

# AGRICULTURE

## Dry periods have increased the areas chances for forest fires

BY MARK WILLIAMS  
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Forest Ranger

Even with all the rain we have had this year, the forests are beginning to dry out again. This time of the year in North Carolina is the worst for fires. Last year the four summer months

produced more fires than the rest of the year.

With warmer weather arriving, the relative humidity readings drop. When these conditions are combined with the winds we are now having, the forest soon dries out. The longer we go between rain falls, the drier

the forest will become and the greater the chance of forest fires. This is also the period when people burn off their fields, debris and trash piles. Fire activity in general increases.

Most forest fires are preventable. As a matter of fact, approximately 99

percent of forest fires in North Carolina each year could be prevented. Most fires result from people burning debris, brush piles, fields, trash, etc. If people would take proper precautions, have proper tools and enough help, or burn on less windy and dry days when the fire

might be in a better controllable situation, we would have a lot less fires.

June is the month for harvesting small grain and in many cases this includes burning stubble and straw. If done properly and safely, this type of burning is over with fast and presents little or no problem.

I want to urge all farmers who plan to burn off their fields this year to follow these few simple precautions:

- Disc completely around the field. Don't depend on ditches, paths or good luck to contain your fire.

- Have adequate equipment and help on hand to keep fires under control.

- Burn with wind blowing away from woods whenever possible or in the late afternoon after the wind has died down.

- Stay with your fire until it is out cold. Don't set it and forget it.

North Carolina Forest Service burning permits are still in effect and are required when burning within 500 ft. of a woods or 100 ft. from nearest dwelling. These permits are available from the permit agents throughout the county or the County Ranger.

If you think a fire might give you trouble, call before you light it. I'll be

glad to advise or help with the burning. I can be reached at Winfall tower, 428-5551. If no answer, call Elizabeth City, 335-4373. Ask for Mark Williams, Perquimans County Ranger.

Having a burning permit does not relieve the individual from having to comply with all burning laws and ordinances.

What do you do if you spot a forest fire? Do not try to fight it yourself, but report it to the nearest forest service office or fire tower. All forest service personnel are trained fire fighters and will respond immediately. If you can't contact the forest service, contact the nearest fire department or law enforcement agency. They will contact the forest service.

We have an outstanding group of volunteer fire departments in Perquimans County. Each year they handle by themselves or help us with a number of woods, brush and grass fires. These guys have saved a lot of woodland acres. Still, it is better to prevent fires than to fight them. Please help us to help you.

## Gardening tips

This is part two of gardening tips from fellow gardeners throughout the country.



BEYOND THE WEEDS  
by  
Jean Winslow

•John Lautsenheiser in Ohio keeps rodents away from newly planted fruit trees by wrapping a foot-wide piece of aluminum foil around the base.

•Your friendly but parsimonious garden writer suggests a free bouquet for seashore gardeners: blue toad-sax, early saxifrage, wild strawberry, trumpet honeysuckle, colts foot, dandelion, beach pea, smartweed, birdsfoot violet, spiderwort, gallardia, yarrow, sweet William. Look out in your yard. There's blooming now.

•In the border, where soil has to be built up, once is not enough. During this growing season mulch veggies and flowers with material that can be spaded into the ground when plants finish their life cycle.

•Seaweed is superb. It makes a useful mulch when dried, and turns into fine humus if spaded directly into soil. Remember that seaweed is low in nitrogen and phosphorus content but has a good percentage of potassium.

When harvesting seaweed make sure you get the real thing.

That fake stuff looks attractive and you could make the mistake of chopping it up and digging it in. It makes shorelines grow, not peppers. Each innocuous thread could impart a plastic taste to the soil, hardly pleasing to persnickery palates.

On second thought, it could be the beginning of a whole new cuisine. Add these recipes to your card file, cookies: Quiche Residual, Eggplant Oilay, Okra OPEC, and a sure shot potential classic—Pasta Plastica con Petrolio Productore. Al dente, of course. And with those fumes, al fresco for sure.

### WASTE NOT WANT NOT

Prepare your compost pile now for hot weather. Turn over all material thoroughly with a pitch or spading fork. To a layer of three feet garden debris add a layer of fresh or dried manure, if you have it, two inches deep, and sprinkle a layer of lime and sulfate of ammonia to speed up decomposition. Be sure to include all kitchen refuse except what animals would dig, such as bones and meat scraps.

Since compost piles must retain heat (as much as 150 degrees in the center) and moisture, make the heap concave in structure. Heat lessens as decomposition takes place. Always throw fresh raw material into this "working" center.

Inside the working center are little workers working away. Many are familiar to every gardener: earthworms, land slugs, ants, wolf spiders, and the like. You may not, however, have noticed beneficial nematodes chomping on bacteria, spores of fungi, and each other. Probably you haven't paid too much attention to protozoa and rotifers that live in water films and feed on organic detritus. Fly maggots—I prefer not to discuss them.

Centipedes abound in the pile, eating anything up to their size that moves. Land snails, sometimes as many as 600 to a square yard, live on leaf litter. Fermentation mites feed on yeasts; beetle mites eat organic

debris; predatory mites eat everybody else's eggs; feather winged beetles move in to clean up rotting vegetation; pseudoscorpions with no eyes smell their way to mites and springtails, which they love for lunch. I could go on and on, but you get the idea.

And you thought you were alone in the garden.

There are advantages to having an old pile of compost and another one in the making. You are assured of a good supply every season. Let the one you now have rest and start pile number two. Use everything possible—your garbage personnel will thank you when they begin picking up half as much at your house every week.

It is amazing what compost will do for a garden. Here are some basic compost-fertilizer suggestions from "Organic Gardening for Health and Nutrition" (Philpot):

Annuals require nutrients fast. Dig plenty of compost into the garden plot before you plant. Top dress when plants are half grown, scratching the fertilizer and compost in thoroughly to prevent matting and exclusion of moisture.

Biennials need a steady supply of compost each year.

Perennials should be given a new supply at the beginning of the growing season. Some are more hungry than others. Peonies, for example, will thank you for up to a

half bushel of manure compost per plant.





Shrubs need a light sprinkling around the base annually.

Orchard trees should benefit from a mixture of fertilizer and compost spread under the drip line. Well-rotted earthy manure should also be incorporated in soil whenever transplanting takes place.

Forest trees require a minimum amount of fertilizer, with no raw manure or raw organic matter.

So get with it. This is one time you can literally make something out of what you thought was nothing! I'll start you off. Here's this morning's coffee grounds. Grapefruit rind. Egg shells...

# ROUND-UP OF SAVINGS

<p><b>Pork Tails</b>..... <b>38¢</b></p> <p><b>Gwaltney Bologna</b>..... LB. <b>1.39</b></p> <p><b>Gwaltney Bacon</b>..... LB. <b>1.37</b></p> <p><b>Lean Boneless Stew Beef</b>..... LB. <b>1.79</b></p> <p><b>Gwaltney Buffet Turkey Ham</b>..... LB. <b>1.39</b></p> <p><b>Pork Feet</b>..... LB. <b>37¢</b></p>	 <p><b>LEAN GROUND BEEF</b> LB. <b>1.19</b></p>	<p><b>WHOLE BONELESS BEEF RIBEYES</b> LB. <b>3.55</b></p>
<p><b>PORK CHITTERLINGS</b> 10 LB. BUCKET <b>4.99</b></p> <p><b>PORK NECK BONES</b> LB. <b>39¢</b></p> <p><b>MUELLER'S DUMPLINGS</b> 12 OZ. <b>59¢</b></p>	<p><b>SIRLOIN TIP STEAK</b> <b>2.39</b></p> <p><b>JELLO</b> 3 OZ. <b>3/1.00</b></p> <p><b>MARTHA WHITE SPUD FLAKES</b> 2 OZ. <b>4/1.00</b></p>	 <p><b>FOX DeLUXE PIZZAS</b> 10 OZ. <b>79¢</b></p> <p><b>CAMPFIRE MARSHMALLOWS</b> 16 OZ. <b>59¢</b></p> <p><b>TIDY GIANT</b> 49 OZ. <b>1.89</b></p>
<p><b>HUDSON NAPKINS</b> 60 COUNT <b>3/1.00</b></p>	<p><b>BUTTER-ME-NOT BISCUITS</b> 5 OZ. <b>4/1.00</b></p>	 <p><b>BANQUET DINNERS</b> 11 OZ. <b>69¢</b></p> <p><b>MRS. FILBERTS MARGARINE</b> 16 OZ. QUARTERS <b>59¢</b></p>
	<p><b>WHITE POTATOES</b> 5 LB. BAG <b>89¢</b></p> <p><b>CUCUMBERS</b> <b>5/1.00</b></p> <p><b>CABBAGE</b> LB. <b>17¢</b></p> <p><b>BROCCOLI</b> BUNCH <b>59¢</b></p>	

Winfall Supermarket

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### IT'S A FACT!



America's number one industry today — in terms of dollars spent — is leisure time activities. So says a recent magazine study. Another survey reports that gardening wins as the favorite hobby.