



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

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The Garden Bench

March/April 2013

Gardening and home landscape information from UGA Cooperative Extension in Houston County. Our newsletter provides research-based horticulture information to help Middle Georgia gardeners.



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Spring Home & Garden Show

April 6th and 7th 2013

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

9 AM-6 PM

10 AM -5 PM

MCGILL BUILDING

GEORGIA NATIONAL FAIRGROUNDS, PERRY, GA

SHOP FOR PLANTS, GARDEN ACCESSORIES, HOME DÉCOR ITEMS, GARDEN TOOLS, BOTANICAL AND WILDLIFE ART, POTTERY, AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

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TICKETS AT DOOR: \$5 DONATION, CHILDREN UNDER 12 ARE FREE.

ADVANCE TICKETS ARE NOW ON SALE FOR \$4.00. VISIT WWW.MCGG.ORG

OR CALL 478 988-8344 FOR VENDOR / EXHIBITOR DETAILS AND ADVANCE

TICKET INFORMATION.

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UGA Cooperative Extension

Plant Spotlight



Prunus x yedoensis

The Yoshino Cherry Tree is the tree that made the Macon Cherry Blossom Festival famous. Known for its fragrant and vibrant display of white-pink blossoms in early Spring, this deciduous tree also has beautiful, glossy bark, dark-brown leaves and an upright to horizontal branching pattern, making it ideal for planting along walks or around patios. The Yoshino Cherry Tree likes full sun and well-drained acidic soil and grows to 35-40'. Life expectancy is 15-20 years. (zones 5-8)

Planting Dates for your Spring Vegetable Garden

The average last frost date is about mid-March. That doesn't mean the danger of frost is over. In our area, the last frost could easily be two or more weeks earlier or later. Use warm days to get ready in your gardens. Take a look at our Home Garden and Landscape Tips for Middle Georgia for suggestions on planting and caring for flowers, vegetables & herbs, shrubs & trees, and lawns.

Continue to plant Asparagus, Cabbage, Spinach, Carrots, Collards, and Kale through about mid-March. Plant Mustard, Radishes, Turnips, and Beets through April 1.

Houston County is in USDA Hardiness Zone 8a. Choose plants that are hardy for this zone.

Planting Dates	Type of Vegetable
Mar 1—Apr 1	Cauliflower
Mar 15— May 1	Bush beans
Mar 15—May 10	Pole beans
Mar 15—Jun 1	Lima beans, Corn
Mar 20—May 1	Watermelon
Mar 20—June 20	Cantaloupe
Mar 25—May 1	Tomatoes
Apr 1—May 1	Butterpeas
Apr 1—May 15	Cucumbers, Eggplant, Summer squash
Apr 1—Jun 1	Okra, Peppers
Apr 1—Aug 10	Southern peas
Apr 15—Jun 15	Sweet potatoes

Home Garden and Landscape Tips for Middle Georgia

Flowers: Prepare your beds for annual flowers. Do a soil test and till in lime and fertilizer as needed. Fertilize established perennials after all danger of frost is past. Fertilize bulbs when the plant gets 2-3 inches tall by applying one pound 10-10-10 per 100 square feet or another equivalent fertilizer. Continue deadheading and fertilizing pansies monthly with granular fertilizer or bi-weekly with liquid fertilizer. Clean up winter-weary liriopse before new growth begins by trimming with a mower or weed eater. Plant heat-tolerant perennials such as lantana, cannas, annual periwinkle, summer phlox, or salvia when temperatures climb in late April or May.

Vegetables & Herbs: Plan your vegetable garden so that leafy vegetables get at least 6 hours of sunlight and fruiting vegetables such as tomatoes, squash, eggplant, and peppers get 8-10 hours of full sun. Run vegetable garden rows east-west to maximize use of sunlight. Plant the tallest vegetables on the north side of the garden to avoid shading other plants. Plant two or more short rows of corn next to each other (as opposed to one long row) for better pollination. Make second plantings (about 2-4 weeks later) of quickly maturing crops like corn, snap beans and radishes. Thin plants when they are 2-3 inches tall to give them plenty of room to grow.

Harden off transplants before planting them in the garden by placing them outside for a few hours each day in a sheltered spot for a week before transplanting them into the garden. Transplant on a shady day in late afternoon or in early evening to reduce transplant shock. Mulch to prevent weeds and conserve moisture. Erect trellises at planting for beans, cucumbers, and tomatoes.

Shrubs & Trees: Apply the first application of fertilizer to trees and shrubs in late March. Do a soil test or apply one-half pound of 12-4-8, 16-4-8, 10-10-10, or 18-0-18 per 100 square feet. Broadcast the fertilizer over the planting area uniformly (prior to a rain if possible, or water after fertilizing). Fertilizing once is enough for most shrubs and trees, but additional applications can be made in May and July if you want the plants to get larger. Spring-blooming plants such as azaleas may be fertilized without affecting flowering.

Aphids, azalea lace bugs, many types of scale insects, white flies, and pine bark beetles become active in March and April. Look for them and treat as needed. Start black spot sprays on roses when new leaves appear.

Prune spring flowering plants (azalea, camellia, forsythia, spirea, etc.) anytime after bloom through mid-July. Prune non-blooming plants or summer bloomers from January through mid-September. Prune oversized shrubs to 12-24 inches high before they bud out in February or March. Do not heavily prune boxwood and needled evergreens this way.

Lawn Tips: If needed, core aerate March through June. Wait until May or June to dethatch. Fertilize your lawn only after it fully greens up—usually in late April or May. Wait until late April or May to seed lawns. Control lawn weeds now through late May, before they get large and the temperature gets too high to apply herbicides safely. Do not use pre-emergence herbicides on lawns the first year. Water dry lawns between midnight and 10 AM with 3/4 to 1 inch of water. Dry lawns will look gray, have rolled or wilted leaves, and will show footprints in them after they are walked on.