



THE SEMINOLE GREENHUMB



Urban Horticulture
Seminole County Extension
407-665-5550

Overwatering in the Summer?

Many Homeowners irrigate their lawns incorrectly. Overwatering is the most common mistake; it can damage or even kill the lawn. Overwatering leads to a shallow root system; increases vulnerability to weeds, insects, and diseases. It also reduces drought tolerance; increases thatch, encourages excessive growth and reduces tolerance for environmental stress. Letting your lawn "tell you when to water" means turning your irrigation system to "off" and operate only when your lawn shows signs of drought stress. Look for the following signs and consider watering when you see at least one of them.

1. Folding leaf blades. Drought-stressed lawns will curl up leaf blades.
2. Blue-gray color. Drought-stressed lawns turn from green to bluish-gray.
3. Footprints remaining visible on your lawn long after being made.

Train your lawn's roots to grow deep. Irrigate only when the grass begins to show one of the three signs of lawn thirst listed above. These practices will increase rooting depth and overall turf-stress tolerance. Another way is to mow at the correct height for your grass type. When you mow too low, the grass puts energy into regrowing shoots rather than the roots. The proper amount of water to be applied is somewhere between 1/2 inch and 3/4 inch of irrigation should be applied. Sandy soils will generally get wet down to 12 inches for each inch of water you apply. To determine the correct amount of water set a tuna or cat food can and turn on the irrigation see how long it takes to fill it up. This time is how long you let the irrigation run. Homeowners are often tempted to apply more water during water restrictions. Applying more water than the grass can absorb only wastes water and causes runoff which can create potential pollution hazards. A lawn too wet is also at greater risk for diseases and weed problems. Have you seen mushrooms? Also Homeowners should have rain sensors on their irrigation system. They were mandated by state law in 1991. These sensors will automatically skip an irrigation event if it has rained. For more information on irrigation practices and how to train your lawn to become drought tolerant, refer to IFAS publication "Your Florida Lawn",

<http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/yourfloridalawn/>.

SUMMER 2014

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What Can We Do For You!



Horticultural Agent Gabrielle Milch

Soil Testing Tests performed Mon. & Fri.
Fee \$2.00 per sample
Samples accepted Mon-Fri 8:00am - 4:00pm

Got a disease? Mon.- Fri. 9:00am - noon
1:00pm- 4:00pm
Bring in a sample Free service

"Ask A Master Gardener" Call 407-665-5550
Phone Service Mon.- Fri. 9:00am - noon
1:00pm- 4:00pm

Speakers, Workshops, Special events
Free Publications on many lawn & garden topics

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
IFAS ~ EXTENSION
<http://solutionsforyourlife.com>
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>
<http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu>
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.com>

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Cover Crops To Let your Vegetable Garden Rest in the Summer

The use of cover crops dates back over 2,500 years. Several ancient Greek and Roman sources suggest growing cover crops to produce green manure for vineyards and other crops. However, during the past century there has been a trend within conventional agriculture to ignore the role of soil organic matter in crop production, and the use of commercial chemical fertilizers for agricultural crop production has greatly increased. Although chemical fertilizers are affordable and easy to apply, they don't add to soil organic matter. In fact, the gradual decline in soil organic matter associated with continued chemical fertilizer use, particularly in the extremely sandy soils of Florida, makes it difficult to maintain crop vigor, yield and quality.

Appropriate use of cover crops, on the other hand, may partially replace chemical fertilizer. Moreover, cover crops function as slow release fertilizers, thereby reducing excessive nutrient leaching. Their use may also sustain/enhance soil organic matter content. This is critical to many Florida soils, especially for sandy soils which typically have low inherent soil fertility, do not retain much water or nutrients, and are often prone to excessive nutrient leaching losses. Cover crops are an alternative way to manage soil fertility. They can be a living mulch or incorporated into the soil as a green manure. Sometimes one crop can cover multiple needs. Florida's sandy soils tend to have low soil fertility as well as low water and nutrient retention because of their low organic content. Cover crops increase soil fertility by adding organic matter. Cover crop uses are:

- Control weeds through competition for available space, light, water, and nutrients
- Prevent soil erosion caused by heavy rainfall or winds
- Protect crops (such as watermelon) from sand blasting damage
- Retain and harvest residual nutrients that would be leached in the off-season
- Recycle and restore nutrients in a crop system
- Reduce select harmful nematode populations
- Create additional income (such as hay production)
- Provide mulch cover for row middles and/or mulched beds
- Provide habitat for beneficial insects and birds

Although cover crops have many benefits, improper selection of cover crop types can create challenges. The main distinction in cover crops is between annual cover crops intended for a season and perennial crops that will last for many years. Annual crops can be grains/grasses or legumes (those that produce nitrogen), and are either summer or winter crops. Winter cover crops are adapted to shorter, cooler days, while summer crops are better for hot, long-hour days. Cover crops can be chosen for purposes such as soil protection, nitrogen production, or creating residues for incorporation into the soil. Variables such as decomposition rates, herbage (biomass), and classification determine how well a cover crop is suited to a specific purpose. The summer cover crops are:

Cowpea, sunn hemp, sorghum-sudangrass, marigold, jointvetch, velvetbean, hairy Indigo (*Indigofera hirsuta*), castor (*Ricinus communis*), sesame, marigolds, partridge pea, and some grasses have most commonly been used as summer cover crops to keep root-knot populations at lower levels.



FLORIDA YARDS & NEIGHBORHOOD

www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fyn

1. Right Plant, Right Place
2. Water Efficiently
3. Fertilize Appropriately
4. Mulch
5. Attract Wildlife
6. Manage Yard Pests Responsibly
7. Recycle
8. **Reduce Stormwater Runoff**
9. Protect the Waterfront

Plant a Parking Lot!

Parking lots are one of the fastest growing land uses. Between 10 - 20% of land in cities are parking lots. On average, there are seven parking spots for every one car. When any land use changes, the microclimates and hydrology also alter. In the case of parking lots, the site becomes warmer and, as an impervious surface, they create stormwater runoff, which is likely polluted with oil, grease, and heavy metals from cars.

How can we make parking lots the very best they can be? By cooling them down and reducing stormwater runoff. What can do that? Trees! Trees provide shade -enough shade to cool air temperatures by 4 - 8° F and the asphalt by 36° F. Secondly, trees can absorb and utilize stormwater if their planter boxes are designed to receive it. Instead of parking lots causing a flash flood into the nearest stream, stormwater can be directed into the tree islands, irrigating the plants and reducing runoff.

Still parking lots can be very stressful environments for a tree. We must not only choose the right one, but supply its needs, in terms of space, water, and pruning. The landscape architect must select a tree that is drought, heat, and salt tolerant; one that has good clearance (branches aren't poking into passerby), large canopy cover, and isn't messy (no fruits or saps). Red maple and Southern Live Oak are up to the task, but even then there must be enough space set aside for the trees' roots to grow and curbing must be designed to allow stormwater to enter. Utilizing angle-in parking, perimeters, or other parking lot "dead space" are a few ways to make room.

The next time you visit a parking lot, look around: what landscaping is in place? If there are trees, how do they function? Did good intentions become a wasted opportunity because the tree needed more than what we gave it? "Right plant, right place" applies to parking lots as well as everywhere else. Trees can greatly improve parking lots so long as we properly design for them.

To schedule a FFL program for your Homeowner Association or organization, or learn more contact Taryn Sudol FFL coordinator, at 407-665-5575 tsudol@seminolecountyfl.gov or fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov. Check www.FloridaYards.org



“Ask A Master Gardener”

We will help with your gardening and landscaping questions.

Monday - Friday
9:00am - 12:00pm
1:00pm - 4:00pm
407-665-5550

A word about “organic” pesticides. Beware, if labeled “organic” (which usually means it is derived from a plant) does not mean that it is not toxic. Organically derived pesticides (like nicotine sulfate, rotenone, sabadilla, etc.) usually break down quickly in the environment, but can be toxic to bees, fish and mammals (including humans). **In the hot summer months only apply early morning.**

Environment-friendly spray

1 gallon water
2Tbsp dish soap
(without degreasers)
2Tbsp vegetable oil

Make sure the plant is not stressed from lack of water, if so water it thoroughly before spraying. Spray in the cooler part of the day. Thorough coverage of the plant is important.

Homemade Fungicide

1 gallon of water
4 teaspoons of baking soda
1oz. Horticulture oil
(1 1/2 Tbsp)

Sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) in combination with horticultural oils has been shown to control powdery mildew and black spot on roses. Spray weekly to prevent disease.

Test products on a small portion of the plant; wait a day or two; inspect the plant for damage before spraying

- Q. I had a conversation with my landscape service about palm tree Injections. It involves injecting with fertilizer, fungicide and insecticide. How can enough be injected into the palm tree to meet their needs?
- A. There are 3 different issues here. In the overall scheme of things, we want to minimize drilling holes into any tree (palms or hardwood trees) unless it is a very good reason to do so. Palm trunk wounds do not heal. So, once you drill a hole into the palm it is there for the life of the palm.
- Fertilization:** The only time we would suggest doing a palm trunk injection with a liquid fertilizer is for manganese (Mn) deficiency, and then only if it is a problem. The basic fertilizer scheme for your landscape (if you want to fertilize at all) is to use the UF recommended product, which is an 8-2-12 product with 4% magnesium (Mg) and Micronutrients (John Deere Landscape stores carry this Product). Then if you are seeing a severe MN deficiency, an injection may be necessary. But, if I recall Dr. Tim Borscht's research on MN injection, the Mn levels remained quite high for a long time. We would not suggest injecting any product that contains boron.
- Insecticides:** In south Florida, people are injecting specific insecticides to control the rugose spiraling whitefly issue that is affecting some palms, especially coconuts. This is useful for the first insecticide application as it moves the insecticide very quickly into the palm to knock back the whiteflies. Following up applications can be accomplished with insecticide drenches. “The question I have is”, do you have an insect problem on your palms or any other trees in your landscape? If not, then I don't see the point of injecting an insecticide. The rugose spiraling whitefly is moving north, something to be aware of, but there is no reason to inject preventively if the whitefly is not affecting your palms.
- Fungicide:** Unless something new has come on the market, there is only one product that is considered legal to use for tree injections. That product is called Alamo and contains the active ingredient propiconazole. Another product called Arbotect (active ingredient is thiabendazole) is registered for tree injections, but it isn't clear that it is legal to use on palms. We have conducted two studies with Alamo and while we can detect it in the palm canopy, it is not clear that the amount in the palm canopy is high enough to prevent diseases. The issue is what disease are you trying to prevent? While these fungicides MAY be useful against Fusarium Wilt, then the only palms that would benefit are Canary Island date palms, queen palms and Mexican fan palms, as these are the only palms considered susceptible to the Fusarium Wilt pathogens. Injections of fungicides are not useful against our other lethal diseases.

Not all recommended injections from Arborists/ Landscaping service are researched by UF/IFAS.



The Seminole County Master Gardener EXPO
Saturday, November 1, 2014 at Seminole County Extension Center
9am to 3 pm 250 W. County Home Rd., Sanford 407-665-5550

This year our guest speakers will be Tom Maccubbin and Robert Bowden.
Our mini talk will be presented by our plant vendor. We will have a new area for
Kids ages 5-12. Our demonstration garden will be an organic vegetable garden
Come out and have some fun!!



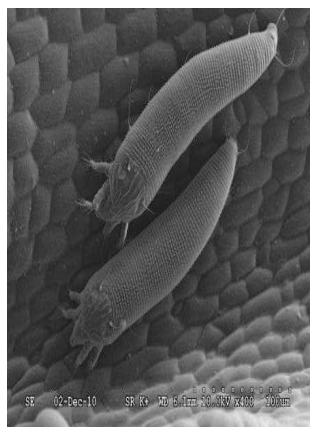
For more info go to gmlch@seminolecountyfl.gov

Pest Alert: Aloe Cancer

What is wrong with this aloe plant?

This is caused by aloe mites - (*Aceria aloinis*) also known as Aloe mite, aka Aloe gall mite, Aloe wart mite and Aloe cancer mite, it doesn't exactly "kill" the Aloe, but it does cause severe damage. These mites are only visible using a compound microscope. They appear worm-like with only two pairs of legs (most mites have four pairs of legs) making them poor crawlers. Therefore it is believed their primary method of transportation is by wind, or human spread.

It is difficult to diagnosis them until the infestation of the gall formation begins. These galls are caused by the mites injecting a chemical (a growth hormone regulator) into plants tissues during feeding, causing the plant tissue to grow abnormally around the mites. The mites are encased within the tissue like a protective cocoon. The resulting galls form a tumor like a growth that is found mainly on the topside of leaves but also occurring on the flower stems and buds. Oftentimes it is referred as "aloe cancer". You will not be able to repair the damage but it is recommended that you isolate the plants from other aloe plants and remove the galls by cutting them off the plant and disposing the infested ball tissue in a trash bag so as not to spread the mites to other aloe plants in your garden. Disinfect your tools after handling the tissue. Chemical miticides have little to no effect on the mites once they have been encased inside gall.





Seminole County Extension

Urban Horticulture

407-665-5550

250 W. County Home Rd
Sanford FL 32773

Located across from Flea World,
17-92 & County Home Road

Your Community Resource For
Gardening And Landscaping
Information

www.seminolecountyfl.gov/
Coopext/

Cooperative Extension Services
Seminole County Office

SEMINOLE GREENTHUMB

Free quarterly
Newsletter

To receive by email

gmilch@seminolecountyfl.gov

Newsletter

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**Seminole County:
USDA Hardiness
Zone 9b
Amer.Hort.Soc.
Heat Zone 10**

Seminole County Water Conservation
Ordinance #2009-24 states residential
homeowners may only irrigate

one day per week

- If your house is odd # only on Saturday
- If your house is even # only on Sunday
- Commercial irrigation only on Tuesday
- **No watering** between 10:00am-4:00pm
- Limited to no more than 3/4in. per zone

EVENTS UPDATE ~ mark your calendar!

July 19, 2014
9:30am - 11:30am

Right Plant, Right Place: Butterfly Garden
Seminole County Extension Center
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
FREE!! 407-665-5575
fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov

August 2, 2014
9:30am-11:30am

Rethinking Your Landscaping
Seminole County Extension Center
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
\$10.00 fee for material
RSVP 407-665-5558
gmilch@seminolecountyfl.gov

August 9, 2014
9:30am-11:30am

FFL The Nine Principles
Seminole County Extension Center
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
FREE!!! 407-665-5575
fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov

August 14, 2014
6:30pm- 9:00pm

Planning Your First Vegetable Garden
Seminole County Extension Center
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
Registration required \$10.00
407-665-5558
gmilch@seminolecountyfl.gov

August 16, 2014
9:30am- Noon

Planning Your First Vegetable Garden
Seminole County Extension Center
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
Registration required \$10.00
407-665-5558
gmilch@seminolecountyfl.gov

September 9, 2014
9:30am-12:00pm

Tips for Better Turf
Seminole County Extension Center
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
\$10.00 fee for material
RSVP 407-665-5558
gmilch@seminolecountyfl.gov

October 4, 2014
9:00pm-12:00pm

Growing Roses in Central Florida
Seminole County Extension Center
250 W. County Home Rd. Sanford
\$10.00 fee for material
RSVP 407-665-5558
gmilch@seminolecountyfl.gov

