

UPCOMING + PAST EVENTS

Board of Commissioners First Nights!

Promoting a State-wide Study

This past month Cabarrus County Extension Master Gardeners, Bruce Batman and Mark Robinson presented our Basil Downy Mildew Variety Trial during the first night of the State Board of Commissioners meeting via an educational booth. Members and Commissioners alike were drawn in by the fragrant smell and beautiful appearance of the live plants that were brought in. I'm beginning to think every garden in the state has at least one basil plant!

SOAR Program at Rowan Cabarrus Community College

Plant Propagation Class

On the 4th of August Horticulture Extension Agent Morgan Menaker taught two classes of special needs students how to propagate plants from leaf, stem and seeds. Students enjoyed chopping up a pothos, twisting off succulent leaves, and watching basil seeds germinate in the palm of their hand. Morgan had never taught a class to those with special needs before and found the students excitement, joy, and enthusiasm heartwarming. To quote one of the students upon seeing the plants in the classroom. "GUYS WE'RE DOING PLANTS TODAY!"

Speakers Bureau

We Speak to the People, For the People

Speakers Bureau chair, Patty Day has created a wonderful presentation on native tree selection, tree pruning and planting. Agent Morgan Menaker has developed another on Fall Vegetables. Do not hesitate to reach out and book a speaker now!

Visit <https://cabarrus.ces.ncsu.edu/extension-horticulture-speakers-bureau/> to book a visit now!

Drip Irrigation Workshop – Rowan County

Drip Irrigation for the Home Garden or Commercial Grower

Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity to learn from Horticulture Extension Agents from Cabarrus, Davidson, Rowan, and Davie County on how to install and manage drip irrigation in your garden or your farm! This one-of-a-kind workshop will be held on September 23rd from 9:00am – 4:00pm at Elium Farm. Lunch will be provided. Click the link to register, there is only availability for the first 20 people.

Visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/384089230227>

Top 5 Questions from Cabarrus County Residents!

Members of the community take full advantage of calling -in their questions. And why wouldn't they? It's free! I recently went through every call-in or walk-in client I have received since starting in February and these were the Top 5 categories.

1. **Soil and soil testing**
2. **Tree care**
3. **Weeds**
4. **Pesticide/herbicides**
5. **Blueberries**

While I never know what is going to come through the door or over the phone, I have certainly gotten accustomed to fielding questions from the above categories.

Part of the daily excitement of this job is walking towards the front of the office after being notified someone is here with a plant sample for me to look at. It definitely keeps me on my toes!

-Morgan Menaker

Cabarrus Horticulture Extension Newsletter

Published by your Cabarrus County Horticulture Agent and Extension Master Gardener Volunteers

August 2022

Third Friday Newsletter

Join us the 3rd Friday of each month to read educational content and more!



Cabarrus County Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Bruce Batman (right) and a member of the All-Saints Garden Team harvest Basil from trial plots for taste-testing.

Growing up in North Carolina I was surprised to see that our August temperatures have been so low as of late. Hopefully that does not jinx what has been going on! The lower temperatures have been great for those Summer annual vegetables that you may be trying to get your last few harvests out of. Many vegetable flowers can become intolerant to excessive heat especially when it stays warm at night and fall off. As much as we are enjoying the cooler temperatures, our plants are too!

If you plan on having vegetables this Fall it is time to begin sowing seeds for transplant and preparing your garden to receive the next crop of plants. I like to think of this transition and preparation like you are "wiping the slate clean." There is no better feeling than tilling, mowing or weed-whacking those pesky weeds out of the way to make room for your Brassica crops like broccoli, kale or cabbage. Onions, carrots, and other root crops will do well in the cooler fall weather. Read more about fall gardening at <https://chatham.ces.ncsu.edu/2015/08/plant-a-fall-garden/>.

August is also a great time to let go of some control in the garden. You have weeded and fertilized and tried to keep it as pristine as possible... Mother nature will reclaim what is hers and that is okay. The weed pressure can be intense this time of year. My own family garden plot is next to overrun! We have begun removing our summer annuals like tomato, squash, zucchini and showing the weeds no mercy along the way. Amending rows with compost and covering fallow areas with cardboard and tarps to keep the weeds out is something we have found low cost, low tech and effective preparation for the next crop.

INSIDE:

- Gardening Tip-of-the-Month
- Native Plant Highlight
- Your Problems, Solved!
- Gardening for Children

Started in the Summer of 2022, the Cabarrus Horticulture Extension Newsletter was formed for the purpose of informing you, the reader, of all thing's Horticulture-related going on in Cabarrus County. Join us every month as we explore the vast realm of Horticulture from plant pathogens and pests to composting and more! Current and future events will be advertised here as well.

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Horticulture Agent

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ABOUT N.C. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

North Carolina Cooperative Extension is a strategic partnership of NC State Extension, The Cooperative Extension Program at N.C. A&T State University, USDA-NIFA, and 101 local governments statewide. Extension professionals in all 100 counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee translate research-based education from our state's land-grant universities, NC State and N.C. A&T, into everyday solutions. Extension specializes in agriculture, youth, communities, food, health and the environment by responding to local needs.

Gardening Tip-of-the-Month

Hope Duckworth, Extension Master Gardener Volunteer

Perhaps surprisingly, this is a great time to plant cool season fall crops like kale, broccoli, and cabbage! You can also start seeding cool season herbs like parsley, cilantro and dill. Wait until mid-September, though, if you're planting onions or garlic. This is also a good time to get prepared for fall planting! While it's still too hot and dry for transplanting or planting perennials and trees, you can start preparing new planting areas. You can (and should) test your soil through the NC Department of Agriculture free soil testing program.

Soil boxes and instructions are available at our local county extension office. Soil tests will tell you important details about the levels of nutrients in your soil and provide recommendations for a variety of different plants (trees, shrubs, flowers, veggies, blueberries, etc.). It's very easy and I highly recommend it! Do not prune trees or shrubs after August 15, as doing so promotes new growth that will be too tender to withstand fall frost. They should not be fertilized this month for the same reason.



Kale seedlings push their way out of a seed tray. Many Brassica cotyledons or false leaves have a "B" shape. Making them easy to identify.



Native Plant Highlight

Bruce Batman, Extension Master Gardener Volunteer

Purple coneflower also called *Echinacea purpurea* is a herbaceous perennial in the Asteraceae (daisy) family that is native to central and eastern USA. This plant prefers well-drained moist loam but is adaptable to various types of soil. It is drought tolerant once established and can grow in full sun to part shade. A popular and long-blooming plant for use in the native garden, meadow, pollinator garden or naturalized area. The showy flowers attract bees, butterflies, songbirds, and gold finch. Many existing Echinacea hybrids come in a variety of different colors

Planting Information

Plants grow to 3 - 4ft tall and should be spaced 12-18 inches apart. Flowers bloom in early summer to fall and are Propagated by seed and will reseed itself in the garden.

Your Problems, Solved!

Morgan Menaker, Horticulture Agent Cabarrus County

Every Friday, I post an article to the Cabarrus County Cooperative Extension/4-H Facebook page highlighting a different call-in clients plant predicament. I describe the issue, the pest pathogen or problem and the options for treatment or control.

Last month, I highlighted issues Cabarrus County residents were having with pickleworm on their cucurbit crops like cucumber, zucchini, and squash. Tomato fruit splitting, southern blight on tomato, waterlogged potatoes, and white mold on string beans.

Visit our Facebook page to read the full stories by scanning the QR code on the right or visiting <https://www.facebook.com/cabarruscountyce>



Feature Story

Discover Gardening for Young Children

Dianne Trogdon Wall, Extension Master Gardener Volunteer

Imagine that you are a 7-year-old child in modern society. You live in a subdivision. You cannot ride your bike in your neighborhood. All your activities must be planned. Your home and school life are dominated by technology. You have a cell phone, an iPad, and play video games. Covid has made all this even more stark. What could make your life happier? This gardener and research say gardening is the answer. Researchers have identified benefits for these children. The Lucky Farming published an article outlining seven benefits of gardening for children. One, it increases focus and memory because this activity increases nerve growth leading to enhanced cognitive skills, awareness, and confidence. Two, it helps to fight stress. A 2011 research study compared children in a group that gardened with a group that read in a quiet place. The gardening group returned with a positive state of mind—the reading group did not. Three, it helps in science studies. Children learn weather, seasons, pests, plants, photosynthesis, and insects. Four, it teaches healthy habits such as eating fresh fruits and vegetables. It teaches the pleasure of hard work. It teaches the value of hygiene—hand washing, and care of clothes and tools. Five, it teaches responsibility because plants must be watered and observed. Six, it teaches patience because gardening is a slow process. Seven, it is exercise. It involves digging, raking, cutting grass, pulling, and bending.

How does this help our 7-year-old child? How can this child access gardening if their parents do not garden? They can look for an organization that provides this in their community. Cabarrus County Extension Master Gardeners offer this in our summer Discovery Garden. We have personally witnessed the difference it makes for children. Due to Covid and recent fire loss of a facility, Discovery Garden has been on hold. But it is coming back soon. We hope to see you and the children you love there in 2023!

Works cited. ProvideIndustries. "What Are 7 Benefits of Gardening for Kids 2022." Lucky Farming, 30 Mar. 2022, <https://luckyfarming.com/benefits-of-gardening-for-kids>



A sign from the old garden plot at Frank Liske Park in Concord.

Discovery Garden



Cabarrus County Extension Master Gardeners assist campers with harvesting from the multiple crops grown in the garden. Pictured here are corn, tomato and cucumbers.