



The Green Machine

Dedicated to improving the quality of life for future generations through education.

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SOLUTIONS
for *your* LIFE

The Birth of the Bradford Farmer's Market

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Ever since I started working as an agricultural extension agent in Bradford County I have had a lot of people ask me, "are we ever going to get a local farmer's market again"? Truth is, people prefer to buy locally-grown food and they want to support local farmers.

People like to buy locally produced food because it ripens naturally and is still fresh when it is consumed. Fresh food not only tastes better, it is better for you.

The demand for fresh food is increasing and can benefit our community by providing economic opportunities for local farmers and crafters. It is a perfect match: the community gets safe, quality food products and the money stays in Bradford County. Plus, the rural charm of Bradford County can get even better! (Continued on page 2)

Farmer's markets are lucrative markets for the entrepreneurial farmer who wishes to continue the tradition of working the land to grow food or nursery plants to sell locally. All across the nation, farmer's markets are growing in popularity because they help to form and improve communities, they are a traditional part of American Folklore, and they provide access to locally grown products.

For all of these reasons a group of volunteers are working to open a local farmer's market soon. The volunteers organizing the new Starke Farmer's Market envision having a diverse market that offers fresh produce, fruits & nuts, cut flowers, foliage plants and arts & crafts. The market will also provide a place for public education and community activities.

Land owners can keep an agricultural exemption by producing food for Farmer's Markets. This not only helps the individual but it also provides an economic incentive for Bradford County to preserve it's rural charm.

You don't need a lot of land to have a profitable farm if you sell locally. The need to sell lots of produce to generate an income stream is replaced by selling smaller quantities of high value produce. Customers can still afford the product because the food broker's profit is eliminated by the direct sales strategy.

Participating in a Farmer's Market provides a great opportunity for a second income or an opportunity to finance a hobby. I talk with a lot of people who have a garden simply because they enjoy growing and consuming fresh food. Many people give away any extra produce to friends and family. With proper planning, selling at a farmer's market can become a viable retirement income.

But don't quit your day job! Growing for Farmer's Markets, especially when you're just starting out, requires a lot of trial and error. Like any new business venture, many skills need to be mastered. The important thing is to not rush in and get overwhelmed.

Selling at a farmer's market is the same as starting a small business. Growers, bakers and crafters can set the price for the goods they sell – and cut out the middleman. Sellers must be patient to identify what items they can sell at the market. It is best to grow your new business slowly so your time and money are not wasted. In time, your customers will learn to like, trust and return to the friendly, reliable Farmer's Market vendor to get their prized goods. Repeat customers are great for business!

If you are interested in selling at your local farmer's markets, then the workshop **"To Market, to market"** is the perfect place to learn about setting up a good booth, controlling costs, creating customers who come back again and again, finding out what licenses or permits are needed and finding out what is going on in other local markets. The workshop will be held on Saturday, October 20th from 9 am until noon. See page 6 for workshop details or call your local extension office.

Awareness, **Education**, Action



There are three main things you need to do now. Get your soil tested, cultivate your garden area and plan what you are going to plant.

If you are planning to have a fall garden now is the time to get your soil tested to see if the pH (measure of acidity or alkalinity) needs adjusting and what kinds of fertilizer you need to add to your garden soil. **Do not** add lime to your soil without getting the soil tested first. Adjusting the pH too high can limit the availability of nutrients to your garden plants.

Make a visit to your extension office to pick up the appropriate forms and mailers so you can send your sample to the University of Florida Soil Testing Laboratory. While you are here we'll answer any questions you may have.

Taking a soil sample is easy and only costs seven dollars. All you do is collect several 1 inch diameter x 6 inch deep soil samples from your garden. Make a "zig zag" pattern as you collect the soil from your garden. Mix all the samples together and then keep about 1 pint of mixed soil which goes into the sample bag you picked up from the extension office. It takes about 2 weeks to get the results back.

You can turn over the soil anytime now. This will aerate the soil, turn some of the weeds under and enhance the weed decomposition. You can collect the soil sample before or after you break up the soil. You will need to turn the soil again just prior to planting. If your garden is in low ground you'll need to plant on top of beds so the roots get plenty of air. If you live on a sand hill then bedding is not necessary.

If you are not sure what to plant in your fall garden consult the Bradford County Planting Guide on page 4 of this newsletter. In the table you will see when you need to plant each crop along with how long it will take the crop to mature.

You should be getting the soil test results back in time to add the appropriate soil amendments before planting.

For more information consult the UF/IFAS Vegetable Gardening Guide. This is a great publication that goes into vegetable gardening, including insect and composting in greater detail. You can come in and pick up a copy the extension office or you can see it on the web at:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/VH021>



Variety	Best soil temp for germination	Spacing (inches)	Optimum Germination	Days to Germination	Days to Maturity (* from plants) (** from sets)	Direct seed in garden before March 15	Sow seeds before transplanting	pH
Beet	75	4	Oct	7 - 14	55-70	4 weeks		5.6 - 6.6
Broccoli	65 - 75	18	Oct, Nov	5 - 10	90-110 *		6 weeks	6.0 - 7.0
Brussels sprout	68 - 75	18	Oct, Nov	5 - 10	80-115 *		6 weeks	6.0 - 7.0
Cabbage	68 - 75	12	Oct, Nov	5 - 10	65-120 *		6 weeks	6.0 - 8.0
Carrot	75	3	Oct	12 - 15	120-150	4 weeks		5.5 - 7.0
Cauliflower	65 - 75	18	Oct, Mar, Apr	5 - 10	90-110 *		6 weeks	6.0 - 7.0
Celery	70 - 75	6	Oct, Apr, May	10 - 14	90 *		10 weeks	6.0 - 7.0
Collard	70 - 75	6	Oct	5 - 10	80-90			6.0 - 7.0
Endive	70 - 75	8	Oct	10 - 14	50-60	4 weeks		6.0 - 7.0
Kale	70 - 75	12	Oct	5 - 10	50-60	5 weeks		6.0 - 7.0
Kohlrabi	70 - 75	8	Oct	5 - 10	50-60	5 weeks		6.0 - 7.0
Lettuce	65 - 70	4-6	Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov	7 - 10	40-90	2 weeks		6.0 - 7.0
Melon	80 - 85	48	July, Sept	5 - 10	85-95 *		3 weeks	6.0 - 7.0
Mustard Greens	70	6	Oct, Apr	5 - 10	35-45	5 weeks		6.0 - 7.0
Okra	80 - 85	18	July, Sept	7 - 14	60-70			6.0 - 8.0
Onion, bulbing	70 - 75	4	Oct	10 - 14	90-150 **	6 weeks	12 weeks	5.0 - 7.0
Onion, bunching	60 - 70	4	Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov	10 - 14	50-60			5.0 - 7.0
Parsnip	70	4	Oct, Apr	14 - 21	150			5.0 - 7.0
Pumpkin	70 - 75	60	Oct, Apr	7 - 10	100-120 *		3 weeks	5.5 - 7.5
Radish	65 - 70	2	Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov	5 - 7	30	4 weeks		6.0 - 7.0
Rutabaga	65 - 70	8	Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov	7 - 15	80-90			5.5 - 7.0
Snap or Snow Pea	65 - 70	4-8	Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov	7 - 14	60-70			5.5 - 7.0
Spinach	70	4	Oct, Apr	7 - 14	40-50	5 weeks		6.0 - 7.5
Swiss chard	70 - 75	6	Oct	7 - 14	50-60	2 weeks		5.0 - 7.0
Turnip	65 - 70	4	Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov	7 - 14	45-75	5 weeks		5.0 - 7.0

This vegetable planting guide was created by Master Gardener Sam Williams. She took information published by the University of Florida and the accessed UF/IFAS Florida Automated Weather Network (FAWN) to customized the guide for Bradford County soil temperatures. Average soil temperatures in Bradford County from January Until December are 60, 58, 65, 70, 77, 76, 84, 82, 81, 74, 63 and 56 °F.



Growing Growers Workshop 1, September 11, Clay County Extension, Green Cove Springs, Call Dave Nistler at 904-284-6355

Growing Growers Workshop 2, September 18, Clay County Extension, Green Cove Springs, Call Dave Nistler at 904-284-6355

2007 Pesticide Certification CEU Day & Ornamental Pest Update, Friday September 21, 8:30 until 3:30, Alachua County Extension, Free but must register before Sept 19 by voicemail at 352-337-6209.

Why Should I Buy From You? Workshop Series, (Cultivating and Keeping Loyal Customers), Sept 19, 2 to 4 pm and will be held at the North Florida Research & Education Center, Live Oak, RSVP on Monday prior to program at 386-362-1725 ext 105.

Dear and Turkey Short Course, October 4 & 5, North Florida REC, Quincy, call Larry Halsey at 850-342-0187.

Why Should I Buy From You? Workshop Series, (Advertising Tools and Tips), Oct 17, 2 to 4 pm and will be held at the North Florida Research & Education Center, Live Oak, RSVP on Monday prior to program at 386-362-1725 ext 105.

3rd Annual Florida Quail & Dove Management Short Course, October 19th, Arcadia, \$50 early registration, \$75 after Oct 5th. Call Bill Giuliano at 352-846-0575.

Suwannee Valley Fall Workshops, Instruction on Fruit Crops, Pesticide CEU's, Food Safety, Hydroponics, Horticultural Crops, Small Ruminants, Soil Properties, Renewable Energy and First Detector Plant Disease Diagnostics will be offered. November 14, North Florida Research & Education Center, Live Oak, RSVP on Monday prior to program at 386-362-1725 ext 105.

On Farm Production of Bio-diesel Fuel, Tuesday, December 11, from 6 to 8 pm, Taylor County Extension, Perry, FL. Call Clay Olsen at 850-838-3508





“To Market, to market”

A Workshop for Farmers, Producers & Entrepreneurs

Saturday, October 20th, 2007, 2:30 PM until 5:30 PM

Bradford County Extension Office, 2266 North Temple Avenue, Starke

\$5 dollar registration fee, call to RSVP 904-966-6224 by October 15th

Program

Farmer’s Markets Are Great (learn how to make this thing work based on other success stories - analysis of market trends based on recent consumer opinion poles. Jim DeValerio, Bradford Co. Extension) **20 minutes**

Counting the Costs: Making a Business Plan (costs to count include production costs, overhead, booth fees, and licenses. Get a list of resources to help you succeed, Marilyn Dye, Bradford Farmers Market founder) **40 minutes**

REFRESHMENTS

Setting Up a Successful Selling Area – How to Merchandise Your Product (engaging all the customers’ senses, making it easy for customers to buy from you, the physical look of the booth – signage, tent, truck, tables. Sam Williams, local producer and seller) **45 minutes**

Creating “Sticky” Customers – Customers That Stick With You and Come Back (suggestions on hand-outs, email communication, getting customers’ opinions so that they feel like part of the process, importance of showing up every week they are in season, being alert and available to talk and answer questions, developing relationships. Sam Williams, local producer and seller) **45 minutes**

Discover Farmer’s Markets in Florida (local market managers tell when their markets meet & have copies of their Market Rules and registration sheets) **30minutes**

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