



Shades of Green

Athens-Clarke County Agriculture and Natural Resources E-Newsletter

August 2021



What's inside this issue...

<u>A Note From Athens-Clarke County Agriculture and Natural Resources</u>	Pg. 2	<u>Georgia Citizens Help Collect Pollinator Data Across State</u>	Pg. 8
<u>Ask A Master Gardener</u>	Pg. 3	<u>Online Green Thumb Lecture</u>	Pg. 9
<u>A Love Affair for a Better World: The Future of Agriculture</u>	Pg. 4	<u>Stay in the Loop!</u>	Pg. 10
<u>Too Much Love Can Ruin Chances of Growing Perfect Summer Tomatoes</u>	Pg. 5	<u>Local Farmers Markets</u>	Pg. 11
<u>Managing Common Summer Pests around the Yard and Home</u>	Pg. 6	<u>Helpful Resources</u>	Pg. 15

A note from Athens-Clarke County Agriculture & Natural Resources

Hello readers! We hope this month's edition of our newsletter finds you well. We are looking at a busy month up ahead! We are still accepting applications for our Fall [2021 Master Composter course](#) (flyer later in this issue). We will also be releasing our application soon for our Spring 2022 Master Gardener course. Let us know if you'd like to be put on the interest list to receive the course application as soon as it is made available (email Joanna.wright@uga.edu). Our Green Thumb Lecture this month will be all about [Fall Vegetable Gardening](#) (flyer later in this issue). Also, "bee" on the lookout this month for our activities occurring during the 2021 Great Georgia Pollinator Census on August 20-21! One of the articles in this issue, "[Georgia Citizens Help Collect Pollinator Data Across State](#)", gives some great info on this year's census as well as how our office is hosting a location for counting.

We hope you enjoy this month's issue of "Shades of Green".

Take care,
Athens-Clarke County Agriculture and Natural Resources



Master Gardener Project Highlight

By Zoe Hamilton

Intern, Athens-Clarke County Extension



Ask a Master Gardener

When you visit any of the three farmers markets in the Athens area, whether that be the Athens Farmers Market, the West Broad Farmers Market, or the Marigold Market in Winterville, you can always expect a great atmosphere with great food and produce. At every Athens area farmers market since 2006, members of the Athens Area Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program set up an “Ask a Master Gardener” booth. At their booth, the Master Gardeners answer any and all questions that homeowners may have about gardening. They can offer advice on a wide range of plants, from flowers to trees and shrubs to fruits and vegetables, but the most common questions are about growing vegetables. They provide advice to the homeowners based on their own knowledge, but they also give them resources and materials where they can do their own research as well.

“The key to being a good Master Gardener is asking good questions, because then that gives you some firm ground to work from,” said Jim, an Athens Area Master Gardener.

“Then we can give recommendations, and we can provide them with the information to guide them in the right direction.”

Another thing the Master Gardeners do at their booth is hand out seeds to anyone who wants them. They give out a variety of different seeds, and they provide information about the different seeds and how to grow them.

Whenever you stop by one of the Athens area farmers markets, you can always come to the “Ask a Master Gardener” booth with any gardening questions you may have, and you will surely get all the information and resources you need for a happy, healthy garden.

“That’s what we’re here for,” said Jim, **“to teach and assist the homeowners.”**



A Love Affair for a Better World: The Future of Agriculture

By Marin Lonnee & Haley McMillan

Many believe agriculture is solely based on mass production for big supermarket chains and mass consumption for affluent areas. In reality, agriculture is a love affair between research and progress, farmers and their land, and culinary and physical arts making up intricate differences between various cultures. In today's society, farmers and researchers alike take pride in seeing how their crafts are utilized for good. The Crop Genetics and Genomics Research and Extension Experience for Undergraduates (REEU) provides an opportunity to explore this love affair through in-depth research, informational farm tours, and meaningful service at the Athens Farmers Market, over the course of the nine-week program.

During our time at the Athens Farmers Market, we were given the chance to work closely with the market's leadership team. Through this experience we explored eight farm stands whose booths were present that Saturday, and learned about the two programs the market supports, in order to give back to the Athens community.

The first program, FARM-Rx, supports financially burdened families that may not be eligible for EBT, but would otherwise struggle to find fresh yet affordable produce. The program adds one dollar to the family account per person per day in the week. For example, a family of three would accumulate \$21 in a one-week period. On Saturday, each family is given the corresponding amount of tokens to spend on produce and can choose from excess produce that farms donate to the program.

Second, Georgia's new initiative, Wholesome Wave Georgia, has a subprogram, Fresh for

Less, that utilizes EBT and SNAP benefits. This program 'doubles the dollars' spent on groceries. For every dollar spent, a second dollar is given to purchase produce. Agriculture isn't simply plowing, planting, and propagating. Agriculture is creative solutions, love for the land, and a warm heart willing to serve others. Our REEU experience has shown this through deep gratitude to both the land and the people that feed our world. Research and production go hand in hand to efficiently produce large quantities of nutritious crops without severely depleting nature's resources. This partnership allows humanity to flourish and share experiences across cultures.



Too Much Love Can Ruin the Chances of Growing Perfect Summer Tomatoes

By Mary Carol Sheffield



During the summer growing season, the love many have for a homegrown tomato approaches obsession. In fact, some people love tomatoes so much that they struggle to grow them — because they give their plants too much care.

The calls have started to come in to University of Georgia Cooperative Extension offices: “My tomato plant leaves are yellowing or browning, curling, spotting or wilting.” I hear it every year, beginning right about now.

As I talk to gardeners, I learn that they water the plants every day, fertilize them dutifully and plant them in the same spot year after year. This well-intentioned care has resulted in the problems they are desperately trying to solve.

Follow these basic rules and you will produce a great crop of tomatoes this summer:

- **Water correctly.** Do not overwater. The first week tomato plants are in the ground, they need water every day, but back off watering after the first week, slowly weaning the plants down to 1 to 1.5 inches of water per week. Watering tomato plants every day will prevent them from developing a strong root system and sitting in wet soil is an invitation to root rot and other soilborne diseases.

- **When you water, do not wet the plant leaves.** Wet leaves invite infections that can cause your plant leaves to spot, yellow and wilt before the plant has a chance to produce any of the tasty tomatoes that you are so anxiously anticipating.

- **Water early in the day.** Early watering gives the plant time to take up the water before the heat of the sun increases evaporation, making your water application more effective.

- **Mulch around your tomato plants.** To help conserve soil moisture, keep the root system cool. Mulching also helps reduce the chance of diseases infecting your tomato plants. A 2- to 3-inch layer of mulch will suffice and can help protect your plants from weed competition. It can also reduce the splashing of water that can transfer soilborne diseases to the leaves and stems of the plants.

- **Rotate your crop each year.** Try to plant tomatoes in a different spot every year, rotating through your garden space every three to four years. Planting them in the same place allows disease pathogens that are specific to tomatoes to build up in the soil. By moving them around in the garden each year, you can break up the disease cycle.

[\(Continued on page 7\)](#)

Managing Common Summer Pests around the Yard and Home

By Alicia Holloway

As a University of Georgia Cooperative Extension agent, I see a lot of insects. People leave jars of them on my desk, send me photos or call me out to their gardens to identify them and give control recommendations.

Often I speak to folks about how to bring pollinators to their gardens, to have more insects instead of less. Because of this, I am somewhat inured to insects and I forget what most folks think about them, which often goes along the lines of “eek,” “aaahhh,” or “squish it!” At least until the shoe is on the other foot, or rather the other hand, as I’m swatting at an insect that is in my home. As much as I love looking for monarch caterpillars on milkweed or bumblebees on echinacea, some insects are pests and need to be managed. **Here are a few insect pests to watch out for this season in and around the home.**

Fire ants

Ants interrupting a picnic is a common summer trope, and no one wants fire ants interrupting summer fun — they are aggressive when disturbed and their stings are painful. For smaller areas of less than an acre, treating individual mounds is advised, and there are numerous contact pesticides, granular, mound drenches and dusts that are effective for individual mound control. The most important advice for using these chemicals is to follow



label instructions. For most treatments, it is important not to disturb the mound. Read carefully and apply pesticides as directed for the highest level of efficacy. For more detailed information see our Extension publication on [Managing Imported Fire Ants in Urban Areas](#).

Flies



Fly populations increase in summer and occasionally become home pests. Prevention is the key to controlling these opportunistic pests. Take garbage out of the home at least twice a week and, if you compost, make sure to keep material waiting to go to the pile covered. Keep outdoor garbage cans tightly closed and clean them regularly to prevent spilled garbage or leaky bags from providing an ideal breeding ground for flies. Also, place garbage cans far from building entrances. If flies do make their way indoors, sprays labeled for flies or good, old-fashioned swatters can take down the stray fly or two and keep them from reproducing. For higher numbers, sticky traps with the chemical attractant Z-9-tricosene are effective for control.

Mosquitos



Mosquitos are hands-down the worst summer pest. Not only are their bites itchy, certain species of mosquitos can spread diseases. Mosquitos need standing water to reproduce, and many homes grow their own population of mosquitos simply by allowing collected water to stand. Prevent mosquitos by eliminating areas of your yard that could hold water. There are many possible culprits, including plant containers, toys, and even tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water.

[\(Continued on page 7\)](#)

Too Much Love Can Ruin the Chances of Growing Perfect Summer Tomatoes (continued)

• **Be careful with fertilizer.** Young tomato plants are sensitive to nitrogen and can be easily burned if overfertilized. Also, [have your soil tested](#) and follow recommendations based on test results carefully. Don't apply all of the recommended fertilizer at the time you plant tomatoes. Wait until they have established a good root system and started to grow before you fertilize. Overfertilization of mature plants can result in lush green plants that never flower and therefore will not produce tomatoes.

More information is available in UGA Extension Bulletin 1271, "[Georgia Homegrown Tomatoes](#)."

UGA Extension can help answer questions about home horticulture, sustainable landscaping and environmentally friendly gardening practices using unbiased, research-based information. **For more information, contact your local UGA Extension office.**

(Mary Carol Sheffield is the UGA Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources agent in Paulding County.)

Managing Common Summer Pests around the Yard and Home (continued)

Don't forget to refresh water in bird baths at least once a week. Managing standing water is especially useful for controlling day-biting mosquitos, which are most likely the Asian tiger mosquito, which cannot travel far from larval habitats. To keep your backyard comfortable, avoid or repel low levels of mosquitos that are present in the evening using fans and repellent lanterns with a heat source.

Wasps and Hornets



Lots of folks are alarmed by wasps and hornets but, left alone, these insects are not aggressive. In addition, they are important pollinators and can help control pest populations. Unless nests are very near doors or other high traffic areas, leave them, but be mindful of the nests and give them a bit of space. In the winter, those colonies will die and nests can be easily removed.

Preparing for fall



While I mostly associate summer with outdoor pests, many insects will start looking for warmth

as temperatures begin to cool down. Asian ladybugs and brown marmorated stink bugs can invade houses by the hundreds. Now is the time to prepare your home against these cooler-weather invaders. Make sure cracks around windows are caulked, window screens are intact and door sweeps are installed on exterior doors. Essentially, plug up any opening that could allow insects to enter. In addition, a residual pesticide around the exterior of the house, especially at potential entry points, can prevent insects from entering. Preparing by late summer can prevent an insect invasion in the fall.

For more in-depth information about home pests, check out UGA Extension Publications including [Management of Pest Insects In and Around the Home](#), [Stinging and Biting Pests](#) and [Managing Imported Fire Ants in Urban Areas](#).

(Alicia Holloway is the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources agent in Barrow County.)

Georgia Citizens Help Collect Pollinator Data Across State

By Angela Hsiung

Later this summer, Georgia residents will have the opportunity to help researchers find out what's the buzz with insect pollinators in their state.

The Great Georgia Pollinator Census, hosted by University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, will be held this year on Aug. 20 and 21. During the census, Georgia citizens are asked to visit plants in their gardens or other spots frequented by insect pollinators and count how many pollinators they observe in a 15-minute window. Those who participate then submit their counts online via [the census website](#).

The inaugural census was held in [2019, with great success](#). In 2020, census coordinators had to pivot due to the pandemic. Instead of focusing on schools and promoting census events across the state, "we concentrated on encouraging families to count at home together," said Becky Griffin, community and school garden coordinator at UGA Extension, who spearheaded the census.

They also shared recipes online for foods that rely on insect pollination and even created a [pollinator-themed Spotify playlist](#). In the end, 3,755 people representing 124 counties participated in the 2020 census, collecting close to 82,600 insect visit observations. Additionally, 525 new pollinator gardens have been created as part of the project.

Data collected for the pollinator census are currently being used by UGA researchers for economic valuation studies of pollination. Some are also used in classrooms for student projects.

The plan is to grow the census each year, continuing to educate Georgia citizens and adding more participants and pollinator habitat.

When asked about this year's census, Griffin is optimistic. "We have some new project partners, and schools are busy planning their counts," she added. "I am excited about this year's count!"

(Angela Hsiung is a graduate research assistant in the integrative conservation doctoral program at UGA's Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources.)

COME COUNT POLLINATORS!

GREAT GEORGIA POLLINATOR CENSUS

ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE AT THE ACC EXTENSION OFFICE GARDEN FRIDAY, AUGUST 20 FROM 3PM-6PM AND SATURDAY, AUGUST 21 FROM 9AM-12PM

TO FIND OUT MORE INFO, VISIT THE GREAT GEORGIA POLLINATOR CENSUS WEBSITE: [HTTPS://GGAPC.ORG/](https://ggapc.org/)

Athens-Clarke County Extension Demonstration and Teaching Garden
275 Cleveland Road, Bogart, GA 30622

Virtual Green Thumb Lectures

2021 Free Monthly Gardening Class Series



August: Fall Vegetable Gardening

Please join us online for an informative presentation on topics including:

- General vegetable gardening guidelines for our area
- What vegetables do best in fall weather and when to plant
- How to maintain, troubleshoot, and harvest your veggies

Gardeners of all experience levels are welcome.

WHEN:

Wednesday, August 11 · 6:00-7:30 pm

WHERE:

ONLINE via Zoom.com

Specific link to join Zoom meeting will be sent to the email you register with.

TO REGISTER:

Registration is required. Please register by August 10 by visiting

www.accgov.com/gardening



For questions:

Contact Laura Ney, Extension Agent at
706-613-3640 or lney@uga.edu

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Stay in the loop! (local or online activities and events)

Lunch & Learn: Snakes of Georgia

- August 13, 2021 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - FREE online event
- Learn about Georgia's snakes with this fun & educational lesson!
 - Contact Jessica Warren at uge3039@uga.edu to register & obtain the meeting link
- You can also contact Jessica Warren by calling **912-576-3219** or visit the [official event page](#) for more information.

Homeowner Planting Basics: Soil Health

- August 17, 2021 6:00pm-7:00pm
 - FREE online event
- Learn about the importance of soil health for your plants!
 - To register for this event, [click here](#)
- For additional information you can visit the [official event page](#) or contact Sarah Cranston at Sarah.Cranston@uga.edu with any questions.

Green Industry Summer Series: Herbaceous Invasives in Urban Areas

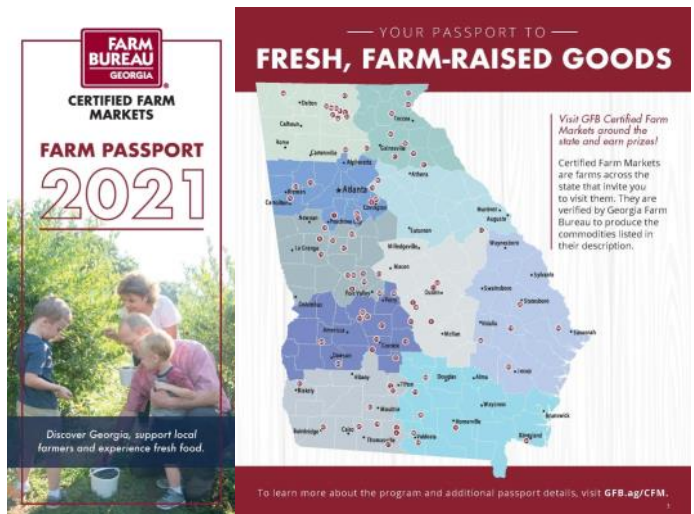
- August 27, 2021 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - FREE online event
- Join Cobb County Extension to learn about herbaceous invasive plants!
 - To register for this event, [click here](#)
- For additional information you can visit the [official event page](#) or contact Hallie Harrington at hallie.harriman@uga.edu or by calling **770-528-4070** with any questions.

The State Botanical Garden of Georgia is open for the public, but make sure to check out [their website](#) for updates and hours. Contact the State Botanical Garden of Georgia by emailing garden@uga.edu or calling 706-542-1244.

- [Discover education activities for home.](#)
- Check out their [event calendar](#) for more offerings.

Georgia Farm Bureau® Farm Passport

- The Farm Passport is your guide to finding and visiting farms throughout Georgia. You and your family can explore the state, support local farms, and eat fresh food while learning where it comes from!
- You can download a printable copy of the passport or find a location to pick one up, as well as find out more information here: <https://www.gfb.org/education-and-outreach/passport.cms>



UGA Extension offices around the state are working hard at developing quality online presentations on various topics.

Visit the UGA Extension [event calendar](#) to see events happening local to our county as well as virtual opportunities.

Local Farmers Markets



The **Athens Farmers Market** is taking place on Saturdays from 8am-12pm at Bishop Park. Make sure to visit [their website](#) for updates and details.

Find them on Facebook: [@AthensFarmersMarket](#)

Follow them on Instagram:
[@athensfarmersmarket](#)



West Broad Farmers Market

Online ordering with pick-up and delivery options are available on Saturdays.

Visit [their website](#) to find out how to order online.

Find them on Facebook:
[@WestBroadMarketGarden](#)

MARIGOLD



MARKET

The **Winterville Farmers Market** is taking place on Saturdays from 10am-2pm at Pittard Park. Visit [their website](#) for more information.

Find out more on Facebook:
[@marigoldmarketwinterville](#)

Instagram: [@marigoldmarketwinterville](#)

Would you like to become a Georgia Master Composter?



If you enjoy working with people, digging in the dirt and are interested in teaching others about composting, then the **Master Composter program** is for you! You will become part of an elite group of volunteers that uses the information learned in this training program to teach others how to turn their organic material into a beneficial soil amendment.

This multiple session Master Composter Training Program provides an educational experience in the chemistry and microbiology of composting, types of and reasons for composting, and lessons on teaching audiences.

Expectations of the Program

1. Complete the training course and field trips
2. Complete class project
3. Volunteer a minimum of 40 hours back to the program in the first year

Typical Volunteer Duties

1. Teaching or assisting with compost workshops
2. Staffing composting informational booths at various public education and outreach events
3. Giving lectures and hands-on presentations on composting to various civic, community, and garden groups
4. Building Compost Bins

Georgia Master Composter 2021 Program

Dates

Every Wednesday from
September 15, 2021 to
November 17, 2021

Time

5:30pm to 8:30pm

Location

ACC Solid Waste
Department,
Administration Building
Training Room

725 Hancock Industrial
Way, Athens 30605

Cost

\$150

To Apply

Contact Laura New with
ACC Cooperative Extension
at Iney@uga.edu

Application deadline is
August 16, 2021

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[Return to table of contents](#)



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Athens-Clarke County



Join Athens-Clarke County 4-H!



Students in 5th - 12th grades in Athens-Clarke County can sign up for 4-H now. The mission of Georgia 4-H is to assist youth in acquiring knowledge, developing life skills, and forming attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, productive and contributing members of society. 4-H meetings will look different this year and are online. There is no charge to be a member or participate in a competition.

To start your 4-H Adventure e-mail the ACC 4-H Agent, Elizabeth Conway, at ebarber@uga.edu today!



Virtual 4-H Programs can be viewed on the ACC 4-H website:

<https://tinyurl.com/acc4hvirtual>

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Concerned about the state of your garden?

Are weeds taking over your landscape?

No need to fear, Clarke is here!

Follow @gardenwithclarke on Instagram  and learn how to battle pests, identify weeds, build your soil and so much more as you garden alongside Clarke, Athens-Clarke County's super gardener!



gardenwithclarke
UGA Extension Athens-Clarke County





Helpful resources online:

[Find My Local Extension Office](#)

[Bugwood— Pest Images](#)

[Landscape Alerts Online](#)

[Georgia Turf](#)

[Pest Management Handbook](#)

[Pesticide Applicator Info](#)

[Free Online Webinars](#)

[SE Ornamental Horticulture Production & IPM Blog](#)

[UGA Center for Urban Agriculture](#)

[Georgia Certified Plant Professional](#)

[Extension Publications](#)

Athens-Clarke County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources

Mission Statement

The UGA Athens-Clarke County Extension's mission is to respond to the people's needs and interest in Agriculture, the Environment, Families, and 4-H/youth in Athens-Clarke County with unbiased, research-based education and information.

Visit us online:



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Email: lney@uga.edu

Like us on Facebook:

