Developing and maintaining productive soils begin with soil testing. How many times have you walked in your landscape area and seen plants that just don’t seem to be at their best? Perhaps you are adding too much fertilizer or not enough. Test results are used to determine the amount and kind of nutrients that should be added for the best growth of plants, lawn and gardens. Here is the proper way to collect a soil sample:

- **Figure 1. Area divided according to vegetation and soil characteristics.** Yellow dots indicate sampling points.
- Use a zigzag approach when taking samples. Collect 8-10 soil samples from each location (zone) as shown in Fig. 1.
- For trees and shrubs, take soil samples from six to eight spots around the drip-line of the plants.

**2. Sampling Depth**

The depth of sampling depends on the type of plants being grown.

- For lawns, **sample to a depth of 4 inches**.
- For gardens, ornamentals, mixed fruit trees, and wildlife plots, **collect sample to a depth of 6 inches**.

**3. Sampling Time**

Soil sampling should be done well in advance of planting or spring green-up. This allows adequate time for sample analysis, data interpretation, and fertilizer and lime application.

**4. Sampling Tools**

Use clean sampling tools and containers to avoid contaminating the soil sample. Never use tools or containers that have been used for fertilizer or lime. Tools like trowels, shovels, spades, hand probes or hand augers may be used to collect samples.

**Figure 2. Remove grass thatch or mulch before sampling.**

Push the handle forward, with the spade still in the soil to make a wide opening. Then, as shown in Figure 3, cut a thin slice from the side of the opening that is of uniform thickness, approximately ¼ inch thick and two inches in width, extending from the top of the ground to the depth of the cut. Collect from several locations. Combine and mix them in a plastic bucket to avoid metal contamination.

Make sure the soil has been laid out to dry completely and bring to our office in a clean zip-lock bag. A fee of $8.00 cash or check is charged and it will usually take about 10 days for results.

If you have any questions, please give us a call here at the office at 678-377-4010.
Scented Geraniums Add Fragrance to the Garden

Scented geraniums (Pelargonium species) are excellent additions to the garden. They are grown for their scented leaves, and do not have showy flowers like traditional geraniums. They come in all shapes, sizes and colors with rounded to finely cut leaf shapes that are highly aromatic.

Scented geraniums are categorized by their scents, such as rose, mint, lemon or other strong fragrances. Some may have the odor of pine or peppermint, or perhaps a fruit scent such as apple, apricot, or pineapple. Some have a chocolate or coconut scent. One of the most commonly grown is the cultivar ‘Attar of Roses,’ an old-fashioned rose-scented geranium. The aromatic oils are released when the geranium leaves are rubbed or when exposed to the hot sun. Common uses for these plants include flavoring beverages, preserves, deserts, and other dishes as well as for use in potpourris.

Scented geraniums prefer to be grown in well drained soil and in full sun to partial shade. However, during the hottest part of the day, the plants may need some shade to keep from being scorched. Outdoor containers need to be checked frequently for water. Scented geraniums are not cold hardy. They are best planted in containers so that they can be brought indoors for winter. Constant pruning, especially on the smaller leafed varieties that have a tendency to become "leggy," encourages dense growth. Use pruning shears or your fingers to remove stem tips above a leaf on the green part of the stalk. Allow several leaves to remain on the stalk. The plants will branch out from that point.

Cuttings can be rooted in a glass of water, but do better when rooted in a soil-less growing media. Take six inch cuttings, strip off the lower leaves, and dip into a rooting hormone. Keep the growing medium damp. After a few weeks, gently tug on the plants. If there is resistance, then they have formed roots and can be potted into larger containers. They are light feeders and only occasionally need a dose of all purpose fertilizer, like 10-10-10.

Scented geraniums add fragrances to the garden throughout the growing season, and to the indoors during the winter months. They are rewarding to grow.

Timothy Daly, Agricultural and Natural Resource Agent, Gwinnett County Extension

GWINNETT COUNTY MASTER GARDENER
ANNUAL PLANT SALE
FRIDAY, MAY 7TH (Just in time for Mother’s Day)

Gwinnett Justice & Administration
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Rain or Shine
Questions: Give us a call at 678-377-4010

“SO EASY TO PRESERVE”

Prepared by UGA

This book is an excellent source for canning, preserving, drying and much more. It also has great recipes for jellies and jams. Great gift idea for anytime of the year.

Copies are $18.00 each
Gwinnett Extension Office
750 South Perry Street - Lawrenceville, Ga 30046
HOW TO RAISE FINANCIALLY LITERATE CHILDREN

There is ample evidence that we need to do more to prepare our youth to become financially literate adults. High school seniors routinely flunk national assessments of their financial management knowledge. Scores have not improved over time, despite implementation in many states, including Georgia, of financial literacy requirements through the schools.

Financial literacy in the schools can only help so much. It is the parents’ job to prepare children to handle the financial challenges and decisions they will face as adults. More than just talking with children about money and providing information, parents need to model appropriate financial skills and attitudes. Children learn what to do by modeling what they see, are shown to do, and from information around them.

Teaching your children to be financially literate adults and modeling appropriate behaviors will likely pay off in other ways, too. Families that pay bills on time and live within the family’s income tend to have more respect for one another, a greater sense of self-worth, and fewer financially driven tensions. On the other hand, less than optimal behaviors often lead to less kindness, less communication, and lower quality of life.

Becoming financially literate is a life-long process. At different ages and stages of the life cycle, financial transactions and decision-making vary. Research suggests that children begin to exert their influence on purchasing decisions by the age of 3. The way a parent handles those early wants and desires will likely play out well into adulthood for the child.

An allowance is one tool to help parents teach children important lessons about money. The keys to success are a high level of communication about money and modeling of appropriate behaviors and attitudes by the parent. Be clear on your expectations about how the allowance is to be used. For example, dictate that a certain portion must be saved, another portion shared with others, and the final portion must cover all spending needs between now and when the next allowance payment will be received.

As your child grows older, increase the allowance along with the responsibilities for how the money will be used. Gradually shift responsibility for meeting wants and needs from you to your child. The goal is to provide enough practice and experience for your child to successfully manage finances when they leave your home.

Remember, while talking with your children about money is important, it is not as important as modeling appropriate financial behaviors and attitudes. Make sure your actions correspond to your words when it comes to managing money. Your children learn more from what you do than from what you say.

Ines Beltran - FACS Agent - Gwinnett Extension Services - University of Georgia

---

 ROCK EAGLE 4-H CAMP
 4TH THRU 6TH GRADERS  
(Based on grade just completed in school)

JUNE 28TH – JULY 2ND, 2010

Rock Eagle 4-H Center – Eatonton, Ga.

APPLICATIONS CAN BE OBTAINED AT: 
WWW.UGAEXTENSION.COM/GWINNETT

Cost for camp: $290.00 due with application
GWINNETT EXTENSION OFFICE

Gwinnett Extension Service has served Gwinnett County Citizens since 1919. We offer programs in departments of Family and Consumer Sciences, Agriculture/Horticulture/Natural Resources and 4-H and Youth.

We are proud to be a part of Gwinnett County to assist with landscaping, soil testing, natural resources, promote youth programs, teach educational classes and assist consumers with unbiased, researched, informative information from The University of Georgia.

Listed below are staff members at our office. Please give us a call if we can assist you.
Visit our website at www.ugaextension.com/gwinnett

Robert Brannen - Extension Director
Kitty Shepard - Office Manager
Sharon Cassidy - Receptionist

4-H and Youth Programs
Pam Schingoethe - 4-H Agent
Janice Rogers - 5th Grade Programs
Barbara Larson - 6th - 7th Grade Programs

Ag/ Horticulture/ Natural Resource Department
Timothy Daly - County Extension Agent
Kathy Parent - Ag Program Assistant
Marlene Gillman - Horticulture Program Asst.

Family & Consumer Science Department
Ines Beltran - County Agent/Radon Specialist
Tricia Smith - Secretary

EFNEP Program
Alma Rhoden - Program Assistant

Email: uge1135@uga.edu
Website: http://www.ugaextension.com/gwinnett
Phone: 678-377-4010
Fax: 678-377-4030

Gwinnett Extension
750 South Perry Street, Suite 400
Lawrenceville, GA 30046-4804

The University of Georgia
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
Cooperative Extension
GWINNETT COUNTY
750 South Perry Street, Suite 400
Lawrenceville, GA 30046-4804