



Home Gardening Newsletter

April - May
2022



193 Thomas Heights Rd.
Franklin, N.C. 28734
828-349-2046
macon.ces.ncsu.edu

Garden Plots Available

The **Macon County Community Garden** located near the front entrance of SCC and the library still has 3 garden plots available for those interested in gardening. Each plot is 500 square feet with 24 plots total. Gardeners must supply their own fertilizer, seeds and plants and agree to abide by garden regulations. There is a charge of twenty five dollars (\$25) per garden spot.



If interested or for more information, call the Macon Extension Center at 349-2049 or e-mail Christy at clbreden@ncsu.edu

The Community Garden at the Cowee School of Arts & Heritage Center has several 4x12 ft. beds (organic) available to rent. The fee is \$25/bed. If interested call 828 369-4080 Monday-Friday from 10 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. or e-mail maconheritagecenter@gmail.com

Upcoming Workshop: Common Insects & Diseases in the Garden an Organic Focus

The N.C. Cooperative Extension Service will be holding an in-depth Organic Pest Management Seminar for gardeners who desire to learn more on how to control (organically) insects, diseases and weeds that plague their vegetables. This program will be held on **Thursday May 12th** from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Macon County Extension Center located at 193 Thomas Heights Rd Franklin N.C.

This seminar (free) will cover a whorl wind of topics such as companion plants, farmscaping, soil amendmets, organically approved sprays, a plethora of tips and more. Participants will receive plenty of handouts (online), ask questions and enjoy a great presentation. You won't want to miss it.

To register go to: macon.ces.ncsu.edu/events/ and look for the Eventbrite link. For more information, contact the Macon County Extension Center at 828 349 2049 or e-mail Christy Bredenkamp at clbreden@ncsu.edu





Bee Aware for Bee Swarms



Honey bees are highly esteemed for providing honey, beeswax and other valuable hive products. Honey bees are important pollinators of almonds, apples, blackberries, blueberries, forage crops, cucurbits (e.g., squash) and more. Although highly cherished, honey bees can be a nuisance and threatening for those who are allergic to bees.

Webster's definition of a swarm reads; "a great number of honeybees emigrating together from a hive in company with a queen to start a new colony elsewhere." Swarming is an advantage to the bees but is a disadvantage for beekeepers. As a result, beekeepers endeavor to manage their hives to reduce the incidence of "escapes" or swarming.

Swarming usually occurs in late spring and early summer and begins in the warmer hours of the day. Typically, swarms cluster on an object, such as a tree branch, while scout bees search for a permanent nest site. A hanging swarm may assume any shape, depending on the surface it lands. Most hanging swarms are dark brown, round or oval and about the size of a basketball or watermelon.



Although swarms may look threatening, most are not dangerous and are simply looking for a new home. Usually, honey bees feed prior to swarming, which reduces their ability to sting and when away from the locale of their nest, are less defensive and unlikely to sting unless provoked.

If a honey bee swarm lands on your property:

- Avoid disturbing it. Keep children, pets and others away from the swarm.
- If the swarm is located at a safe distance, then wait for it to fly away on its own. A swarm usually relocates to a permanent site e.g., a hollow tree, abandoned beekeeper's hive, or inside a hollow wall in about 24 hours.
- If the swarm poses a real risk to people or animals, find a local beekeeper who will be happy to remove it. Your county Extension Agent can refer you to local beekeepers who collect swarms.
- *Note - not all beekeepers collect swarms, and some may charge a fee for their service.*

At times, swarms find their way into wall voids. To avoid this problem, seal openings such as holes, gaps in siding, and openings around plumbing or electric wires. If you discover a bee colony nesting inside a wall, consider working with a beekeeper and carpenter team specific for this work. Pest control companies tend to avoid handling swarms because they involve unusual skill and liability risks.

Beekeepers willing to extract bees within a wall, typically wait until evening when all bees are inside the nest. First they will locate the nest cavity by listening and observing and then begin removing the siding or necessary timbers followed by vacuuming the bees off each comb layer. This process continues in succession until all the bees and combs are removed; followed by sealing off the void. Afterwards, it's important to close up potential bee entry sites to avoid the risk of a new swarm quickly reoccupying the void. When the work is complete, it's not uncommon to find a few disoriented worker bees on the outside surface where the nest entrance used to be. These lingering bees pose a minimal sting risk and typically die or relocate within a short period of time.

Interested in Beekeeping?

The **Macon County Beekeepers Association** meets every 1st Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at the Macon County Extension Center located at 193 Thomas Heights Rd. Franklin, NC. For more information e-mail the maconcobeclub@gmail.com contact the Extension Center at 828 349 2046.



April Horticulture Tips

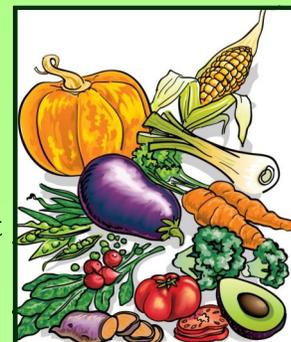
Lawns

- Do not fertilize cool season lawns between April through August
- If broadleaf weeds are present, pull them while they are small or spot treat with a broadleaf herbicide.
- Mow Fescue and bluegrass lawns at 3 inches.



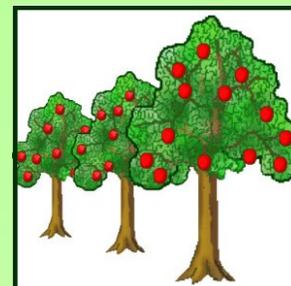
Vegetables

- Break up soil in garden beds when soil is dry enough.
- Turn under cover crop when soil is not too wet.
- Plant asparagus crowns, radishes and potatoes.
- Sow seeds for beets, carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, lettuce, radishes, spinach and Swiss chard.
- Transplant broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and kale.
- Plant potatoes about the time that dandelions bloom.
- Start transplants for warm season vegetables indoors. Do not plant frost-sensitive plants outside until May.
- Spray broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower for worms if needed with Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*).
- Cut back perennial herbs to keep them compact.
- Keep last frost date in mind. May 15 is average for Macon County. The actual last frost date will fluctuate depending on your elevation and the weather.



Fruits & Berries

- Prune out fire blight in pear and apple trees. Sterilize pruners in a solution of 1 part bleach to 9 parts water after each cut. Spray streptomycin on apple and pear varieties susceptible for fire blight.
- Check fruit trees for winter damage and prune dead or weakened wood.
- Fertilize fruits if not done last month.
- Mulch berries and fruit trees (4 inches in a 2-ft in diameter)



Trees Shrubs & Flowers

- Plant trees, shrubs and ground covers.
- Side-dress trees, shrubs and ground covers with compost.
- Mulch trees and shrubs, and perennial beds after removing weeds.
- Prune spring-flowering shrubs after the flowers fade.
- Watch for azalea lace bugs, boxwood leafminer, euonymus scale. Spray if needed.
- Work a 2-3 inch layer of compost into the soil to improve drainage in flower beds.
- Plant flowering perennials and ground covers.
- Divide or transplant perennials and herbs when growth is 3-4 inches high.
- If rose varieties are not disease resistant, start weekly fungicide sprays to prevent black spot. Continue spray program through October. Consider replacing disease-prone varieties with disease-resistant types.



Macon County: Take the Broadband Survey

Macon County needs your help. Please complete the 5-minute North Carolina Broadband online Survey today and share the survey with your friends and family.

To report locations without internet service, participants can take the survey via the phone by calling 919 750 0553. Please participate in the survey so our data shows the need for funding here in Macon county and throughout Western North Carolina.

Here is the link to the survey – <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/north-carolina-broadband-survey>

Page 4

Christy Bredenkamp,
Macon County Extension Director



NC COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION

N.C. A&T

NC STATE

Macon Extension Center
193 Thomas Heights Rd
Franklin, NC 28734