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SOLUTIONS

Newsletter of the Alamance County Cooperative Extension Service

Resolve To Learn!

Mark S. Danieleley, Director

New Year's resolutions are usually easier to make than keep, but I have a suggestion for a resolution that will be easy to keep. Resolve to learn something new in the New Year with Alamance County Cooperative Extension. We will have many different educational programs in 2016 that will be of interest to almost everyone. Whether your interest is home gardening and landscaping, youth activities or traditional livestock and field crop agriculture, we will have something for you.

Chris and I have just completed the class schedule for our 2016 Think Green Thursdays series. The classes begin in January and are held about every two weeks through the month of October. Topics range from pruning and vegetable gardening to landscaping to attract birds and butterflies to your garden. The complete class list can be found on our website. The classes are free or have a minimal charge for materials. Our monthly Alamance Gardener email newsletter will have more information on the class schedule throughout the year. If you don't receive the Alamance Gardener, please let us know and we'll add you to the email list.

If you have children or grandchildren ages 5-19, you should check out our 4-H program. While we encourage club membership, you

don't have to belong to a club to enjoy 4-H activities. There are many summer programs that are open to the public. Our 4-H program will be going through a transition this year. Erin has a new job and is leaving Alamance County in January. While we are sad to see her go, we are also excited about her new opportunity. We will be starting the search process for a new 4-H agent shortly.

There are many opportunities this winter for folks interested in learning more about livestock. Sheep, swine and beef producers all will have regional educational meetings in Guilford County. Lauren has more details about these conferences in her livestock newsletter. Lauren is also working with the youth livestock program. The group did very well at the state fair contest in November and have another competition in January.

January will be an important month for our field crop producers. The regional tobacco meeting and the area field crops meeting will be held this month. Contact Dwayne for more information on both of these meetings. Dwayne will also be offering some pesticide recertification classes this winter.

Alamance County Cooperative Extension is here for you. Resolve to learn something new with us in 2016.

Mark S. Danieleley

Calendar Updates

- Thurs., Jan 14 Feeder Cattle Beef Marketing Symposium, Occasions in Burlington
- Wed., Jan 20 NC Dairy Referendum. Vote in person at Alamance Extension Office
- Wed., Jan 20 Tobacco Production/GAP Meeting, Caswell Civic Center
- Wed., Jan 27 Multi-County Field Crops Meeting, AVS Banquet Center, Asheboro
- Thurs., Jan 28 10:00 **THINK GREEN THURSDAY** - Your Healthy Landscape
- Sat., Jan 30 8:30-Noon Regional Goat and Sheep Training, Guilford County Extension
- Thurs., Feb 11 10:00 **THINK GREEN THURSDAY** - Grapevine pruning with Andy Zeman
- Tues., Feb 23 Piedmont Regional Beef Conference, Guilford Extension Office
- Thurs., Feb 25 10:00 **THINK GREEN THURSDAY** - Pruning Trees and Shrubs
- Thurs., Mar 10 10:00 **THINK GREEN THURSDAY** - Rain Gardens
- Thurs., Mar 24 10:00 **THINK GREEN THURSDAY** - Fruit Tree Pruning

For more information:
Call 336.570.6740 or visit
<http://alamance.ces.ncsu.edu/>

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Resolve To Learn Something New

by: Mark Danieleley, Horticulture Agent

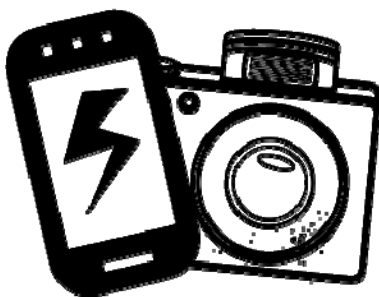
I have always heard that you learn something new every day. That might be a slight exaggeration, but you can resolve to learn something new about a particular horticultural topic in 2016 with me and Chris.

There are several ways we can help you learn.



The easiest way to learn something new may be to give us a telephone call. There are many types of questions we can answer over the phone. While it is tempting to diagnose a problem on the internet, the answer you find may not always be correct.

If a phone call can't provide us with sufficient information to answer the question, we can move on to email. A picture attached to an email is helpful when the problem is hard to describe.



If we still can't figure it out with the picture, then bringing a sample to the office is the next step. We (mostly Chris) can do a pretty good job of identifying insects, weeds and diseases in the plant lab. There are a couple of plant lab rules that we would like you to follow. If you are bringing in an insect for identification, please bring it in a clear container if it is alive and likely to jump out. The clear container rule especially applies to snakes.



Plant samples for identification should include as much of the plant as possible. Flowers are best for proper identification, but leaves, stems and even roots and seeds can be helpful.

Plant problem samples should include healthy parts as well as diseased parts. Best would be a section of the plant that includes both. All samples should be as fresh as possible.



Our 2016 Think Green Thursdays horticulture class schedule has been completed and will begin the end of January. Classes are held about every two weeks throughout the year and end in October. The class schedule can be found on our website and in the Alamance Gardener e-newsletter.



If you don't already receive the Alamance Gardener monthly e-newsletter, I recommend signing up. Just send an email to mark_danieley@ncsu.edu and I'll add you to the email list. Alamance Gardener contains monthly gardening tips and has information on upcoming gardening programs. As you can see there are many ways to learn something new with the horticulture staff at Alamance County Cooperative Extension. Resolve to learn something new with us in 2016.

North Park Farmers Market

Healthy Alamance is pleased to announce a new farmer's market housed in a permanent structure at North Park, Burlington! The Farmer's Market at North Park is an exciting new frontier in Burlington's food scene, providing farmers with a new consumer base while creating a community gathering space that provides residents with fresh, healthy food and nutrition education. The Farmer's Market at North Park will run every Tuesday from 3:00pm-6:00pm from the first Tuesday of April through the last Tuesday of October.

Alamance County is an agricultural county at heart, and the Farmer's Market at North Park wants to celebrate that heritage. Please join us in creating this vision.

We want your input and involvement - please contact Cat Palmer at Catherine.palmer@conehealth.com for more information, or visit the Cooperative Extension of Alamance County's website for additional details and application.

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Dear Alamance Extension Family,

Erin Bain, 4-H Agent



It is with mixed emotions that I write to you today to share some big personal news. I have accepted a new position and will be leaving Alamance County 4-H towards the end of January.

I will be working with the Special Risk Division of American Income Life Insurance Company as the 4-H and Extension Client Relationship Coordinator. This is a new position based in their office in Indianapolis, Indiana. This company works closely with 4-H and Extension professionals and volunteers all around the US to provide blanket accident and illness insurance coverage for clubs, programs, and events, and over the years I have utilized their services in a variety of ways. I am hopeful that taking on this new role will allow me to serve the 4-H community in a new way and still feel a connection to the program that has meant so very much to me over the years.

I will miss the community here in Alamance, the North Central District, and North Carolina 4-H as a whole, but I am excited about the opportunity to grow my professional experiences and still have the opportunity to work closely with 4-H professionals and volunteers in a different capacity. In my time here I have sincerely enjoyed getting to know many of you as well as many other amazing supporters and most importantly, our youth.

I hope that you will all be as excited to meet and welcome the new 4-H Agent as you were when I arrived here and I know your efforts to support the 4-H program will help them continue to live the 4-H Motto, "To Make the Best Better!"



Cooperative Extension's
Youth Development Program

Cards and Cookies Report



Cards and Cookies is an annual event for Alamance County 4-H where we come together around the Holidays for fun and fellowship and work together to give to others. Our 4-H youth and parents decorated over 300 cookies and made beautiful Holiday cards to give to local charities and community organizations including Friendship Adult Day Services and the Burlington Housing Authority.

We hope that the love we put into our creations is felt by all those who receive them.



Learning To Think

By: Lauren Langley, Livestock Extension Agent

Happy New Year! Another year has come and gone; are you ready for 2016? Ask yourself, did you learn anything new in 2015? Maybe it was a hard and fast lesson you did not enjoy learning or possibly an exciting new discovery that enabled you to become better. To become better at something, we have to be willing to learn. Our theme this quarter is about learning. We (Extension Service) are, after all, part of the education system, it is our job to learn and educate! Take a moment to look at the photo below of a calf being taught to lead for the first time.



Photo Credit: <http://theheritagefarm.me/>

How does this relate to learning? First of all, if you haven't halter broke a calf before, you just haven't lived. The whole experience is a learning curve. I broke many calves to lead in my showing days and each one taught me a lesson titled: Patience. Eventually the calf learns to walk when it feels pressure or it will be uncomfortable. Both the calf and the person leading the calf learn something new. The calf learns to give to pressure and the person learns that they cannot rush the calf. When it comes to learning you have to take baby steps as to not overload yourself in the process. I really cannot tell you how many times I have been

approached in Extension and have been asked to tell everything I know about raising beef cattle or meat goats, etc.



Photo Credit: <http://umaine.edu/publications/2186e/>

It would take me years to tell you everything you need to know. What I explain is what you need to know in the beginning to get going without overloading you. It is absolutely daunting to think about everything you need to know if you want to get into livestock production. You have to take small steps and do one thing at a time. My best advice is to attend a training or two before you ever get your first animal. This helps acclimate you to your new project or business and in a slow way so that you do not make valuable mistakes. Raising livestock is challenging but very rewarding and fun! Even if you are a seasoned veteran, there is always something new for you to learn about, such as a new forage variety, new ways to market, genetics, etc. Now is the time for you to sit down and think about your livestock goals for 2016! What do you want to learn or do differently in the coming year? How can I help you achieve your livestock goals? Contact me today!

Resolve to be Safe and Profitable with Extension

by: Dwayne Dabbs, Field Crops Agent



As we begin a new year, farmers are looking back and reflecting on 2015. They are looking at what worked and what could be improved for 2016. With the unusual warm and wet fall and winter that we have had so far, farmers will be looking for ways to try and save some of their small grains that were planted early. In a normal year, when small grains are planted, we will have warm temperatures that

allow the grain to get up and grow, but eventually the temperatures will get cold and the grain will go dormant. This year that has not been the case for farmers that got their grain planted in September and October. With a few exceptions of cold snaps, the temperatures have remained warm and the grain has continued to grow. If it turns off cold now, some of the grain may suffer frost bite, and may have less quality, if it produces at all. Farming is always a gamble, and this year will likely be no exception.

With that being said, farmers may have to change their management plans in hopes to get the best yields that they can off of what they have in the field.

Production Meetings

Quite a bit of the next few months will include going to production meetings to get information on new and coming products that will be available for the Spring. This time of year is very busy for all the people involved in Agriculture. In January, we will be having several meetings: a Tobacco Production and GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) Meeting for the tobacco producers to receive information on new products and research that will be helpful to control possible problems for the coming growing season, as well as training that the tobacco companies require for them to sell their tobacco. We will also have a Field Crops Production Meeting, for the grain farmers in the county. This meeting will include production information and research for small grains, corn, and soybeans; along with vendors giving information on new products and varieties of grain

that will be available for this growing season. There will also be several meetings for pesticide applicators to get re-certification credits to apply certain chemicals to their crops. These meetings include ways for the applicator to be safe while applying the chemicals, as well as offering other means of controlling pests, if they are available.



Certified Safe Farms

by: Dwayne Dabbs, Field Crops Agent

One of the programs that I am pleased to try and implement in Alamance County this year is the Certified Safe Farms Program that Cooperative Extension will be doing in conjunction with the NC Agro-medicine Institute.

This program takes a comprehensive approach to looking at the safety of your farm and offers a cost-share to help pay for safety improvements to your farm; currently this program is being offered to farmers, livestock producers, and nursery operators.

This program has two sections. One is an on-farm safety review, where a representative from the Agro-medicine Institute and I will come out and look at your equipment, including tractors, plows, harrows, etc. and buildings to determine if any safety issues exist. The second part of the program is a low-cost health screening, where nurses will take vital information and

make recommendations if they note a concern. After this part is covered, and if you receive a passing score of 85 or above on your farm, then you will receive a sign that you can place on your farm, along with a spreadsheet outlining all the information that we take from the on-farm safety review. You may then take this information to your insurance agent, and he or she may be able to adjust your premiums on your land and maybe your health insurance. I

know that in this day and time, every farmer is looking for a way to save money where they can, and this may be a way to do that. There is quite a bit that goes into this program, so if you are interested in participating or have questions about the program, please feel free to give me a call at 336-570-6740 or come by the Extension Office and I will try to answer any questions that I can.



There is a link on our website that has a brochure about the program, and it can be found at <https://alamance.ces.ncsu.edu/2015/12/certified-safe-farms/>

Resolve to Eat More Vegetables!

Diets come and diets go, but most health professionals agree that vegetables should make up the biggest part of any healthy eating plan.

One great way to maximize flavor in those vegetables is by roasting. The addition of a bit of healthy fat and a little heat can bring out the best in almost any vegetable and make it easy to stick to your resolution.



Roasted Root Vegetables*

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 2 Tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 4 large beets, peeled and quartered
- 2 Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 Carrots, peeled and cut on the diagonal
- 2 Parsnips, diced
- 1 large sweet potato, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 Rutabaga, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 large onions, quartered
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 Tablespoons clarified butter, melted
- 1/3 cup green onions, chopped



Preheat oven to 350°. In a small mixing bowl, combine oil, maple syrup and garlic. Place all vegetables on a heavy, large, rimmed baking sheet. Pour oil mixture over vegetables and toss to coat. Spread vegetables out in a single layer and generously sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast until tender and golden, about 1-1/2 hours. Transfer vegetables to a platter and drizzle with butter. Sprinkle with chopped green onions and serve immediately.



**Recipe from*
The Garden Plate: Recipes By Alamance
County Master Gardeners,
available at Alamance County Cooperative
Extension

