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Florence County

## Caution: Serious Gardening Ahead

Easter, the traditional start of the gardening season has arrived. Now, it is time to get down (on our knees) and do some serious gardening. No self-respecting, serious gardener would miss the Southern Plant and Flower Festival at the Pee Dee State Farmers Market. This perennial event germinates on Thursday, April 15th and flowers through Sunday, April 18th. Hours for the festival will be 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday; 1:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. The Florence County Master Gardeners and I will be manning a booth in the center of the shed to answer all your gardening questions.

If you have the desire to be a Master Gardener, classes are scheduled for Darlington, Clarendon, and Marion Counties. The Darlington County Class will begin on April 13th. Classes will be from 6:15 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. at the Joslin Education Center at Kalmia Gardens. Call Kalmia Gardens at 843-383-8145 for more information. The Clarendon County Class will begin on May 3rd and be an evening class. Please call the Clarendon County Extension Office at 803-435-8429 for more information. The Marion County Class will begin on May 3rd. Classes will be from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in the Beeson Building Auditorium at 206 Airport Court. Please call the Marion County Extension Office at 843-423-8285 for more information.

The Master Gardener Class is an intensive thirteen week horticultural training. Training includes topics such as basic plant botany and physiology, entomology, plant pathology, vegetable gardening, fruit culture, annuals, and perennials. Topics also include woody ornamentals, turf management, interior plants, pest control, basic landscaping, and identification and usage of common landscape plants. At the end of the training the graduates become a member of the local Master Gardener Association and agree to volunteer at least 40 hours back to the community. This results in making the entire community a better place to live for everyone.

To learn the specifics on gardening we have both free and for-sale publications at our office in the back of the Public Services Building on the corner of Third Loop and Irby. You may also visit our Home & Garden Information Center through our web site at [www.clemson.edu/florence](http://www.clemson.edu/florence). I may be contacted through our web site, [amelton@clemson.edu](mailto:amelton@clemson.edu), or 661-4800.

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