



The Hancock Gardener

The Hancock Gardener is the monthly Gardening Newsletter from the UGA
Cooperative Extension – Hancock County March 2010 Edition

WELCOME

March comes in like a lion and leaves like a lamb! If you haven't already, start seed of tomatoes, peppers and annual flowers indoors. You'll need six to eight weeks or more to grow many transplants. You can save yourself some time and frustration by doing this. Usually our last frost is around mid-March but it can vary by a few weeks. It's a good idea to wait until the first of April to plant tender plants. You can prep your garden by breaking it up to expose hiding insects to the cold temperatures thus using a little preventive pest control.

Greg Glover, Hancock County Coordinator

GENERAL LANDSCAPE

Scout your landscape plants for aphids, azalea lace bugs, scale insects, white flies and pine bark beetles before they get active in March and April. Scout for them and treat as needed. Please remember to read and follow all of the label directions. Prune spring flowering shrubs such as azalea, camellia, and forsythia after they bloom before mid-July.

LAWN CARE

It's time to get your lawn mower tuned up, blades sharpened and ready to roll into a new season. Worn or dull blades will tear up the grass blades and even pull out sections of your lawn. A little fertilizer after the first green in April or May up will help things. Let's not forget about weed control as you can concentrate on this area through Mid May before the weeds get large and the temperatures get too high to apply herbicides safely.

SOIL TESTING REMINDER

You should pull a soil test now to determine your lime and fertilizer needs. If your ph is low, you should apply the recommended amount of lime before rototilling your garden area so that the lime can be mixed with the soil as you till. A ph of 6.0 to 6.5 is recommended for most vegetables.

The Hancock Gardener is a gardening publication from the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension in Hancock County.

FLOWERS

You can increase your bloom and color of pansies by deadheading and fertilizing them. You can fertilize pansies monthly with a granular fertilizer or bi-weekly with a liquid fertilizer. Daylilies should be fertilized around the last of March. As a precaution, you should check for aphids and treat as needed.

You can also clean up winter weary liriopoe by trimming with a mower or weed eater. Your mower should be set at its' highest setting when you're working in large areas. Do this before any new growth begins.

VEGETABLE/HERBS

If you haven't already started on this task, plan your vegetable garden now. Remember that leafy vegetables need at least 6 hours of sunlight to develop properly. Fruiting vegetables such as tomatoes, squash, eggplants and peppers prefer 8 to 10 hours of sunlight. You can maximize the use of sunlight by running your garden rows east-west. You should plant your tallest vegetables on the north and west sides of your garden.

If you're using transplants, harden them off by decreasing water, fertilizer and growing temperatures. You should transplant on a shad day in the late afternoon or in the early evening to reduce transplant shock. You should mulch to prevent the emergence of weeds and plan on fertilizing them at least monthly.



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Learning for Life