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Special Points of Interest:
 Mark your calendars!
→ POP-UP Farmers Market
 3:00 PM–7:00 PM
 July 26, Aug 30
 1527 Sunshine Ave, Perry, GA
→ Junior Master Gardener Training
 9AM–4PM July 11
 2030 Kings Chapel Rd
 \$20 (includes lunch)
→ Great Southeast Pollinator Census
 9AM / Aug 23 / Hafley Park
 Make a difference for pollinator conservation by participating in this citizen science project!
 (Rain day–Aug 24)
 For more information on these activities,
 Email: christine.kelly@uga.edu
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The Garden Bench

July/August 2024



Gardening and home landscape information from UGA Cooperative Extension in Houston County. Our newsletter provides research-based horticulture information to help Middle Georgia gardeners.

Planting Dates for your Vegetable Garden

Through July 1	Winter squash, pumpkin
Through July 10	Okra
Through July 15	Tomatoes
July 1-Aug 1	Beans (pole, lima), Butter peas
July 5-Aug 10	Bush beans
July 10-July 30	Eggplant
July 15-Aug 15	Cauliflower, Cucumber
July 25-Aug 10	Peppers (bell, hot, hot-sweet)
Aug 1- Aug 25	Summer squash
Aug 1-Sept 1	Broccoli, Collards, Kale
Aug 1- Sept 20	Beets
Aug 1-Oct 1	Cabbage
Aug 10-Sept 15	Turnips
Aug 15-Sept 15	Mustard
Aug 20-Sept 15	Carrots

Vegetables & Herbs:

Before spraying insecticides on your edible plants, check the label for how long you must wait after spraying before harvesting. Each insecticide has a waiting period after application before you can harvest.

With regular watering, vegetables and herbs can thrive in hot, dry environments. Keeping vegetables picked, well watered and fertilized will encourage continued production. If needed, fertilize every four weeks. Water twice a week with 3/4 inch water. Mulch to control weeds and water loss.

Most vegetables are best harvested in early morning. This is especially important for leafy greens like lettuce and chard, for fresh herbs such as parsley and basil, for crisp fruiting vegetables such as peas, and for anything in the cabbage family, such as broccoli and radishes.

Examine your plants regularly for insects and disease.

Shrubs & Trees:

To encourage a second bloom on crape myrtles, fertilize, water, and remove faded flowers.

Do not prune or fertilize spring-flowering shrubs like azalea, camellia, and viburnum after mid-July if you want flowers next year!

Watch for damaging insects on shrubs like euonymus, azalea, camellia, pyracantha, holly, gardenia, and pittosporum. Azalea caterpillars, scale, spider mites, lace bugs and spittle bugs are common now. Spray roses for insects and diseases as needed. For additional information on the control of common pests of landscape plants, visit https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201074_8.PDF

Apply a light application of fertilizer to newly planted ornamental trees and shrubs during July. See https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201065_7.PDF

Plant Spotlight : Integrated Pest Management

I've never met a gardener that had a 100% pest-free garden 100% of the time. Pests are organisms that damage or interfere with desirable plants or damage homes or other structures. Some transmit disease or damage the ecosystem. Others cause unsightly damage to ornamentals or decimate crops. The huge variety of pests and the different treatments needed to control them can make it hard for the home gardener to know what to do about them. Enter Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

IPM is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that takes advantage of all appropriate pest management options to minimize risks to people and the environment and to minimize costs for the gardener. This multidisciplinary control strategy for pests, weeds, and diseases uses information on the life cycles of pests and their interaction with the environment and reduces the need for pesticides. Pesticides are used only after monitoring indicates they are needed according to established guidelines, and treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism.

The [Georgia Pest Management Handbook](https://ipm.uga.edu/georgia-pest-management-handbook/) (<https://ipm.uga.edu/georgia-pest-management-handbook/>) has information on IPM and recommendations for pest control methods, including recommended pesticide applications. A paper copy of the homeowner edition can be purchased for \$20 or a pdf version can be downloaded for free. Learn more about IPM!

Lawn Tips:

Good cultural practices can prevent many lawn problems. The most important practice for a healthy lawn is to keep it mowed at the right height. Don't remove more than 1/3 the grass blade height at a mowing. Keep mower blades sharp to avoid damaging the lawn by tearing the grass blades.

Many lawn problems are due to improper watering: wait to water until the grass begins to turn bluish-gray. Most established lawns need only about one inch of water per week. **The most efficient and effective time to water is after sunset and before sunrise.**

Bermuda, St. Augustine, Zoysia, and Centipede lawns can be fertilized in July. Do not fertilize Centipede lawns after Sept 1 or other lawns after Sept 15, and don't fertilize if the grass will not be watered properly or is water stressed.

Post emergent herbicides can be applied to small actively growing weeds at air temperatures between 60-90 F. Applications to grass stressed by high temperatures or drought increases the possibility of injury and usually results in poor weed control.

For more information on Georgia lawns, visit

https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%201009_2.PDF

Flowers:

Don't forget to keep those container plants watered! Water when the top of the soil dries, and apply enough water to run out the bottom of the pot.

Fertilize and "dead-head" annuals and perennials. Pinch back mums to make them bushier and keep them blooming longer.

Start seeds of favorite biennials and other fall flowers in pots. Seedlings should be ready for transplanting in the fall.

Sunflowers are ready to harvest when the back of the head turns brown. Plant or transplant daylilies and irises beginning in late August.

Fruits & Nuts:

Apply a heavy mulch layer around strawberries to protect them from heat and drought. Fertilize strawberries in August.

Water fruit trees once a week, when the soil dries out.

Fertilize established figs if they are watered.

Apply mulch around fruit trees, but to avoid creating a path for insects and disease, do not place it right up against the trunk.

Prevent disease by promptly disposing of fallen fruit, leaves, and dead limbs.