practices are important steps in protecting ourselves and our family or co-workers from lawn mower injury. Please follow these tips for safety.

Assess the site

Before powering up the mower, walk the site to identify and remove hazards.

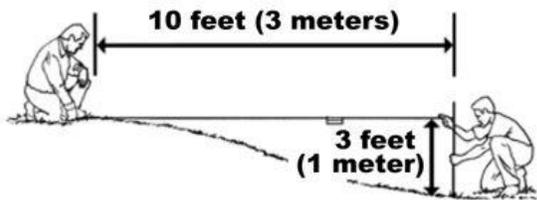
- Remove children and pets from the site.

- Acorns, rocks, sweetgum balls, sticks and other materials can roll when we step on them, causing us to lose balance or fall. These same and similar items can become high-velocity projectiles on the discharge side of the mower. Pick up sticks and rake acorns and other small debris to the side of the mowing area.
- Holes, stones, roots, and borders are tripping hazards. Take note of these, and outline holes with spray paint if necessary.
- Low-hanging branches can poke eyes and scratch skin.

Apply some math

Because they will slide and roll over, riding mowers are unsafe to use on ground with more than a 27 percent slope, or a slope greater than 15 degrees. For safety on slopes:

- Assess the slope with some simple measurements. Yes, a yard stick and



a tape measure can save a life. Have a helper hold the end of the tape measure at the top of the slope as you walk down to the bottom, measuring out a 10-foot distance. Stand the yard stick on the ground vertically and hold the tape measure against it horizontally, keeping it level with the top of the slope. If the drop from the top to the bottom of the slope is 3-feet or more across that 10-foot distance, do not use a riding mower to mow the area.

- On slopes that are safe to mow with a riding mower (less than 27 percent slope), mow up and down the slope, turning the mower on the level ground at the top and bottom.
- To mow a slope with a push mower, start at the bottom and mow back and forth across the slope, working to the top.

Dress for success

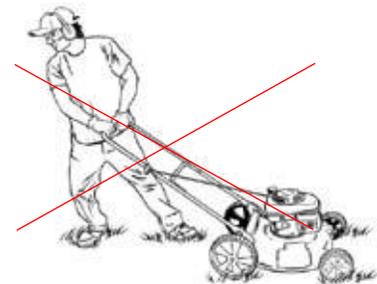
Wear personal protection equipment (PPE):

- Long pants and sleeves to protect from flying debris, stinging insects, and poisonous plants;
- Gloves and steel-toed boots to protect hands and feet;
- Safety goggles to protect eyes
- Noise-reducing hearing protection;
- Hat for sun and tick protection;
- Brightly-colored safety vest for visibility to motorists.

Maintain forward progress and safe distance

Always mow in a forward direction.

Pulling a push mower backward endangers your feet and



increases the chances of tripping. Operating a riding mower in reverse limits your field of vision. When mowing near a street, always face the direction of oncoming traffic. Maintain a safe distance of 45 feet from other people and traffic.

Be cool with fuel

When fueling a mower, park it on level ground and allow it to cool completely. Never smoke around fuel.

A beautiful lawn can enhance our outdoor leisure time. Using safe mowing practices helps make sure we're around to enjoy it.

Fall lawn and garden prep starts now!

Although crisp morning air and flannel shirts are still a few weeks away, fall lawn and garden success starts in August. Put these tasks on your to-do list:

Prevent winter annual weeds. Annual weeds are the weeds that pop up from seeds, flower for a while, then die when the weather changes. We essentially have two seasons of annual weeds: summer (warm season) and winter (cool season). When the chickweed, henbit, Carolina geranium, and other winter annuals bloomed in our yards last winter, they dropped thousands of seeds to lie in wait until the weather conditions turn just right to sprout and grow a new generation. Well, that time is approaching.



Henbit (*Lamium amplexicaule*) is a common winter annual weed in Georgia lawns and

We can use a combination of strategies to reduce annual weeds:

- Smother them out with thick, healthy turfgrass in lawn areas, or with 2-4 inches of mulch in garden and landscaped areas;

- Mow lawn weeds frequently enough to prevent flowering. Preventing flowers also prevents seed development;
- Monitor non-lawn areas and hand-pull weeds while they're still small;
- Suppress weed seed germination with timely applications of a pre-emergent herbicide;
- Spot-treat emerged weeds with a post-emergence herbicide.

Because pre-emergent herbicides need to be in the soil before weather conditions encourage seeds to sprout, in North Georgia, mid-August through September is the time to treat established lawns with pre-emergent herbicides. These are products containing one or more of these active ingredients:

- Atrazine
- Benefin
- Dithiopyr
- Oryzalin
- Pendimethalin

When selecting herbicides, make sure the active ingredient is safe to use on the lawn being treated. Atrazine, for example, will damage bermudagrass. Most products should not be applied to newly sprigged grasses. Since pre-emergent herbicides stop germination of desirable seeds as well as weed seeds – and they continue to work for several weeks – don't use any of them if you're planning to reseed the lawn.

What about weed-and-feed for lawns?

Weed-and-feed type lawn products typically contain post-emergence herbicides (for weeds that you can see) along with a boost of nitrogen. If your lawn is tall fescue and broad-leaf weeds are evident, a fall application of this combination product may be beneficial. That's because cool-season grasses such as fescue and annual ryegrass grow during the fall and early spring.



On the other hand, weed-and-feed products should not be applied to warm-season turf, such as bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, or centipedegrass, in the fall. These grass species need to slow down their growth and prepare for winter dormancy during late summer and early fall. Nitrogen stimulates growth, which sets up warm-season lawns for winter injury – and to experience spring dead spot next year.

Plant a fall vegetable garden. Keep fresh produce coming to the table with a fall garden. There are plenty of cool-season vegetables to plant now into September.

- From seed, plant beets, carrots, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, radishes, spinach, and turnips.
- From transplants, grow broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, and onions.

Cooler weather and fewer insects are a couple of advantages of fall vegetable gardening. Since some cool-season vegetables, like carrots, can over-winter, you'll also get a jump on your early spring garden.

Prepare planting sites for trees and shrubs. Fall is the best season to plant woody perennial plants. Whether you're replacing roses afflicted with rose rosette virus or adding fruit plants to create a foodscape, preparing the planting site now will give your new plants a strong start. Remember to bring in your soil samples for testing so you'll know exactly how to amend the soil to create the optimal environment for the plants you want to grow.

Speaking of foodscapes, it's time for the annual Forsyth County Extension Fall Plant Sale, featuring both favorite and lesser-known native fruit and nut trees and shrubs.

From apple trees to raspberry plants, I personally select species and cultivars that will grow and produce well in North Georgia while requiring lower management inputs and maintaining home-owner friendly sizes. Many of the native plants are also valuable for restoring natural biodiversity and sustaining pollinators and wildlife. Look for the order form on our website later this month, or better yet, pick one up in person at our **Extension Open House** on September 4, 2019 from 5-7 p.m.

Stay-cation fun (and rewards) with Georgia agritourism



A view of the 2019 Corn Maze at Warbington Farms in Cumming, Georgia.

School is back in session, but there are still lots of opportunities for local adventures on farms across Georgia. And with the [Georgia Farm Bureau Farm Passport 2019](#), you can earn prizes for having fun while supporting local agriculture. Late summer and fall farm activities include apple-picking at numerous orchards in Ellijay and Blue Ridge to corn mazes, pumpkin patches, hay rides, and special events right here in Cumming at [Warbington Farms](#).

To pick up your Farm Passport 2019, visit Forsyth County Georgia Farm Bureau office at 307 Canton Road, Cumming, or call 770-887-5245.

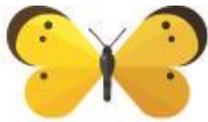


Learning with Extension – Events and Opportunities

Dual Purpose Vegetables Class

August 22, 11 a.m., Sexton Hall

When space is limited in the garden, it's important to get the most out of the vegetables planted. Join UGA Family and Consumer Sciences Agent Barbara Worley to learn about common vegetables and herbs with more than one edible part, and how these can increase your food benefit while reducing food waste.



GREAT GEORGIA Pollinator Census

August 23-24, 2019

Calling all Citizen Scientists! Spend a few minutes enjoying nature and help us collect important data on pollinators in Georgia. No specialized insect knowledge needed! Learn how to participate [here](#).

Instant Success!

August 26, 6:30 p.m., Cumming Library



Electronic Programmable Pressure Cookers (EPPCs) such as the “Instant Pot” have been one of the most popular kitchen appliances to appear in recent years. Family and Consumer Sciences Agent Barbara Worley will demonstrate how to use yours safely and discuss food safety concerns.

UGA GrassMasters Series

August 27-October 8, 2019

GRASSMASTERS
A Seven Week Educational Series on Forage Production

Where: North Murray High School Ag Ctr. 2568 Mt. Carmel Church Rd. Chatsworth, GA 30705	When: Every Tuesday evening at 6:30pm starting on August 27 th for seven consecutive weeks
Registration: Contact Murray County Extension Office at 706 - 695 - 3031	Cost: \$25 Includes refreshments and notebook

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA EXTENSION | USDA NRCS United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

Want to learn more about growing quality forage? GrassMasters is a 7-evening introduction to forage production systems. [Registration information.](#)

2019 Southeastern Hay Contest

Entry Deadline September 16, 2019

Hay producers, got great hay? Only a lab analysis will tell!

Forage testing shows the nutrient levels in hay and baleage lots. Knowing the Relative Forage Quality helps producers set a fair price, and helps buyers determine how much to purchase to meet nutritional needs for their livestock.

Test your hay or baleage quality through UGA and enter [the 2019 Southeastern Hay Contest](#) at the same time. Prizes for all seven categories and one rockin' Grand Prize.

Forage samples for contest entry must be brought to the Forsyth County Extension Office by Monday, September 16 to ensure timely delivery to the lab.

Please call our office at 770-887-2418 if you want to reserve the hay probe for forage sample collection.



UGA Heifer Evaluation and Reproductive Development (HERD) Program accepting applications for 2019-2020 beef herd improvement enrollment

Now-November 1, 2019



Are you interested in:

- Improving replacement heifers?
- Consolidating calving season?
- Improving calving ease?
- Learning more about breeding and feeding your herd?

The [University of Georgia HERD program](#) will help you succeed with all of that.

Through this annual program, beef producers consign heifers to UGA, where they are maintained and bred in a uniform environment. This uniform and consistent management provides educational demonstration of individual performance differences. Recording, analyzing, and understanding these differences helps producers select better replacement animals to improve herd health and uniformity.

Consigners choose whether to bring heifers home at the end of the program, or to offer them for sale in the annual HERD auction in May. The auction is open to all buyers.

Download enrollment rules and form [here](#), or pick one up at the Extension office.

Forsyth County Extension and NRCS Open House – Plus Canning and Baking Contest!

September 4, 2019, 5-7 p.m.

See canning and baking contest entry information [here](#).



Join us September 4, 2019, 5 PM to 7PM

for our Open House at the new

Forsyth County Extension / 4-H

and

Natural Resources Conservation Service Office

5110 Piney Grove Road, Cumming, GA 30040



Meet the Forsyth County Extension Staff

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Family and Consumer Sciences

4-H

Meet the Staff of Natural Resources Conservation Services



Visit with our Community Volunteers
Master Gardeners & Master Naturalists



Enter in our Canning and Baking Contest

Winners of the contest to be

announced at 6:30 PM

The Deadly Garden

October 17, 2019, 7-8:30 p.m.

Save the date for this fun and informative evening. Our special guest speaker, Poison Ivy, will discuss poisonous plants and other ghoulish garden dangers.

Cost: Please bring a canned good or other shelf-stable food for our food drive to help at-risk populations in Forsyth County.

Attire: Family-friendly costumes encouraged, but optional.

Register: Call 770-887-2418 or email uge1117@uga.edu to save your seat!