



Hughes County Connection

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Pruning Woody Ornamentals

With recent weather conditions - warm, mild temperatures and drought - questions have arisen as to how this might affect pruning of plants in the landscape.

Recent weather conditions should not affect, to a great deal, the normal pruning activities for most ornamentals in the landscape. Waiting to trim trees and shrubs that do not bloom in the spring until late winter or early spring before new growth begins is still advisable; spring flowering plants should be pruned after they flower in the spring. However, remember that there should always be a purpose for pruning; don't prune just for the sake of pruning.

Pruning can actually be done at any time of the year; however, recommended times vary with different plants. Contrary to popular belief, pruning at the wrong time of the year does not kill plants, but continual improper pruning results in damaged or weakened plants. The least desirable time is immediately after new growth develops in the spring.

Trees known as "bleeders" (those that drip large amounts of sap from pruning cuts) are usually pruned when sap is not actively flowing such as winter when temperatures remain below freezing or in summer. The warm, mild temperatures we are experiencing right now may result in these trees bleeding sap if we prune now. However, this is not detrimental to the trees as once believed and will not kill the tree.

Got Grapes?

The 2006 Oklahoma Grape Management Course will be getting underway soon. The course meets seven times between March and October 2006 in Perkins, OK. Some of the topics discussed will be vineyard establishment, site selection, weed control, economics, and disease management. This course is very detailed and focuses solely on the growing Oklahoma grape industry. Class size is limited to the first 70 registrants and costs \$250 per individual. Please contact the Hughes County Extension Office for more details.

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Children Running Higher Risks Of Health Issues Due to Weight

The number of overweight children in the United States has taken a dramatic rise in recent years.

The National Center for Health Statistics reports more than 14 percent of children and 11 percent of adolescents are overweight. An additional 14 percent are at risk of becoming overweight, said Janice Hermann, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension nutrition specialist.

"Being an overweight or obese adult increases the risks of disease conditions including high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer," Hermann said. "Because being overweight in childhood increases the risk of being overweight in adulthood, overweight children may be at greater risk of developing these health conditions later in life."

There are many factors that contribute to being overweight. Some of these factors can be modified while others cannot.

Non-modifiable factors are genetics or family history, age and gender. A person can run a greater risk of getting a disease if there has been a family history of it.

Factors that can be modified include following a diet that contains foods from all food groups, as well as getting enough exercise.

Children need enough food for proper growth, but too many calories coupled with too little physical activity leads to being overweight.

Many schools have cut physical education because of funding. Other children spend sed-

entary hours watching television or playing computer and video games. Many children simply do not get any exercise at all.

"Since children need to grow, weight loss is not recommended unless guided by a health care provider," she said. "However, growth at proper rates and in a healthy manner is vital to good health."

To help ensure a child leads a healthy lifestyle, start by helping the child develop healthy eating habits. Help the child make sensible food choices. A healthy diet will include lean meat, poultry, fish, beans, nuts, milk, cheese and other dairy products, along with grains, fruits and vegetables.

Hermann said changes in a child's diet do not need to be dramatic or extremely restrictive. Start by serving low-fat milk rather than whole, low-fat yogurt and cheese and offer one cookie instead of two.

Children can improve their health and have fun at the same time by including moderate amounts of physical activity each day. Parents can set a good example by joining their child in physical activities. Go for a walk after dinner or ride bikes to the park on the weekend. Incorporating exercise into the family's lifestyle is good not only for the health of the family, but it also provides them with opportunities to spend more time together.

"Encourage your child to be physically active both at home and at school. If the school doesn't offer a physical education program, suggest your child play active games during recess," she said. "Helping a child start out living a healthy lifestyle is one of the greatest gifts a parent can give."

4-H LEARN AND SERVE OKLAHOMA

Who is involved with Service-Learning?

Pushmataha

Pittsburg

Latimer

Pontotoc

Seminole

Hughes

Coal

The 4-H in these counties have been involved in projects such as ATV safety, Adopt a "Grand Pal", Child identification, Veterans programs, Health fair, Hurricane relief, Park clean-up, Literacy awareness, Projects for needy families, Emergency preparedness, School beautification, and the making of an outdoor classroom. Since July, these youth have put in over 2,000 service hours!

What is Service-Learning?

Service-Learning engages youth of all ages in the educational process, using what is learned in the classroom to solve real life problems. The youth learn about subjects such as democracy and citizenship and at the same time become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform.

How can Service-Learning benefit my club?

By integrating your ordinary community service projects with service-learning, it offers a unique opportunity to use what students learn in the classroom to solve real-life problems. Intern youth develop academic skills, practical skills, self esteem, and a sense of civic responsibility while bettering their community. It turns learning into hands-on learning making it more interesting and fun!

"Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand" --- Chinese Proverb



Soil Sampling 101

It is that time of year again. My office is overwhelmed at times with soil samples, but that is a good thing. The first step to growing a good lawn, flower bed, or pasture is a soil sample. This may be the best \$11 you spend all year and it may even save you a couple of hundred dollars. Here are a few tips on how to get a good soil sample.

- Right now is a great time to sample your soil. Soil samples need to be done during the dormant season. They are much more accurate when nothing is growing.
- Soil properties tend

to vary from place to place. Your sample needs to be representative of the entire lawn, garden, or field. Do not sample unusual areas.

- Scrape plant debris from soil surface before sampling. The nutrients in the dead plant material can affect your sample.
- Lawns need to be sampled 3-4" deep. Pastures, crop fields, and gardens need to be sampled at a 6" depth. Grass roots in lawns typically do not go very deep into the soil.
- Make sure that all of your equipment is clean before sampling. This

includes buckets, spades, and soil probes. Combine all of the soil cores from at least 10 different locations scattered throughout the lawn, garden, or field. Fill the soil bag full of the mixed soil.

Submit samples to the OSU Extension Office. We will send the samples to the OSU lab and will have your results in one to two weeks.

Please contact the Hughes County OSU Extension Office at (405) 379-5470 for questions about soil samples.

New HCE Cookbook On The Way

Hughes County HCE is starting a new cookbook to be available for purchase at the 2006 county fair. If you have a family recipe you would like to have published under your name, or your ancestors name you can email the information to the OSU Extension Office to susan.pearson@okstate.edu or put it on a disc and mail it to OSU Extension, 200 N. Broadway, Suite #2, Holdenville, OK 74848. For further information call 379-5470.



Guiding Young Children**Department of Human Services****2:00-3:30 p.m.**

Topics:

March 6:	A Look At Discipline Why Children Misbehave
March 13	To Prevent Misbehavior Responses to Misbehavior
March 20	Encouraging Self Control
March 27	Discipline W/O Punishment

Co-Parenting Through Divorce**OSU Extension Center****5:00-8:00 p.m.**

March 16th	May 18th
July 27th	September 21st

Community Classes & HCE Leaders Trainings**OSU Extension Center ~ 2:00 p.m.**

March 25th	Canning Workshop
March 28th	Properly Polished
April 26th	Chocolate: Everybody's Friend

Greening of Potatoes

Concern about the potential toxicity associated with eating green potatoes is not unusual. It is important that consumers understand the causes for potato greening. This color change can occur as a result of inadequate soil coverage during the growth stage and subsequent exposure to sunlight or it may be due to exposure to artificial light during storage or while on the retail store shelf.

The green color is caused by the presence of chlorophyll. This is a natural plant pigment which is tasteless and harmless. The tendency toward greening differs among potato varieties. This varietal difference has been found to be especially significant when potatoes are exposed to the artificial light found in retail stores; including storage and sales areas.

The concern with greened potatoes should not be the color but the fact that solanine, a potentially toxic alkaloid, develops in the same area along with the chlorophyll. Greened potatoes, therefore, are often higher in solanine than those not greened. The bitter taste associated with greened potatoes is caused by the solanine, not the chlorophyll. The amount of greening is not a direct measure of its solanine content, since the synthesis of chlorophyll and solanine are separate processes.

The factors affecting greening of potatoes include more than light exposure. Greening is affected by variety, maturity and age, temperature, intensity and quality of light, and duration of light. White skinned varieties often green more readily than the red or russet varieties. The latter can green also but it may be masked and not as easily detected. Immature potatoes and those recently harvested green more readily due to lack of a thick outer skin. Potatoes also develop more greening under light exposure, when temperatures are higher, e.g., 68 °F versus 41 °F. Retail packaging can also contribute to increased greening. Consumers want to be able to view produce prior to purchase. Packaging materials have changed over time from burlap and other opaque materials to transparent bags which allow exposure to light during retail storage and display.

Consumers should be aware that some greening of potatoes is not unusual and may be more prevalent in some varieties than others. Excessive greening should be used as a symptom that solanine may also be present. A bitter taste will verify its presence.

The concentration of solanine is greatest in or directly beneath the peel. Peeling is effective in removing most of the affected tissue. Cooking in steam or water reduces solanine to 60%-70% of the value in raw material.

Growers and retailers should try to reduce factors which contribute to greening. While the potatoes may not develop enough solanine to be toxic, the green color decreases marketability and consumer acceptance. Consumers should know that chlorophyll and solanine are natural products produced by potatoes under a variety of conditions. The presence of a green color should be used as a symptom of the presence of chlorophyll (which is harmless) and a signal that solanine may possibly be present. Preventative steps include hilling to cover exposed tubers, reducing the time potatoes are exposed to natural light and eliminating exposure to artificial light during storage. Variety choice should also be considered.

Control measures including peeling, cooking, and selection of proper home storage techniques.

Information provided by Barbara Brown, Food Specialist. Credit for original development is extended to Wayne Vandredre, Horticulture Specialist, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 1995.

CONGRATULATIONS!

HCE award winners:

Outstanding Young HCE ~ Bryce Bishop

Outstanding Rookie HCE ~ Evelyn Gordon

Outstanding Member ~ Colena Huffstutlar

Heart of HCE ~ LaTrishia Sherry

CONGRATULATIONS!

Dustin Green, Hughes County Moss 4-H member recently received the Prudential Spirit of Community Service Certificate of Excellence for Oklahoma and the Presidential Volunteer Service Gold Award from the President of the United States. Way to go Dustin!

4-H Day at the Capitol Training

March 22, 2006 ~ 3:30 pm

Hughes County Courthouse ~ Commissioners Conference Room



On March 22nd we will be holding an orientation/briefing on how to talk to your legislator, public speaking on behalf of 4-H and questions that you may be asked about your project area. In order for a youth to serve as a delegate in 4-H Day at the Capitol they must attend this orientation. Our three delegates this year are Daniel Harris, Alex Sherry and Laramy Wilson. If you would like to attend this training with our delegates so that you could serve as an interim in the event that one of them can not go, you will need to attend this orientation.

Brand Calves to Limit the Opportunity For Theft*Kent C. Barnes*

Cattle thefts are not a problem that went away with the "Old West", but still exists today. In 2002 over 2,800 head of cattle were stolen in Texas and Oklahoma, resulting in more than a one million dollar loss to Oklahoma cattlemen. Livestock owners need to protect themselves from being in these numbers.

Branding cattle has been promoted and practiced by cattlemen for the past 150 years to show ownership and legal title. Branding today is still the most recognized and accepted means of indicating ownership of cattle. In fact, registered brands are prima facie evidence of ownership in a court of law.

A brand can be registered for cattle and horses through the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association (OCA), Brand Division. For more information on brand registration, check out the branding section of the OCA website www.okcattlemen.org or they can be reached at (405) 235-4391.

Branding in itself won't make you money. However, it can be done, along with other management practices, to demonstrate pride in ownership, and potentially save a large loss.

March

- March 7th-Senior Scams Updates @ Wetumka Nutrition Center—11:00 a.m.
- March 7th-Omniplex Lock-In & Zoo Snooze registration due in county office
- March 9th-Children & Physical Fitness @ Calvin Head Start-7:00 p.m.
- March 10th-HCE Spring Council @ First United Bank-11:00 a.m.
- March 10th-S.E. District Speech Contest Entries due county office
- March 10th-County Speech Contest Entries due to Lisa Peel
- March 11th-Senior Scams Updates @ Dustin Nutrition Center-11:30 a.m.
- March 11-20th-OFB Young Farmers & Ranchers Speech Contest
- March 16th-HCE S.E. District Council Meeting in Coalgate-8:00 a.m.
- March 21st-Opportunity Day (Career Fair) @ Wes Watkins Technology Center-9:30 a.m.
- March 21st-Discovery Unlimited registration due in county extension office
- March 22nd-Diet & Osteoporosis @ Holdenville Nutrition Center-11:00
- March 23rd-County Speech Contest @ Wetumka — 4:00 p.m.
- March 24-25th-Omniplex Lock-In & Zoo Snooze
- March 25th-Canning Workshop @ Hughes County Expo Center-8:00 a.m.
- March 29th-Cedar Eradication and Utilization Conference @ Hughes County Expo
- March 30th-Mayes County Livestock Challenge in Pryor, OK
- March 31st-4-H Family Night w/ the OKC Hornets at Ford Center - OKC

April

- April 3rd-Spring Fling (Pre-Schooler's Day Camp) @ Holdenville City Park-8:30 a.m.
- April 7th-Week of the Young Child Parade downtown, balloon release at the courthouse, etc.-10:30a.m.
- April 13th-S.E. District Speech Contest
- April 5th-4-H Day at the State Capitol
- April 10th-4-H Record book Training @ OSU Extension Center-3:30 p.m.
- April 13th-SE District Speech Contest in McAlester
- April 19th-OCES Supporters Day at the Capitol
- April 20th-REI Woman's Biz Annual Conference-McAlester
- April 21-22nd-Discovery Unlimited for youth ages 11 and 12 - \$35.00 per delegate
- April 22nd-State 4-H Meat Judging Contest in Stillwater
- April 26th-State Record books Due

May

- May 24-26th-4-H Round Up in Stillwater

June

- June 1st—County Record Books Due to Hughes County Ext. Office
- June 19-21st—4-H Tri-County Summer Camp—Robber's Cave State Park

July

- July 18-20th—Animal Science Field Days on OSU Campus - Stillwater
- July 22nd—State 4-H Volunteer / Leader Conference on OSU Campus - Stillwater



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