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Florence County

The Pee Dee is in full flower and beauty. Everything from dogwoods to wisteria are showing-off. Even though it is a horrible weed, I love the waterfalls of purple flowing from the tip-tops of the highest trees. The weather is great and everything except gas prices is fine in Caroline. Hope the rest of the world can afford the gas to come see our "Smiling Faces and Beautiful Places."

In fact, this past weekend over 32,000 people witnessed the flowering of the Southern Plant and Flower Festival at the Pee Dee State Farmers Market. However, most people do not realize the market continues to flower every week with its wonderful flow of fresh fruits, vegetables, shrubs, trees, bedding plants, and etc. Also, Gardening programs for both young and old continue at the market.

First for the older folks, since we do not have as much time as the youth. VEGETABLE GARDENING by Tony Melton of Clemson University Extension Service from 6:30p.m. – 8:00p.m. on Thursday, April 14th. GROWING & USING HERBS by Sally Haynes, a Florence County Master Gardener, from 6:30p.m. – 8:00p.m. on Thursday, May 12th. There is nothing better than fresh herbs in summer recipes. If you love herbs, or just want to know more about them, do not miss this class!

Both programs will be held at the Red Barn Classroom at the Pee Dee State Farmers Market. Pre-registration is required since class space is limited. Fee for the class is \$10 per person. To register, call Betty Boykin at 843/665-5154.

Programs for youth include a 4-H gardening project called the Junior Master Gardener Program. This program for 3rd – 5th graders offer horticultural and environmental science education as well as leadership and life skills development through fun and creative activities. This 930 a.m. to noon, Monday thru Thursday program will begin on Monday, June 6th, and end on Thursday, June 30th. Junior Master Gardeners develop an interest and skills in gardening and their spirit of volunteerism so they can go out and make a positive contribution to their family, school and community. Space is limited and on a first come first serve basis. Quickly call Alma Harris at 843/393-0484 for more information and to register.

To learn the specifics on gardening we have both free and for-sale publications at our office. You may also visit our Home & Garden Information Center through our web site at www.clemson.edu/florence. I may be contacted through our web site, amelton@clemson.edu or 661-4800.

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