



Green-Up News

For The Commercial Grower
By Dana Venrick, Commercial Horticulture Agent II



Vol. 7, Issue 2
Mar./Apr. 2007

First Annual Volusia County Wildflower Festival

Saturday, March 31, 2007
8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Volusia County Agricultural Center
Hester Building & Front Fairgrounds
(Also visit the Master Gardener Plant Faire from 8:30 a.m. to Noon)

8:00 to Noon: Hear Four Wildflower Speakers

- Dana Venrick—(UF/IFAS) - Growing Wildflowers for Fun & Profit
- Dave Rigsby (Stetson University) - Native Plant /Wildflower Initiative
- Dr. Jeff Norcini (UF/IFAS) - Native Wildflower Seed Production
- Dr. Walter Taylor (UCF) - Wildflowers & Fla. Travel Adventures

10:00 a.m.—Noon Art for Kids by Museum of Florida Art

1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.—Field Trips
Newbold Wildflower Farm, The Longleaf Preserve,
and Lyonia Preserve

Call the Agricultural Center for details and directions
Pre-Registration is required!

Over a dozen vendors of plants, seeds/seeders & food!
Buy plants at the Plant Faire adjoining the festival!
Noon drawing for numerous door prizes!

Free Admission—Fun for All! Wildflower Tee Shirts!
Sponsored by: The Wildflower Advisory Council Grant Program, River of
Lakes Heritage Corridor, UF/IFAS Extension, and County of Volusia

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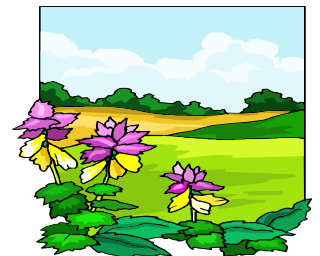
ENGLA MEETING

Wednesday,
April 4, 2007

Beeman's Nursery
3637 S.R. 44, Samsula

Meet & Greet 6:00
Meeting 7:00 p.m.

R.S.V.P. Curtis Davis
407-322-5133





DOWN CITRUS LANE

JUICIER ORANGES

USDA reports that each 90 pound box of oranges harvested this season will produce 1.62 gallons of frozen concentrate, up from the 1.61 gallons forecast last month. As a result, orange juice futures for May delivery fell 2.1 percent to 1.995 a pound. Prices are still high and are expected to remain strong as the crop forecast is now 132 million boxes, down from 140 million forecast last month. This would mean the smallest Florida harvest in 17 years. On top of that, the California crop of oranges is down 39 percent from last year.

BIODIESEL PROCESSOR LOOKS TO BUY SOYBEANS LOCALLY

Biodiesel innovations is looking for soybeans, to use for processing into biodiesel. According to the company, demand for biodiesel is exceeding their present supply made from cooking oil processing. Biodiesel says that biodiesel can be processed from soybeans at a lower conversion cost and yield a higher quality product than that made from cooking oil conversion.

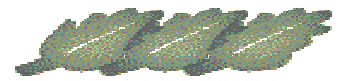
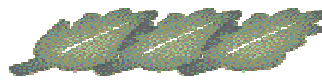
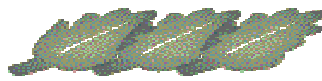
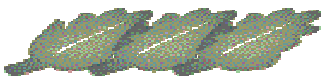
Certain Central Florida locations are suitable for growing heat-resistant soybean varieties suitable for Florida. Could this be a new profitable niche market for an ever-increasing market for biodiesel in city, county, and industrial fleets?

If you would like more information about biodiesel processing, call me at 386-822-5778.

Read the Volusia County Extension Horticulture Newsletter, *Green-Up News* On -Line

Green - Up News is a bi-monthly newsletter for pesticide applicators, nursery growers/nurseries, fern growers, citrus growers, sod growers, golf courses, and landscapers provided by the University of Florida/Volusia County Extension, Commercial Horticulture. Information on future educational programs, including Continuing Education Units (CEUs) available for FDACS pesticide applicator or FNGLA re-certification, also will be provided.

Subscribe to the Nursery News newsletter by clicking on <http://www.volusia.org/extension/horticulture.htm>, then click on the box to subscribe. Your e-mail should open and if you send this e-mail message, you will automatically be signed up for the list service.



NURSERY/FERN/CITRUS/TURF

VOLUNTARY BMPs NOW —FORGET STRICT RULES LATER

In two years the voluntary BMP (Best Management Practices) will sunset and the Florida Legislature will review the existing statutes. If voluntary BMPs have not been generally adopted by growers and horticulturists, a strict mandatory regulatory program will follow. Currently DEP is in charge of Landscape Maintenance BMPs and FDACS is in charge of Nursery BMPs.

Now is your opportunity to sign up for reasonable and easily achievable BMPs! In around six months, Nursery BMPs are scheduled to become stricter.

A key component of the Nursery BMP program, and one that will be a great boost in growing faster and better crops, is measuring substrate (potting soil) nutritional status as determined by measurements of EC (Electrical Conductivity).

The in-field methods of determining EC are quite easy. In a water-saturated container, pour a given volume of distilled water through the substrate and measure the EC of the leachate. Ideally, the EC should be around one mmhos/cm for most container-grown landscape plants. Desirable container substrate EC levels are 0.8-1.5 mmhos/cm for solution fertilizer only or the combination use of controlled release and solution fertilizer. Desirable container substrate EC levels are 0.5—1.0 mmhos/cm for the use of controlled-release fertilizer only. Adjustments must be made for plants known to be sensitive to fertilizer additions. Those plants may grow adequately with lower nutrient levels. Generally, foliage plants require an EC a little higher than one.

Growing plants without testing EC is like driving a car without a steering wheel. For example some “controlled” release fertilizers will register as high as five dS/m (mmhos/cm) initial application. It is important to monitor for EC weekly and, following a rain, immediately inject a little fertilizer to keep EC up.

With conventional irrigation, about 70% of nitrogen is lost from release from the bottom of the pot. Cyclic irrigation is the solution to the loss of nutrients by providing smaller doses of water and nutrients two or three times per day. The amount of water and nutrients lost from the bottom of the container is greatly reduced by cyclic irrigation. As a general rule, the leaching fraction (percentage of what goes in versus what goes out) should never exceed 15%. As an example, controlled release fertilizer with cyclic irrigation releases 33 ppm maximum during one month, while injecting soluble fertilizer releases up to 135 ppm due to run-off in one month. Reducing the parts per million (ppm) of soluble fertilizer is very important to reducing nutrient loss from the bottom of the pot. 150 ppm fertilizer in solution fertilizer is too much!

Reducing fertilizer rates will enable you to do a better, more cost-efficient job while dramatically reducing nutrient loss through leaching from the bottom of the pot.

For complete information, go to : <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu> and <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/bmp/>

In addition to complete information on EC testing and nutrient management, the site has: [Florida Container Nursery BMP Guide](#), [Florida Green Industries BMP Guide](#), [Understanding Container Nursery BMPs](#) and [BMP Certification List—Turfgrass](#).

Most importantly, to sign up for voluntary BMPs (before standards toughen!), call Carol Johnson with FDACS at 352-324-3271. Also go to the FDACS website: <http://www.floridaagwaterpolicy.com/bestmanagementpractices.html> for BMP Rules and Enrollment Forms for Container Grown Plants, Florida Citrus, Ridge Citrus, Leatherleaf Ferns, Vegetable and Agronomic Crops, and others. Take the initiative to voluntarily comply and your agronomic business will be improved as a result.

NURSERY/TURF

Great Groundcovers

- **Dwarf Mondo Grass**

Nanus' dwarf Mondo grass (*Ophiopogon japonicus*) is a low-grower that grows to 3 to 5 inches. The leaves are dark green, narrow, and gives the effect of lawn grass. 'Bluebird' and 'Gyoku Ryu' grow to an even shorter less than 3 inches height. Dwarf Mondo grass makes an excellent turf replacement in heavily shaded spots in the landscape.

- **Perennial Peanut (*Arachis glabra*)**

Perennial peanut is a tough, pest-free plant for a sunny location. The beautiful buttercup flowers are showy during the summer. The varieties 'Arblick' and 'Ecoturf' are most often used in landscapes.

- **Pygmy Bamboo (*Pleioblastus pygmaeus*)**

Pygmy bamboo is the shortest of all bamboos, growing 2 to 4 inches tall. It likes a shady, moist location with acidic soil. It is a fast spreader by rhizomes and looks like a turf grass and can be mowed like a turf grass. Pygmy bamboo can grow alongside St. Augustine grass in the landscape.

These are some of the low-growing alternatives to turfgrass. All can be grown in our climate zone and can tolerate a reasonable amount of foot traffic.

FERNS AND FLORA

New Calcium Nitrate Available

Local suppliers now have greenhouse grade calcium nitrate prills in stock. This calcium nitrate does not have the messy coating, making it much easier to use in your fertigation program.

Use less fertilizer (but more balanced) and get better results.

Regular fertilization is a key to good production and you should be putting inputs year-round as needed. Many growers needed some light fertilization during this warm winter. With an extended spring crop, keep giving your crops regular light inputs as necessary.

Based on research, including research by Dr. Robert Stamps of MREC, even less nitrogen may be necessary than previously believed. Certainly less phosphorus is needed in most cases. Phosphorus (P) should only be applied if a soil test indicates that P is dropping below an optimum range in the soil. Research indicates that the longer P is in the soil, the more available it becomes. Reducing nitrogen (don't reduce too much!) will help avoid continual new growth and increasing the potassium and to a lesser extent, magnesium in relation to nitrogen will help crops reach color maturity early. Remember the trace minerals, particularly boron that leaches so readily from the soil. Spring is the time to make sure you have that trace amount of boron applied with your other fertilizer inputs.

Dr. Stamps reported at the Tri-County Foliage Advisory Committee on February 20 that his research shows the absolute amount of fertilizer elements are not as important as the ratios and balance to include traces of minerals, such as nickel, that are not ordinarily considered essential. Outstanding results are being obtained by lowering the inputs of major fertilizer ingredients and balancing inputs to include a wider array of trace minerals.

HERBICIDES

Some growers have been reporting very good results with the use of liquid (and dry) supplements containing high fulvic acid and humic acids with a wide array of trace minerals. Several applications in the spring growth period may be worth a trial in your growing operation.

Remember as always, to have your soil and plant leaf tissue checked regularly and adjust your inputs as tests indicate.

If you keep your minerals at a desirable level in the soil and in the leaf tissue, you will be able to grow a better crop faster and with less stress and with fewer pest problems.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Florida has 42,500 farms, utilizing 10-million acres. (30% of the state)
- Yearly cash receipts are over \$6 billion.
- Florida ranks #1 nationally in citrus and sugar cane
- Florida ranks #2 nationally, in strawberries, fresh vegetables, and greenhouse/nursery products.
- When Hillsborough County did a comprehensive agricultural study, it was found that the cost of farmland to Hillsborough taxpayers is only 25% as much as farmers pay to Hillsborough County Government.
- Partly as a result of the aforementioned study, Hillsborough County directly reimburses farmers 75% of their property taxes, in addition to other incentives given to growers.

FLORIDIAN AGRICULTURE MOBILE IRRIGATION LAB NOW IN SERVICE!

Now, as an agriculture producer in Volusia, Putnam, Flagler and St. Johns County, you can receive a free, voluntary irrigation evaluation.

The evaluation only takes 3-6 hours, depending on the acreage to be evaluated. Your irrigation system information is gathered. Your system is run and pressures, distribution uniformity (which ideally should be 80% or better), application rates, and soil information is checked. Best of all, an evaluation report is prepared for you, so you can take corrective action as deemed necessary.

The Floridan Team Leader is Cheryl McCrory. The lab is located at 111 Yelvington Road, Suite #1, East Palatka, FL 32132. Telephone: 386-329-0318. Fax: 386-329-1262; e-mail: floridanagmil@hotmail.com

DOW 'SHOWCASES' NEW SELECTIVE HERBICIDE

Patrick Bell, representing Dow AgroSciences, reported outstanding weed control in trials of their new herbicide showcase™. Showcase™ is a new combination herbicide containing 2% trifluralin, 0.25 isoxyben, and 0.25% oxyfluren. Showcase™ gives outstanding, long-lasting, broad-spectrum broadleaf and grassy weed control against spurge, bittercress, thistle, oxalis, shepherdpurse, barnyard grass, goosegrass, Poa annua, groundsel, dandelion, and many others. To date, Showcase™ is labeled for over 150 weeds, with more to be added. It provides pre-emergent and even early postemergent control.

Showcase™ can be applied with a drop type or rotary spreader. It can not be applied on wet foliage or in greenhouses. It can not be used with cycads or agapanthus (Lily of the Nile).

Dr. Bob Stamps and Patrick Bell both stressed the need to rotate different modes of action (MOA) to avoid the development of resistance by weeds.

Other effective products discussed for a weed management program included Barricade (Pendimethilin), Broadstar/Sureguard, Goal, Snapshot, Treflan, Gallery, and Dimension (good rotation partner with Gallery, Goal and Round-Up). Gallery & Dimension can be used with many palms. Dimension can be used over the top for most annuals. Free 63 (Goal) and Free 75 (Goal & Treflan) from Harrell's were also mentioned.

Finally, Milestone (Aminopyralid) was discussed because of its great effectiveness against the tropical soda apple, thistle and selected other weeds. In combination with 2, 4-D, its range of species killed is even greater. The chemical history of Milestone also was discussed. The original chemical was Picloram, then triclopyr, then clopyralid, then fluoroxypr, and then aminopyralid (Milestone).

Dates To Remember

March

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Limited Pesticide License Certification Review and Exam - 8:00 a.m. to 3 p.m., \$30 per person. Volusia County Agricultural Center. Call Jeanne Blanchard or Dana Venrick at (386) 822-5778.

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First Annual Volusia County Wildflower Festival and Plant Faire - See cover for more details.

April

19

Review and Exam for Right of Way (ROW) Aquatic and Natural Areas - Extension training at the Annual FVMA Conference. Daytona Beach Hilton, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Go to <http://fvma.info/conference.html> or call Paul Hurysz at 863-678-4584 or 407-474-7912.

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Core, Private Applicator Ag, and Ornamental & Turf Training & Testing - 9:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. \$20 per person, Volusia County Agricultural Center. Call Jeanne Blanchard or Dana Venrick at (386) 822-5778.

May

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Small Farm Conference Mid-Florida Research & Education Center, Apopka, FL. Concurrent educational sessions on grapes, ornamental, citrus, vegetable, forestry, and livestock small farm opportunities. Optional tours of research station activities in grapes, nursery, and tree crops. For more information contact Dr. Juanita Popenoe, 352-343-4101.

July

19&20

Native Wildflower Seed Production Research Symposium, Leu Gardens, Orlando. For more info contact Kimberly Brand 352-392-5930, e-mail: kimmer72@ufl.edu

Sincerely,



Dana Venrick

Extension Agent II – Commercial Horticulture