



Winter 2018

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Happy New Year and welcome to the Winter edition of the UGA Extension Gwinnett quarterly newsletter.

Articles come from our Extension agents to heighten awareness of winter activities in Georgia.

We hope that you enjoy reading this e-publication. Please help spread the word about everything we have to offer here at UGA Extension Gwinnett.



January is National Radon Awareness Month

We depend upon the good things nature provides. Sunlight helps plants turn energy into food. Rain gives life to all creatures on earth. Ocean tides keep the earth's water flowing.

But some things in nature can be harmful. If a rattlesnake strikes someone, they are hurt. If a tornado storms across a community, some homes might be torn down. If a volcano erupts, a village may be covered in lava. All of these things are part of the earth's natural balance. This balance is part of the wonder of our planet.

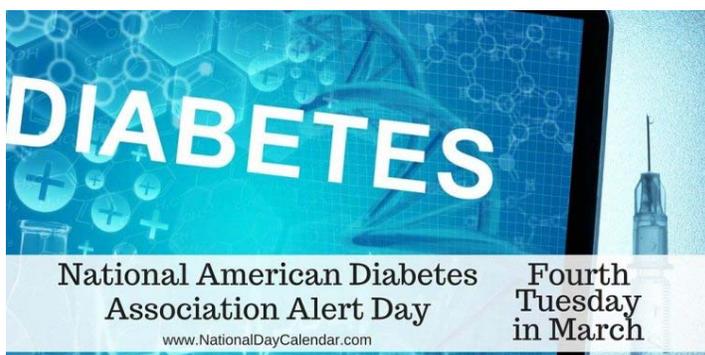
A gas called radon is part of nature. Radon is not something we can see, touch, or smell. It is found in the earth's soil. When homes are built on top of the soil, we do not always know that radon is there. But once we build these places, radon can come inside.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the US, causing more than 21,000 deaths each year. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths, but radon is the number one cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers.

With help from scientists, we are able to measure how much radon is in the soil and in our homes. The only way to know the radon level in your home is to test for it. January is National Radon Awareness Month. What better time to test your home for radon! How do you test for radon? Start with a short-term test kit. They are affordable and easy to use. For your convenience, you can buy a radon test kit for \$10, (includes test instructions, analysis, and results) at your UGA Extension Gwinnett County office, 750 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville, 30046. Phone 678.377.4010.

American Diabetes Association Alert Day

March 27, 2018



The American Diabetes Association Alert Day sounds the alarm about the prevalence of type 2 diabetes in American adults.

The American Diabetes Association created Alert Day as part of its awareness program in 1986. It has been a part of their growing diabetes education and prevention efforts in the United States ever since.

You can take the free, anonymous test online and it only takes a minute to complete. With questions such as "Do You Know Your Risk for Pre-diabetes?" and "Are you physically active," participants can learn if they're at risk for Type 2 diabetes. To determine your individual risk, click on the link below.

<http://www.diabetes.org>

UGA Extension Gwinnett 2018 Annual Plant Sale

The Extension office is offering a variety of Blueberries, Blackberries, Raspberries, Figs, Apples, Pomegranate, Goji Berries, Native Azaleas, Pecan Trees and other landscape plants as a part of their annual plant sale. All proceeds from this fundraising event will be used for Extension educational projects and activities.



All orders must be pre-paid by March 21, 2018. Prepaid orders can be paid by cash or check (payable to Gwinnett County Extension/4-H). Credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, and Discover) can only be taken with walk-in orders.

Order forms may be obtained from: www.ugaextension.org/gwinnett or 678.377.4010 to request a form to be mailed to you.

Thursday, March 29th, between 9:00am and 6:00pm is the one and only day scheduled to pick-up your prepaid order at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds, 2406 Sugarloaf Parkway, Lawrenceville. No orders are shipped.

Plants not picked up will be considered a donation. A friend may pick-up your prepaid order if you are unable to pick them up yourself.

"Middle of the Ring" Sale: On plant pick-up day, there will be a variety of landscape plants for sale that are not on the pre-order sheet. Most likely you will see a plant you will want to buy so bring extra cash, your checkbook or a credit card for a "splurge of the moment" plant purchase.

Please see the "Events and Classes" section of this newsletter for class information on how to grow and care for the plants sold at our plant sale and how to preserve your fruit harvest, scheduled for March 19.

Proper Pruning Helps Keep Plants Healthy and Attractive

Pruning is the process of removing plant parts to improve its shape, to reduce plant size, and to eliminate damaged or diseased sections. Each plant species in the landscape has its growth habit and specific pruning requirements. Unsightly plants often result from not pruning or incorrect pruning.

Often, a shrub is pruned by shearing the new growth to control its size and shape. However, the continual shearing results in dense, thick, fresh growth being produced near the outer portions of the canopy. Less light reaches the interior parts of the plant, leading to sparse foliage with a leggy or hollow appearance; increasing risk of harm from environmental stresses and pests.



Thinning is a pruning method involving the selective removal of an entire shoot or limb to its point of origin on the main branch or lateral branch. Thinning shortens the branches, improves light penetration and directs the growth of shoots or limbs. It encourages new growth within interior portions of a shrub, reduces the plant size, and creates a more attractive plant.

Frequently a shrub is overgrown and needs to be heavily pruned. Late February into March is the best time of the year for this task. As the weather warms up, the plants will have a huge flush of growth that will quickly cover the bare branches. Avoid renewal pruning in the fall or winter, which will cause the shrubs to have an ugly, barren appearance until the new spring growth occurs. Narrow-leafed evergreens, such as junipers, Leyland cypress, and arborvitae should never be pruned in such a manner since they do not regenerate new growth from the old wood and could perish.

The best time to prune varies with plant species and should be done at times that complement the growth characteristics, flowering, and other objectives you desire. Prune spring-flowering shrubs, such as azaleas, after flowering since pruning before flowering will remove the flower buds. Summer-flowering plants, such as crape myrtles can be pruned in the dormant season since they flower on the new growth.

Pruning plays a vital role in the development and maintenance of woody plants. Clear pruning objectives, combined with a basic understanding of pruning and plant response, you can get the results you desire.

Timothy Daly is an Agricultural and Natural Resource Extension Agent with UGA Extension Gwinnett. He can be contacted at timothy.daly@gwinnettcounty.com or 678.277.4010.

Cisco Damons was awarded the Georgia 4-H Salute to Excellence 2018 Volunteer of the Year Award



We are proud to announce that Cisco Damons was awarded the Georgia 4-H Salute to Excellence 2018 Volunteer of the Year Award. Cisco was an active 4-H'er in Barrow County in the 1990's. He competed in project work and was active in the many activities available to him through the club. To hear Cisco talk about his 4-H years, he is appreciative of all the things his 4-H Agent did for him and how much 4-H meant to him. His family had limited resources, so 4-H was a tool for him to learn, grow, and blossom into a responsible adult.

Cisco gives of his time so willingly to Gwinnett 4-H. He attends and chaperones almost every Gwinnett County 4-H event. He has a CDL license, so he volunteers to drive the bus or van to many 4-H events. Cisco has been volunteering with Gwinnett for the past 9 years and the value of his hours total more than \$84,000 over the 9 years. Cisco is loved by everyone that comes in contact with him. It is obvious that 4-H, and what this program does for youth, holds a special place in his heart. He is truly worthy of the 2018 Volunteer of the Year Award. Thank you Cisco Damons for all you have done for 4-H!

To learn about the Gwinnett County 4-H program, contact Pam Bloch, 4-H Youth Development Program Agent at 678.377.4010.

Events and Classes

Soil Basics for the Home Landscape January 22 Noon to 1:00pm

Soil is the most important component of growing plants. Extension Agent Timothy Daly will discuss ways to improve soil to ensure a healthy, attractive landscape.

Come to class with your soil sample which should consist of two cups of dry soil taken from several places in the area. After class you can bring your sample to the Extension office on the 4th floor and for \$8 we will send it off to UGA for testing. If you need any lime in your soil, you will have ample time for the lime to activate before planting season.

The class will be held in the second-floor conference room of the Gwinnett County Government Annex Building, 750 South Perry St., Lawrenceville, 30046.

Free!

Must register by January 19 at
timothy.daly@gwinnettcounty.com
or 678.377.4010.

Proper Pruning Techniques for the Home Landscape,

**February 5
Noon to 1:00pm**



Do you have trouble knowing how to properly prune your shrubs or trees? Extension Agent Timothy Daly will cover proper pruning techniques to keep your landscape plants healthy and attractive.

The class will be held in the second-floor conference room of the Gwinnett County Government Annex Building, 750 South Perry St., Lawrenceville, 30046.

Free!

Must register by February 2 at
timothy.daly@gwinnettcountry.com
or 678.377.4010.



2018 Plant Sale Classes Celebrating Gwinnett County Bicentennial

In recognition of Gwinnett County's Bicentennial celebration, UGA Extension Gwinnett has selected the blueberry plant as the official Gwinnett County Bicentennial Plant. The blueberry plant is native to Georgia and Georgia is the largest producer of blueberries in the country.

Tim Daly and Ines Beltran, Gwinnett County Extension Agents, will provide education regarding the plants being sold this year.

Tim Daly, Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent, will present a FREE program on the care and proper planting and harvesting techniques of the blueberry plant and some of the fruit trees being sold for the plant sale on March 19, 6pm - 7pm. This same evening, 7pm - 8pm, Ines Beltran, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, will present a program on preserving (canning and freezing) blueberries and other delicious fruits. Recipes will be provided. Both classes will be held in the conference room, 2nd floor of the Gwinnett County Government Annex Building, 750 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville, 30046.

Vegetable Gardening March 22 Noon to 1:00pm

Gwinnett County Extension Agent Timothy Daly will cover the many vegetables that can be grown in our area and how to care for them to produce a healthy, bountiful harvest.

The class will be held in the second-floor conference room of the Gwinnett County Government Annex Building, 750 South Perry St., Lawrenceville, 30046.

Free!

Must register by March 20 at
timothy.daly@gwinnettcountry.com
or 678.377.4010



**Walk.a.Weigh for Seniors
Tuesdays,
January 9 - February 25, 2018
9:30am - 11:00am
at Bethesda Park Senior Center**

Have fun and feel fabulous as you get a healthy start to your New Year! Learn to improve your eating habits and become more active with this UGA Extension program.

Interactive group sessions include a variety of fitness activities, nutrition topics, and cooking demonstrations of low calorie recipes by Ines Beltran, Gwinnett County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent.

There will be no class on January 23rd. Space is limited. There is a fee of \$10 per person, must pre-register by January 5 at www.gwinnettparks.com with code **BEP12901** or 678.277.0179.

**Spring Lawn Care February
22
Noon - 1:00pm**

Spring is an important time to take actions to keep your lawn healthy and attractive. Extension Agent Timothy Daly will discuss the care and maintenance of your lawn to keep it in optimal condition for the growing season.



The class will be held in the second-floor conference room of the Gwinnett County Government Annex Building, 750 South Perry St., Lawrenceville 30046.

Free!

Must register by February 20 at
timothy.daly@gwinnettcountry.com
or 678.377.4010.

**North Atlanta Home Show
February 9 - 11 at the Infinite Energy Center**

Come out and visit us at the North Atlanta Home Show.
UGA Extension Gwinnett will have a booth to answer your gardening questions.

UGA Extension Gwinnett offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or disability. An equal opportunity/affirmative action organization committed to a diverse workforce.

[Visit our website](#)

UGA Extension Gwinnett | 750 South Perry Street, Suite 400, Lawrenceville , GA 30046