

HOMESTEAD & FARM NOTES

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Upcoming Events & Programs

For a listing of more programs visit: www.union.ifas.ufl.edu

Sept. 4th: **Marketing & Value Added Products Program** at Columbia County Extension Office, 164 Marty Ethel Lane, Lake City from 6:30PM - 8:00PM.

Sept. 6th: **Cool Season Forage** at Suwannee Valley Ag Center, details pending.

Sept. 11th: **Plant Propagation Program** at the Baker County Extension Office 6:00PM to 7:00PM, Call (904) 259-3520 for more information.

Sept. 13th: **Veggies: Made In The Shade Workshop** at Suwannee Valley Ag Center, 8202 CR 417 Live Oak from 4:00PM - 8:00PM. See brochure at <http://union.ifas.ufl.edu>

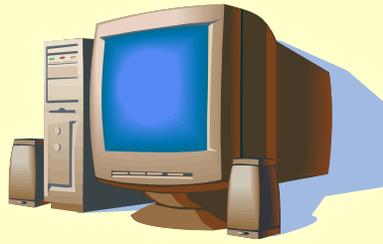
Sept. 19th: **Florida Pecan Growers' Association** at Suwannee Valley Ag Center, details pending.

Sept 20th: **Hunter Safety Class** at FFA Building from 6:00PM to 9:00PM. Must complete online course before attending this class at <http://beasafehunter.org>

Sept 24th: **Ag Business Program** in Alachua County, details pending.

Sept 27th: **IPM Workshop** at Suwannee Valley Ag Center, details pending.

Office News & Updates



Hello Readers & Producers,

At a recent farm visit, I saw some hens that are being kept for egg production on a small farm. They have lost most of their feathers, and look like they were ready for the oven. If a hen loses some of its feathers, it is a natural process of molting or pecking by other hens. But hens that show signs of persistent feather loss may be related to poor nutrition. Feathers keep birds from injury. In addition, they keep the birds warm during low daily temperatures. Feather loss in laying hens can be costly because they eat more feed to maintain their body temperature. It is important to feed laying hens a balanced ration or mash to maintain adequate health and production especially if they are kept in enclosed pens. Feeding only ground corns may not be adequate to meet their nutrient requirements.

I would like to encourage Union County residents to take advantage of an invasive plant control effort being conducted by the Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District. There is no cost to you for the service. A volunteer will spend up to four (4) hours treating invasive plants on a property. Tropical Soda Apple is one plant targeted but Chinese Tallow up to two (2) inches in diameter can also be treated. The Union County Soil and Water Conservation District Advisory Committee is paying the mileage for the volunteer. To arrange for an appointment please contact Paul Still at (904) 368-0291 or email StillPE@aol.com for more information.

Mark your calendar for November 1st, there will be a Marketing Program at Columbia Livestock Market, the details are pending and will be posted on www.union.ifas.ufl.edu.



Thank You, Basil Bactawar, Director/Agent

Livestock & Wildlife

Beef Calendar for September:

Keep those mineral feeders filled. Pasture grass protein as well as digestibility is dropping at this time. Pregnant cattle need those nutrients to stay in condition during the last trimester of pregnancy.

Keep scouting hayfields and pastures for Armyworms, Striped Grass Loopers, Mole Crickets, and Bermuda grass Stem Maggots.

If you buy replacement stock, be sure they are healthy, calf hood vaccinated for brucellosis, and void their rumen of weed seed in an isolated pen for a week (if they come from South Florida where Tropic Soda Apple is a pandemic).

Replacement heifers, if weaned, should be vaccinated, if purchased make sure they've had calf hood vaccination for brucellosis.

Now is a good time to deworm the cow herd.

Review winter feed supply and feeding plans so you can take advantage of lower prices and volume discounts.

Wildlife Happenings for September

Hawk migration begins at St. Joseph Peninsula in Gulf County

Bald eagles return to nest sites and begin courtship

Deer breeding begins in South Florida Flatwoods

Blue crabs migrate from shallow panhandle coast to deeper water for the winter

Atlantic Sturgeon begin fall migration from Suwannee & Apalachicola Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico



Small Ruminant Corner



Photo courtesy of: Carol Elkins, <http://blackbellysheep.org>

Some Breeds of Hair Sheep Suitable for Lamb Production in Florida

Basil Bactawar, MSc., Union County Extension Director/Agent

There are more goats in Florida than sheep, and this may be due, in part, to the summer heat that does not allow woolen sheep to perform well in Florida. The coat of wool is like a winter coat. However, there are some breeds of hair sheep that are suitable for lamb production in Florida. These include the Katahdin, St. Croix, American Blackbelly, and Barbados Blackbelly. Some of the ancestors of these breeds originated in Africa and were brought to the Caribbean Islands, Central America and northern South America during the 18th and 19th century. Some European sheep genetics were incorporated into the African sheep to arrive at the existing hair breeds mentioned above. These breeds are called hair sheep because the coat consists of hair more like that of cattle and many goats rather than wool. The Dorper is not a true hair sheep, but is included in this discussion because it is used in cross breeding programs involving hair sheep.

Hair sheep have some attributes that make them admirably suited to fill market niches or fit varying production systems in Florida. For instance, they have an extended breeding season, and can be used to produce lambs to be marketed when lamb prices are usually high thereby reducing marketing risks. In addition, shearing is not a requirement thereby reducing operational cost. In general, they shed their winter coats during spring and early summer. They are generally more fertile in hot humid regions and show greater tolerance to parasites than woolen breeds. They tend to deposit fat around their internal organs before they deposit external fat. Consequently, they tend to have less subcutaneous fat on average and are a bit leaner because there is less feathering in the muscles. In general they have low maintenance requirements.

The major disadvantage is that they grow slower and produce a lighter weight carcass than most breeds of European origin or woolen breeds. This is true for Barbados Blackbelly and St. Croix in particular, because they have not been subjected to selection for size and growth rate of the woolen breeds. However, they are suitable for markets requiring smaller carcass size. Dorper and Katahdin are medium size breeds. Crossing these breeds with woolen breeds for efficient meat production does hold some potential. However, some of their off-springs may have some wool that may need shearing.

Horticulture Hints

Trees & Shrubs Need to be Prepared for Winter with Fertilizer

For most woody plants in the landscape use a balanced fertilizer. Young planted trees and shrubbery in the yard (Gardenia, Hydrangea etc...) need a balanced fertilizer (such as a 10-10-10 analysis fertilizer). Azalea, Camellia and Gardenia shrubs would benefit from an acid-forming fertilizer (such as a 4-8-12 analysis fertilizer).

Tubers to plant in September include: Amaryllis, Aztec Lily, Calla, Crinum Lily, Iris, Kaffir Lily, Narcissus, Shell Ginger, Spider Lily and Rain Lily.



Spider Lily www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/EP/EP25500.pdf

Lawn Tips

Lawns Should Be Cared for and Fertilized in September

- If you don't have a soil test, University of Florida Extension Specialists would recommend applying fertilizer nutrients that would approximate applying six (6) pounds of a 16-4-8 analysis per 1000 square feet of lawn.
- If burning nettle and burr weed have been a problem in your lawn, now is the time to use a "weed-n-feed" type fertilizer with pendimethalin as the active herbicide ingredient. The strategy is to prevent as much of their germination as possible.
- If it gets cooler cinch bugs will be less of a problem but lawn caterpillars could be a problem. If grass blades look like they've been chewed on, spray with a product that is labeled for lawn caterpillar control.
- If mole crickets become a problem, this is the last month to treat before they get too large to control. Sprays, granular products and baits are available. If using bait, water the lawn well in the late afternoon, let dry off and apply bait just before sundown for best results.



4-H Happenings



Join us for another year of 4-H in Union County. September is registration month. Friends, there is fun in doing, and learning. It makes a good year for everyone. Check with your 4-H Club Leader or call Colan at (386) 496-2321 for more information.

September 3rd: Extension Office closed for Labor Day, BE SAFE!!!!

Hunting This Fall: Check out the free Hunter Safety Class. Go online at <http://beasafehunter.org> to complete the online class, and then join us for the practical application on **September 20th at the FFA Building from 6:00PM to 9:00PM**. You must complete the online course prior to attending this class.

September 22nd: Test and Shoot at Osceola Range in Lake City from 8:00AM to Noon.

This is a good time to check your entire schedule and make sure you have time to complete all of your 4-H requirements along with any other activities you may have.

4-H County Events, yes it's on a Saturday morning. Don't forget family time and ball games. BUCA and BUSA meetings.

September 28th: Deadline to join Union County 4-H as a Fair Exhibitor.

The Annual Union County 4-H Foundation, Inc. was held on August 9th and once again was a huge success. The Foundation would like to thank everyone for coming out to show their support.

Since the office has combined the Agriculture and the 4-H newsletters, if you are receiving duplicates and you haven't requested duplicates, please contact us at (386) 496-2321 or via email at ptoney@ufl.edu to inform us of any changes you would like to make. Thanks so much and we hope you continue to enjoy your monthly newsletter!!!