



# FROM THE GROUND UP

## FLORENCE COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

### NEWSLETTER

#### March 2016

*“Sowing The Seeds Of Love For Gardening”*  
<http://www.florencecountymastergardeners.org>

#### From the Potting Bench,

The smell of rich moist soil is in the air. My trowel and pruning shears are calling. Ahhhh, Spring. I love it!

This month's meeting will be held at the PDREC hoop house on March 21 at 6:30. Bring the plants you'll be donating for this May's Discovery Day plant sale. We're offering plants in three different ways: Seeds, Dry and Potted. We will have small envelopes with FCMGA identification on the outside for seeds. Dry plants like bulbs, tubers, rhizomes will be placed in a paper bag with a label on the outside. Potted are cuttings, divisions or transplants ready to go directly into the garden. We have dirt and pots available for these plants.

Daylight Savings Time began on March 13 and our meeting is March 21. But I understand anyone who doesn't want to drive unfamiliar roads after dark. We plan to have the Hoop House open at 4:00 in the afternoon for those who are bringing plants. We'll plant first and start the meeting promptly at 6:30 so we can all be gone before dark.

In keeping with election year, the March meeting will be our "Primaries". At the meeting, you will be handed a blank ballot. Write in your choice of candidate for that office. The nominees will be notified and our final election will be held in April. New officers will begin their one-year term in June.

March 31 is a one-day advanced training for SC Master Gardeners, Gardening for Wildlife. The garden can provide a haven for wildlife providing food, water, and shelter for wildlife. The cost is \$30. You must be a Master Gardener to attend. To register go to:  
[www.clemson.edu/extension/mg/gardening\\_for\\_wildlife\\_2016.html](http://www.clemson.edu/extension/mg/gardening_for_wildlife_2016.html)

The Pee Dee Farmers Market Spring Plant sale will be held from Thursday, April 21 through Sunday, April 24. We'll set up a Sign-Up Genius so that you can select the dates and times you can volunteer at our Booth. The Officers have agreed that we will not try to sell anything this year based on the lack of sales in

previous years. We will have our Clemson HGIC pages and other information sheets available to give away.

PDREC Discovery Day is the first Saturday in May. We need EVERYONE to help with this project in EVERY WAY. Volunteers are needed to tend the plants in the hoop house or at home right on through set up, manning the booth, and take down on May 7. Being an exhibitor at this event will be our event for this year.

See you in the Hoop House,  
Christine

#### **Pee Dee Plant & Flower Festival** **April 21 – 24, 2016**

Thursday – Saturday 8:00 am – 6:00 pm  
Sunday 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Mark your calendar, we will once again have our Q&A booth set up taking questions from local gardeners. With this being a four day event, we will need everyone's help. You will be receiving an e-mail with a link to Signup Genius to volunteer. We are asking that you volunteer for two hours, but if you can only work for an hour that will be great too. We would like at least two Master Gardeners manning the booth at all times, but more won't hurt. Don't worry about not knowing the answers to every question. If you can't answer a question, we have a note pad so they can write down their question and Tony will get back to them with an answer. This event is always a lot of fun so plan to spend a couple of hours answering questions and then go shopping.

**Next Meeting:** Monday, March 21 at the PDREC  
As most of you know, we will be selling plants at the PDREC Discovery Day on May 7 instead of our usual spring event. To get ready for the sale, we are asking our members to donate plants, cuttings, divisions, seeds or dry (ie bulbs or rhizomes). We have pots, soil, and water at the Hoop House. If you have plants ready now and would like to Christine will meet you at PDREC weekdays between 9 am and 4 pm so you can do your planting. Otherwise, Happy and Christine will be at PDREC at 4:00 on Monday, March 21. You can come out early and do your planting before the meeting at 6:30. There will be paper bags and seed envelopes at the meeting.

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**Fresh Tomato Salsa**

Simple and straightforward.

Spoon it over grilled fish, add it to a taco or sit it next to a steak.

- 1 1/2 Cups finely chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 Cup finely chopped white onion, rinsed under cold water and fully drained to crisp it up and mellow the flavor
- 1/4 Cup finely chopped green bell pepper
- 2 Tablespoons finely chopped cilantro
- 1 Tablespoon fresh lime
- 1 to 2 teaspoons mince jalapeno pepper
- 1/4 Teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 Teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

In a small bowl combine the ingredients and mix well. Allow to stand for 10 minutes so all of the flavors can blend. It is best served fresh and at room temperature.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Brookgreen Gardens  
Plantacular Sale  
Saturday and Sunday, April 2 & 3**

One of the most popular events all year, the Plantacular sale is a one-stop shopping experience for high-quality plants grown in Brookgreen's greenhouses. Horticulture staff and volunteers are on-hand to give expert advice for all your gardening needs. Come early for the best selection. **Come early for the best selection!**

[Link](#)

**81st Annual House & Garden Tour  
Garden Club of Charleston  
April 8 & 9**

Self guided tours will lead visitors through the historic homes and gardens surrounding newly renovated Colonial Lake Park, located in the heart of the peninsula.

[Link](#)

**Midlands Plant & Flower Festival  
April 14 – 17, 2016**

Thursday – Saturday 8:00 am – 6:00 pm  
Sunday 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

South Carolina State Farmers Market

**Riverbanks Botanical Gardener  
Spring Plant Sale**

Saturday, April 23 @ 9:00am–12:00pm  
at the Botanical Garden Parking Lot  
(enter from Botanical Parkway)

Pick from more than 60 varieties of plants including a few staff favorites.

**Charleston Horticultural Society  
Plantasia 2016  
April 15 & 16  
Old Towne Creek Country Park**

Plantasia is the ultimate plant sale and gardeners paradise. With a vast array of unusual and cutting edge plants for sale (as well as tried and true favorites), Plantasia is one of the most sought after and anticipated events of its kind in the Southeast. Garden experts and other non-profit garden organization be on hand to answer your horticultural inquiries from home vegetable gardening to hybridizing your daylilies and more at this one of a kind plant sale extravaganza.

[Link](#)

## April In The Garden

### General

Prepare soils for planting by fertilizing soils according to soil test recommendations, if not already done. Purchase vegetable seeds and transplants, shrubs and trees, flower seeds and flats for planting. Fertilize established lawns, shrubs, and trees. Fertilize perennials if not done in March. Leave bulb foliage alone until it turns yellow. Be ready to protect newly-planted flowers from unexpected frost. Time to fertilize azaleas if blooming has stopped. Prune spring blooming shrubs after blooming stops. Remove suckers from below graft on roses and grafted fruit trees. Don't buy pot-bound transplants. Look at the roots carefully. Sow seeds for peanuts April 15th - May. Sow seeds for winter squash April 15th -April 30th. For a longer vegetable harvest season, plant at intervals during suggested planting

### LAWNS

**Planting:** Sow grass seed, lay sod, or plant sprigs and plugs of warm-season grasses now through July.  
**Fertilizing:** Fertilize all warm-season grasses according to the soil test analysis. Do it 2 weeks after grass begins to green up and grow about April 15th. Apply evenly.  
**Mowing:** Mow established lawns as short as possible. Remove dead grass and clippings with stiff raking.  
**Irrigate:** Water when the signs of wilt occur. Drench the soil to a depth of 5-7 inches (equivalent to approximately 1 inch of rainfall).  
**Special Care:** As centipede grass continues to grow, if yellowing occurs and continues, check for iron deficiency. Patch bare lawn areas by seeding, sprigging, or sodding. If moss is a problem, aerating may help.

### VEGETABLES & FRUITS

**Planting:** Sow seeds for beans, cantaloupe, cucumbers, okra, peanuts, southern peas, sweet corn, squash, and watermelon in the garden. Transplant eggplant, peppers, and tomatoes in the garden. Set out horseradish root now. Sow warm-weather herb seeds and transplants.  
**Fertilizing:** "Side dress" to fertilize established plants per established guidelines.  
**Irrigation:** Thoroughly wet the soil once a week, unless there is sufficient rainfall to moisten the soil around the roots.  
**Special care:** Control webworms as they occur. Spray Fruit trees, brambles, grapes, blueberries, strawberries, and pecan to control insects and diseases. Be sure to buy only disease-free stock from a reputable nursery.

### TREES & SHRUBS

**Planting:** Plant now, consider mature height and spread, and the proper growing conditions in the desired growing location. Plant azaleas, rhododendrons, and other flowering shrubs. Fall is best for planting. If you plant now, you must be prepared to take special care of your plants.  
**Fertilizing:** Fertilize and mulch new plants. Fertilize azaleas after blooming and mulch.  
**Irrigation:** Water new shrubs and trees once a week during dry periods and during the 1st and 2nd growing season, to ensure their survival and rapid growth  
**Special Care:** Check leaves for diseases. Prune infected wood to eliminate source. Spray camellias and azaleas for scale and lacebugs, if present.

### FLOWERS

**Planting:** Sow seeds in the garden and transplant flats. Plant gladiolas, cannas, and other summer-flowering bulbs.  
**Fertilizing:** Use half strength fertilizer on newly-planted annuals. Fertilize roses after first bloom  
**Irrigation:** water regularly and deeply, up to 2 hours a week during dry periods.  
**Special Care:** Cut out the old canes on climbing roses after blooming and lightly head back new canes. Dig up overgrown cannas and divide. Control slugs.

## Using Herbicides Safely

With so much emphasis on organic gardening now, many gardeners have reduced their dependence on herbicides for controlling weeds. As most Southern gardeners know, sometimes herbicides are all that works. If you are going to use herbicides, it is important to know how they work and how to apply them properly.

### Selectivity Of Herbicides

Herbicides can be either selective or nonselective. Selective herbicides affect only certain kinds of plants. For example, some herbicides control only grass weeds. Other herbicides control only broadleaf weeds and brush. The herbicide triclopyr is selective because it controls broadleaf weeds, but not grasses.

Nonselective herbicides control both grass and broadleaf weeds. Glyphosate is a nonselective foliar-applied herbicide that is rapidly tied up on contact with mineral soil. Glyphosate is available in several concentrations under the trade names ROUNDUP, RATTLER, and JURY. Prometon is the active ingredient in total vegetation control products such as PRAMITOL and PROMETONE. This chemical lasts for long periods in the soil and can injure turf or gardens downslope of application site or can injure trees and shrubs with roots in the treated areas.

### Timing Of Herbicide Application

Proper application is necessary for the success of any herbicide treatment. Soil-active herbicides should be applied uniformly over a given area. Foliar-translocated herbicides should be applied uniformly to the foliage of vegetation at the proper time. Both soil and foliar-active herbicides require proper timing and good coverage for effective performance.

Pre emergence herbicides are applied to the soil and are absorbed by the seed or by the roots or stems of tiny seedlings before the plants emerge from the soil. Post-emergence herbicides are applied after weeds have emerged from the soil. Post-emergence herbicides generally act through the foliage of the plant. Some herbicides that are used for pre-emergence weed control can also control small, actively growing emerged weeds. See the table for a description of pre-emergence and post-emergence herbicides.

### Preventing Injury To Non-target Plants

The major sources of herbicide injury to off-site vegetation are from spray drift and volatility. When injuries occur, the damage is near the area treated and might have been avoided by a more careful application.

One important factor herbicide applicators should be aware of at all times is spray drift: the movement of airborne spray particles from the target area. Foliar-active herbicides can be injurious if the spray moves to non-target plants near the treatment area. The amount of drift depends primarily on droplet size (the smaller the droplet the longer it takes to reach the ground), the wind velocity, and the height above the ground that the spray is released. Herbicides should be sprayed only when wind speed is less than 3 MPH. The danger to non-target plants, both on and off site, should always be considered.

Volatility refers to the tendency of a chemical to vaporize or give off fumes. Vapor drift may damage susceptible plants or reduce the effectiveness of the herbicide treatment through loss. Chemicals differ in volatility. The herbicides listed in the table are not classified as volatile formulations. Herbicides should be applied when there is little or no wind, when daily temperatures are less than 90°F, and when ventilation fans are off.

Source: Alabama Extension Service ANR-951