

Homestead & Farm Notes

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EVENTS TO REMEMBER

July 19 th	Alachua County Extension Office: Fruits and Nuts Program from 6:00PM to 8:00PM, 2800 NE 39 th Avenue, Gainesville.
July 21 st	Columbia County Extension Office: Do It Yourself Irrigation for Home Gardens held at the Columbia County Public Library at 2:00PM.
July 24 th	Planning for the Future of Your Family Lands: Bradford County Extension Office, 2266 N. Temple Avenue, Starke.
July 27-29	Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference: Kissimmee, see union@ifas.ufl.edu .
SATURDAYS	The Union County Farmers' Market is open every Saturday from 8:00AM to 12:00 Noon. Come and support your local farmers and enjoy the freshness!!!

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- Small Ruminant Corner
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Beef Calendar for July:

- ✓ Mow or use herbicides to control pasture/hay weeds. Get rid of poisonous weeds that might be grazed if cattle are short of feed.
- ✓ **Along fence lines:** Black Cherry limbs that fall, China Berry limbs with fruit and Yellow Jasmine vines.

- ✓ **In Pastures:** Black Nightshade, Jimson weed, Husk Tomato, Coffee weed, Sickie pod, crotalaria, Lantana, Cocklebur, Poke weed, Sesbania, Bladder pod, and Rattlebox.
- ✓ If you need more grass, apply about 60 to 80 pounds actual nitrogen per acre.
- ✓ Keep mineral feeders full.
- ✓ Check hayfields for Armyworms, treat when you find an average of more than two worms, $\frac{3}{4}$ inches or longer per square feet. Scout every two days during wet rainy weather.
- ✓ Wean calves, revaccinate calves for Blackleg.

Small Ruminant Corner

❖ **The official requirements for movement of Sheep and Goats:**

Producers who are planning to move any sheep or goats within the state of Florida or between states are required to officially identify their animals. One of the methods commonly used is an Official ID ear tag. If you need more information for tags for your animals, please contact:

Area Veterinarian-in-Charge

**USDA, APHIS, VS
8100 NW 15th Place
Gainesville, FL 32606-3060**

**Phone: (352) 313-3060
Fax: (352) 313-3062**

Note to Goat Producers:

- ❖ Union County Extension Office has developed a spreadsheet that can assist you to calculate your cost of production of a small meat goat business. The County Agent can show how to do this using a computer spreadsheet. You will receive a copy of the spreadsheet which you can load onto your computer. If you do not have a computer or do not know how to use a computer, the Agent can show you how to calculate your production costs by using a hard copy of the spreadsheet. For more information please call the office at (386) 496-2321.

Is Meat Goat Production increasing in Florida?

- ❖ Several farms in Union County keep goats as a hobby or just to keep down the weeds!!! Some are commercial farms that produce milk and meat or meat alone. Union County holds good potential to increase its goat production. According to the United States Department of Agriculture Census (2002), the number of goat farms increased by nineteen (19) percent, the goat population by twelve (12) percent, the number of farms that sold goats by forty five (45) percent from 1997 to 2002. National sales were up by fifty-five (55) percent during the same period. The increase in goat production is most likely driven by an increasing demand for goat meat.
- ❖ The growing demand was noted by several newspaper articles, for example in 2001, the Boston Globe reported on the "Growing Markets for Goats." In 2003, Daily Oklahoma ran an article captioned "Goat Meat finds Support in Oklahoma." The following year the Chicago Tribune published "A Growing demand for Meat Goats."

Even the Kentucky Living Magazine featured the "Growing Goat market during 2006." The growing demand for goat meat appears to be a trend across North America. In 2007, The Globe and Mail, Canada's national newspaper carried an article on "Goats are not for cheese anymore." The increase in goat numbers is evident in Florida as goat production increased by 180 percent from 2002 to 2006 with a current population of 75,000 head. In the next issue of Homestead & Farm Notes we will examine what this trend means in some more detail and find out about opportunities that may exist for goat producers in Union County.

Vegetables Garden Pointers:

- Now is a good time to pull out the spring garden and till the soil, letting it rest until fall. If you need lime, now is the time to apply for fall gardening.
- Now is a good time to control nematodes in problem areas by Solarizing.
- **Solarizing:** Wet tilled soil with $\frac{3}{4}$ inch irrigation, cover area with clear plastic and hold plastic sheet down with bricks or boards; leaving plastic in place at least a month. After one month, pull plastic back, till, irrigate and cover with plastic again until the last week of August, when you are ready to plant the fall garden.
- **Heat-tolerant Vegetables to plant this:** include eggplant, okra, New Zealand Spinach, Sweet Potatoes (from vine cuttings, not tuber slips), Lima Beans, and Southern Peas.

Bulbs to Plant this Month:

Aztec lily, butterfly lily, gladiolus, spider lily, and walking iris.

Annual Flowers to Sow:

Celosia, coleus, crossandra, exacum, hollyhock, impatiens, kalanchoe, nicotiana, ornamental pepper, portulaca, salvia, torenia, periwinkles, and zinnia.

Wildlife Happenings:

- ❖ Alligators and crocodiles will begin to hatch.
- ❖ Armadillos are breeding.
- ❖ Squirrels are being born.
- ❖ Look for frigate birds flying overhead in South Florida.
- ❖ Shorebirds are nesting on beaches.
- ❖ Listen for Eastern narrowmouth toads (Aaaa, like a baying sheep!) after heavy rains.

