

**Perquimans Gardening**  
By Jean Winslow



Check over your trees and plants for any dead wood. Sometimes we get use to looking at it and don't see it any more. But other people do, and it looks sloppy.

Keep dead flower heads pruned from plants, as they rob the plants of vigor, and eventually go to seed, causing the plants to stop blooming altogether.

Lots of people in the county are concerned over the rotting of ground vegetables, such as squash and melons. The weather has been against us so badly that we serious gardeners feel it is not all our fault. The best thing might be a mulch, like pine needles, that will allow for aeration. Regular dusting and strict sanitation goes without saying. Someone also suggested plastic slipped under the whole plant. Just hope it dries up!

Speaking of cantaloupes, did you know that they even exceed bananas as a marvelous source of potassium! Not only are they delicious eating, but are a boon to anyone with heart problems or patients who are forced to take diuretics on a regular basis. Cantaloupes should have saucer-like depressions at the stem when ripe and will be covered with netting on the surface that is well raised, coarse and corky, say NCSU horticulturists.

Anyone who is doing grass-cutting: Read these safety tips before you go another step, possibly toeless, behind a cutting machine. Never cut a wet lawn. If the machine gets clogged up, it is tempting to dislodge it with a finger or toe.

Remove loose stones, wires, bones, from the lawn before they become dangerous projectiles. Wear steady, non-slip shoes. NO BARE FEET. Adjust the cutting height of the blade before starting the mower. Make sure you know where any hard, solid objects might be hidden in the grass and avoid them.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission says that each year 57,000 power mower accidents that require emergency treatment occur in the U. S. Was one of them you?

The Bird Lady and I were discussing bird antics and she pointed out in a note written for this week that the big news in birds at this time of year is the concert performance, as she so correctly described



VIEW ESTUARINE SITE — CAMA permit officers (left to right) Keith Haskett, Perquimans County; Carroll Vaughn, Hertford County; James Parker, Bertie County; and Ralph Parrish, Chowan County; look at an estuarine area site while attending training sessions sponsored recently by the N.C. Office of Coastal Management in Manteo.

it, of the three mimics in this area — the mockingbird, brown thrasher and the catbird. She said that the thrasher and catbird do not have quite the range or volume of the mocking bird, but sing a softer, sweeter song, usually while hidden away in the branches of a nearby tree. Catbirds like people and usually will not fly away.

She says this and other information can be obtained by taking THE CHAT, a quarterly, POB 1220, Tryon, NC 28782. Membership is \$9.00 individual, \$10 family, and \$5 student.

**Excess rain may have one benefit**

By DAVID LEATHERWOOD  
SCS-USDA

Many farmers in Perquimans and Chowan Counties are still shaking their heads in disbelief at the amount of rain which has fallen on their land in recent weeks. These unusual weather conditions may have one beneficial side effect.

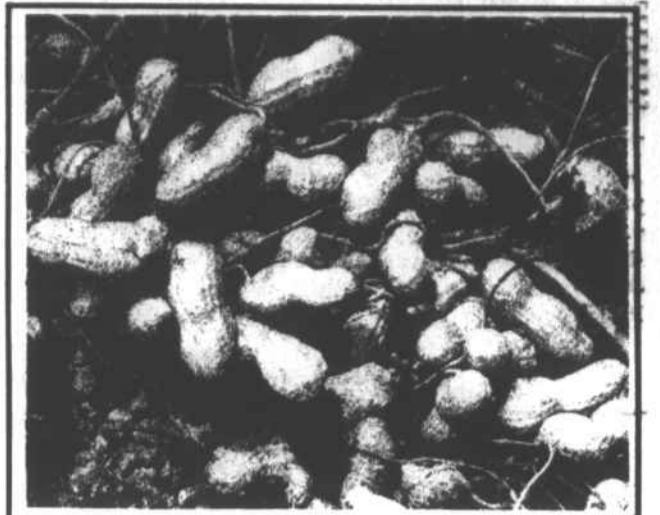
What possible benefit could be found in drowned crops? These conditions point out what sections of cropland have an excess water problem. There can be a lot of trouble dealing with too much water, and a careful study of a farm after a heavy rain can indicate where added conservation practices are needed to improve crop conditions.

measures can range from tile drainage or field ditches to land shaping and grading. In addition, reduced tillage practices of the type often recommended by the Soil Conservation Service, will help keep protective crop residue on the land — another way of handling moisture.

Naturally, several different methods may be called for, depending on individual circumstances. In a time where rising costs demand the most efficient use of cropland, it is important to get the most out of each crop for the least amount of effort and cost. To do this, wet areas on a farm must be minimized and controlled.

The Soil Conservation Service will assist homeowners as well as farmers with problems involving too much water

on the land. Like all programs and services of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, assistance in solving these conservation problems is available free to everyone.



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Four years ago, I was a parts manager for a truck equipment company in Norfolk. And I can tell you, living in the city was not for my wife and me. So I left my job and we headed back to the country. Much of my family lives around Rocky Hock, so we built a new home here. And one of the first things I did was build a Perdue broiler house.

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