

The Clod-Hopper

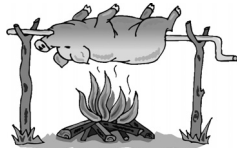


Volume 27 Edition 5 Gardeners of Wake County, Inc. – Raleigh, NC

MAY 2011

MAY MEETING

The May 17 meeting will be the Gardeners of Wake County's first Annual Pig Pickin'. It will be held at 4401 Dewees Court, just off Ebenezer Church Road. We will congregate at 6PM and eat at 7PM. That will allow you some time to visit the archeological curiosities at the venue.



In the event of the occasional occurrence of a North Carolinian who does not pick pig, there is a chicken alternative. If you want chicken we must know in advance so that

we can cook the correct amount. Members may bring family or other guests. The cost of the meal is \$5 per person. If you would like to contribute a desert or appetizer to the party you may do so.

If you did not reply to Charles Gilliam with the reservation form in the **April Clodhopper** please call him to make your reservation. His telephone number and email address are in the Membership Directory. You may also check the club web site www.gardenersofwakecounty.org for additional information.

CLUB MEETINGS

Meetings are at 7:30 pm at the JC Raulston Arboretum

- May 17** Club Picnic
- May 14** Tour of Executive Mansion Gardens at 10:00 am
- June 11** Tour of Pollinator Garden in Pittsboro 10:00 am
- June 21** Tony Avent, Plant Delights Nursery
- July 19** Jonathan Kidder, Water Garden Plants and Designs

CLUB PROJECTS

Bob Hartgrove thanks all the members who helped with the Azalea Sale. The 219 plants that were left at the end of the day on Sunday were donated to Habitat for Humanity. The \$9,941 profit from the sale will help fund our scholarship program.



The Club will participate in the "Got to Be North Carolina" festival at the Fair Grounds May 20-23. Several members have volunteered to

present short demonstrations or talks during the event. You can find out more about the Festival at the May Pig Pickin'.

Mac Williamson will coordinate the work at the Plant-a-Row gardens this year. By this time the soil will have been prepared and the first crops planted. If you are interested in participating please contact Mac.

Mark Boone is also starting a "Gardeners Helping Gardeners" program for the club. There are times when some of our members may need assistance with their garden.

Reasons for using the service might be illness, a longer than usual trip away from home, or just needing help solving a gardening problem. More information will be available in May.

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www.gardenersofwakecounty.org

APRIL PROGRAM

Dr. Richard C. Reich, Assistant Commissioner N. C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Science presented the April program on The Changing Face of Agriculture in North Carolina. Damage from recent storms will produce additional changes. Several nurseries were severely damaged, strawberry and wheat fields had wind and hail damage while chicken and hog farms lost buildings and animals.

In 1910 there were 253,725 farms in North Carolina with 22,439,129 acres in production and 1,227,625 hogs grown. By 2007 there were 52,913 farms, 8,474,671 acres in cultivation and 10,134,004 hogs. In 2009 the Census of Agriculture reported 2,700,000 farms in the United States, 52,400 (less than 2%) of them in North Carolina.

North Carolina farm acreage was 8,600,000, or 0.9% of the 919,800,000 under cultivation in the United States. 48.7% of North Carolina farms were smaller than 50 acres and 3% were over 1000 acres. From 1990 to 2002 North Carolina lost one million acres of farmland. We lost another 600,000 from 2002 to 2007.

Approximately 62% of farm cash receipts are from livestock, poultry and dairy production and 38% from crops. Of the latter, almost 9% is from Christmas tree, greenhouse, nursery and floriculture operations. North Carolina exports approximately \$2.9 billion in farm products to 154 countries.

We are the leader in "Agri-tourism" in the United States. That includes our "pick-your-own" farms, corn mazes at Halloween, and winery tours. In North Carolina there are 415 "Pick Your Own" farms, 135 certified roadside farm markets, 100 community supported agriculture operations (you contract with a farmer for your produce), over 200 farmer's markets (14 in Wake County) and 5 Regional Farmers Markets.

In 2010 there were 632 research projects at NC Agriculture Research Stations. 105 faculty members from NCSU and NCA&T and 126 graduate students participated in those projects. The face of North Carolina Agriculture is indeed changing.




New Members





Carole Gilliam (Mrs. Charles)



Barbara Harvey, Cary



John and Sallie Everette, Raleigh



Brenda Strickland, Raleigh



Richard and Lucee Wallace,
Wake Forest









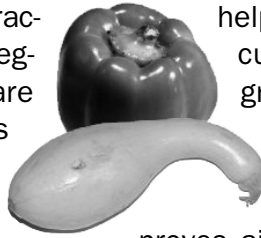





VEGETABLE GARDENS

The numerous articles in recent gardening magazines reflect the increased interest in home vegetable gardening. Several of them concentrate on making the garden attractive as well as productive. The Club tour of the Executive Mansion on May 14 will showcase an attractive, very productive vegetable garden. There are lots of ornamental plants to attract beneficial insects and produce nectar for the resident honey bees.

Several articles have suggested using turfgrass paths between sections of gardens. It is easier to push wheelbarrows and garden carts on a wide grassy path than on a narrow bark covered one. One author suggested edging the path with *Liriope muscari* to make it more attractive.



There is still time to plant snap beans, sweet corn, cantaloupe, summer squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers and egg-plant. Herbs can also be added to existing vegetable plantings. Staking or using one of the heavy plastic mesh fences helps to keep tomato and cucumber vines off the ground. This helps keep the weight of the produce from breaking the vines and improves air circulation around plants to reduce rotting and disease problems. It's also easier to pick crops standing up rather than stooping down.

Most vegetables will need to be fertilized every 6 weeks. You will need to water the garden if it does not rain after you apply the fertilizer. Keep plants mulched to prevent weeds and retain moisture.

FAIR GROUNDS WORK DAYS

Volunteers are needed to help maintain the gardens in the Flower Show area at the Fair Grounds. While the Club will not be an official sponsor of the Flower Show at the State Fair this year many of our members enjoy working in the gardens.

Work days have been scheduled for May 14, June 18, July 23, August 20 and September 24. If you are available from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm on those days your help will be appreciated.

You may contact Erv Evans (ervplantguy@gmail.com) or BJ Snyder (snyd6654@bellsouth.net) for additional information.



MAY LANDSCAPING TIPS

Damage to trees and shrubs from April storms needs to be repaired. Remove broken limbs and branches with a smooth cut at the branch collar. Damaged trees and shrubs may be more attractive to insects so check for scale, spider mites, lace bugs, leaf hoppers and leaf miners. The small gnats you see flying around hollies may be the adult stage of the leaf miner.

Read labels carefully before applying insecticides. Be sure the insecticide you choose can be applied safely to the plant that needs treating. Also check for temperature precautions on the



label. The spray may do more damage on a sunny, hot day than the insect or disease you are trying to control.

Japanese beetles are beginning to emerge from the ground. If you use traps to control them remember to place the traps downwind from the plants you want to protect. With our ever-changing wind patterns this spring it might be better advice to put the traps far away from the plants you are protecting or convince your neighbors he needs to put out beetle traps. Liquid Sevin is a good chemical control for beetles. (The powder form gets transferred to bee hives and kills our pollinators.)

There is still time to prune azaleas, camellias and rhododendrons as they finish blooming. Other spring blooming shrubs may be pruned when they finish blooming as well. There appears to be some cold damage to Butterfly bushes and Althea. Prune out those stems that have not shown new growth by May.

ROSES

Roses bloomed earlier than usual in many gardens this year. Be sure to keep the old blooms removed. It helps prevent insect and disease problems and

May Landscaping Tips

(continued on page 4)

**GARDENERS OF
WAKE COUNTY**

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**MAY LANDSCAPING TIPS –
ROSES** *(continued from page 3)*

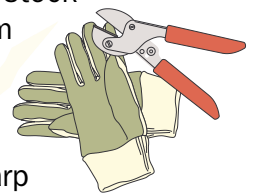
helps the plant retain its shape. Many of us have been told to always cut to the first five-leaf leaflet below the spent bloom. That is not “always” the best advice. If the stem at that leaflet is not thick enough to support a blooming stem you may want to make the cut at a lower leaflet. You also need to remember to keep the plant symmetrical. If you don’t have time to properly “prune” the spent blooms when they fade you can break off the spent flower head and cut the stem back later in the week.



Remove small branches that grow into the center of the plant for better air circulation in the center of the plant. This will improve insect and disease resistance. Also check the base of the plant for new canes that may come up from the base of the plant.

If the new canes are coming from below the graft union it is an undesirable “sucker” and it should be removed. You will have to dig carefully below the surface of the soil to remove the sucker. If you have the strength to break the

“rogue” cane off the rootstock it may pull the bud for the sucker from the root stock and keep it from growing back again. If you cant break the stem off use sharp clippers and remove it.



Several roses in the Arboretum rose garden have developed red, malformed canes that are a symptom of rose mosaic disease. The affected plants need to be destroyed. If you cut the diseased stems of a diseased plant sterilize your clippers before you use them on another plant. The diseased plants and any cut stems need to be bagged and destroyed. They should never be added to the compost pile.

