

Agriculture

Tips on getting tools ready for the upcoming season

Sharpen lawn mower blades. Check edges of shovels and trowels for rust. Reapply a layer of oil if necessary.

Do you have enough garden markers, work gloves, plant supports, tomato cages, rubber knees, liniment?

Plant, per person:

- Mustard, 1/4 ounce; beets, 1/4 packet. New varieties of beets are 'Cruiser' from Johnny's and 'Sprinter' from Vermont Bean.
- Cauliflower, 25 plants; chinese cabbage, 1/4 packet; rutabaga, 1/4 packet.

Plant these flower seeds in the greenhouse or in a sunny window:

- Ageratum—a new variety is 'Powder Puff Pink' from Burpee; asters; carnations; salvia; alyssum; marigolds—too many new varieties to try listing here; putunias—ditto; and dianthus.
- Start these new vegetable varieties inside: 'Sweet Chelsea' cherry tomato from Vermont Seed; 'Super Stokesdale' and 'Red Robin' tomatoes from Stokes; Park Seed's 'Early

Bird' eggplant. Shepherd's Garden Seed's 'Lorelei' purple pepper; cream colored 'Midal' pepper from Pinetree Gardens; 'Earlred' pepper from Seeds Blum; and Petosied's red-hot 'Habenero' pepper.

Serious tomato growers will want to check out a great new catalog from Tomato Growers Supply Co.; POB J. Fort Myers, Florida 33902.

Keep in mind when starting any flower and veggie seeds that, depending on the medium used, fertilization may be necessary very soon after sowing. Iowa State researchers have found that fertilizing soilless media beginning just two days after sowing will result in larger, more advanced seedlings.

Apply a complete liquid fertilizer diluted to 1/2 the recommended strength and gradually increased the strength. Water should be close to 110 degrees, as cooler water reduces germination and growth.

Now, if you are really smart, organic savvy and all that, make your



own seedling mix from aged compost, screened through a 1/4 inch mesh, and avoid the necessity of fertilizing at every watering. Green River Tools, Box 1919, Brattleboro, VT 05303, carries compost-based commercial mixes if you don't have any in the back yard.

In the meantime, Horticulturists at NCSU are studying and developing numerous biostimulants, reports Avant Gardener Magazine. A humic acid product applied to carrot seeds or the germinating media more than doubled the number and size of carrots harvested.

Speaking of watering, house plants

will develop brown leaf tips if salts from fertilizers build up and inhibit water absorption by the roots.

If injury is suspected, thoroughly flush the potting mixture and let clay pots stand in water for an hour or so to leach minerals.

Plants in containers which do not have drainage holes should be watered with a solution of 1/4 cup sugar in one gallon water.

Sugar produces rapid increase in microorganisms that tie up excess salts.

could go up an average of \$3,100 in price simply by improving the lawn's appearance.

They also said that potential buyers not only notice the lawn, but believe its appearance reflects the condition of the home's interior. Many said that if a potential buyer drives past a property and likes the look of the lawn and landscaping, an inquiry is more likely to follow.

Another company, Weyerhaeuser, conducted three surveys, interviewing old and new homeowners and professional appraisers. Findings were

that the average homeowner believed that landscaping adds over 15 percent to the value of a home. Avant Gardener reports that landscaping is as good or a better investment than other home improvements, provided its true worth is included in the sale price. A swimming pool, for example, usually returns 20 percent to 50 percent of its cost when the property is sold, a kitchen renovation 75 percent to 120 percent. Landscaping, however, returns 100 percent to 200 percent!

Get digging. Now.

Landscaping Pays Off

Do not underestimate the value of landscaping.

That's what the O.M. Scott lawn people say they learned in a recent nationwide survey of realtors.

Realtors agreed that an attractive looking lawn will not only increase the home's value, but could also shorten its time on the market. For instance, the selling price of a suburban home in the 70 to 90,000 range

4-H'ers participate in project

By STANLEY J. WINSLOW
Co. Extension Director

4-H Corn Production Project—Last year there were 6 participants in the 4-H Corn Contest. I was very pleased with the interest and enthusiasm, each 4-H'er showed for this project. Every 4-H'er who participated learned and benefited from the experience.

The project is open to anyone from ages 9-18 who is actively enrolled in elementary or high school. I want to encourage more participation for 1987. It is not necessary for children to be enrolled in a community 4-H Club.

Rules for the project are as follows:

- (1) The field must be selected before or during planting season. Contact

our office once you have the field planted. I need to have a record of where the field is located. A field will be considered to be from ditch to ditch.

- (2) Soil tests should be used for determining fertilizer used if they are available. Beginning this year, soil tests will be required for all 4-H Corn Production Projects. If you have not taken them yet, do so now.
- (3) Each 4-H'er must keep a record of when various operations are performed on the field and why they were needed. This should be turned in with the project book.
- (4) Yield must be verified by a member of the Corn Yield Contest Committee.
- (5) Corn Production Project books

must be turned by September 30th in order to be eligible to compete for the trophy.

The purpose of these requirements is to cause participating 4-H'ers to think about the various inputs necessary to grow corn. By doing so they will learn what their father's have to go through to produce a crop. They will also learn the importance of record keeping.

As part of this project, I plan to have a small tour during the summer for each 4-H'er to see fields other 4-H'ers have entered in the project. Each 4-H'er will have a few minutes to explain what he or she has done with their corn project.

We look forward to you participating in this project this summer.

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INSIGHT INTO
EYESIGHT

Dr. A.F. Downum
OPTOMETRIST

DIABETICS AND VISION

If you are among the 10 million people in this country who have diabetes, you probably know that this disease can have serious effects on vision. Diabetics are more vulnerable than other people to such eye diseases as cataracts, glaucoma, and disorders involving the cornea.

One of the most common problems associated with diabetes is diabetic retinopathy. In this disease, the tiny blood vessels that nourish the retina of the eye are damaged and may leak. Among other symptoms, this causes swelling of the retina and blurred vision. Left untreated this condition may lead to blindness.

One of the dangers of this disease is that it causes no obvious symptoms in its early stages. That's one reason why people who have diabetes should have their eyes examined at least once a year. Frequent eye examinations are also recommended for people who have not been diagnosed as diabetic but who have a history of diabetes in their family.

Dr. A.F. DOWNUM
103 W. Eden St.
Edenton, N.C.
Phone: 482-8444

Production tools challenged

Three of the farmer's most valuable production tools have been commercial fertilizers to increase yields, pesticides to protect his crops, and low-level antibiotic drugs to promote the growth and health of his animals.

All have been under heavy attack by some outside the agricultural community. Although it is true that these tools must be handled very carefully, it is also true that their dangers and abuses have been exaggerated.

There can be no doubt that without pesticides our annual harvest of grains and fruits and vegetables would be reduced drastically. Commercial fertilizers are said to add an estimated 20 percent increase in crop production. Low-level antibiotics have been used for many, many years by the livestock and poultry industries and result in benefits to both

consumers and farmers. There has been no scientific evidence which shows that the drugs continued use in animal feeds is detrimental to human health.

The result of using these important tools of production is abundant, nourishing supplies of food at as low a cost as possible. Without these tools, food prices would rise significantly above the present prices.

The farmer has proven over and over that he is a good neighbor to his friends in the towns and cities. The great environmental issues of the day are among his great concerns. In our complex, modern life, few have a greater knowledge or appreciation for nature than does the farmer. In his work, he sees and deals with the miracle of life each day. He is, and must continue to be, an expert ecologist so that he and the rest of us can survive.

Home extension calendar

Battleground Lace Ornament Workshop—Tuesday, March 31—9:00-1:00 p.m. Instructor—Mrs. Helen Timms—Small Cost—Class Limit 10. Please call 426-7697.

April 7—Spring Achievement Day—Perquimans County Extension Office—10:00 a.m.-1:00. Lunch by School Food Service, Mrs. La Claire Anderson. Must call to pre-register for lunch by March 27.

April 1, Pediatric Clinic, p.m.; Dr. Slade; April 2, Immunization Clinic, 9:00-7:00 p.m.; April 3, General Clinic, p.m., WIC, All Day. April 6, Prenatal, a.m.; Family Planning, p.m.; April 7, 8:00, Teen Clinic; April 8, Child Health, All Day.

Also, April 10, General Clinic, p.m.; April 14, Prenatal Check, Pills

April 22—Northeastern District Extension Homemakers Annual Activity Day—Southwestern Elementary School, Windsor, N.C. Hospitality, 9:30 a.m. Meeting at 10:00 a.m. Program—"Changing Times", Cost: \$1.25. Registration, \$4.75. Lunch, \$6.00 Total (Optional—3:00-Tour of Hope House and King Bazemore House. This can be determined by each car load and driver). Late registration after April 15 is \$12.00.

Problems, p.m.; April 15, Child Health, p.m.; April 16, PAP Clinic. April 17, General Clinic, p.m., WIC, All Day. April 20, Holiday. April 21, Prenatal, a.m.; Family Planning, p.m.; April 22, Eye Clinic, a.m.; April 23, Adult Health, All Day. April 24, General, p.m., and April 28, Prenatal Check, Pills-Problems, p.m.

Health Department schedule

April 1, Pediatric Clinic, p.m.; Dr. Slade; April 2, Immunization Clinic, 9:00-7:00 p.m.; April 3, General Clinic, p.m., WIC, All Day. April 6, Prenatal, a.m.; Family Planning, p.m.; April 7, 8:00, Teen Clinic; April 8, Child Health, All Day.

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Prices Good At All Family Dollar Stores Through This Weekend. Quantities Limited On Some Items. No Sales To Dealers.

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