

Date: March 6, 2008
Release: Home Gardening
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Why is a Gardening Workshop Needed?

The first reason is that over ninety percent of the lawn and gardening problems I see are people problems instead of plant problems. I get calls from and travel all over the Pee Dee to help folks with their outdoor dilemmas. Well, sometimes it's a little embarrassing to tell them they actually caused the problem by something they did or didn't do. And to make it worse, many times the homeowner spent extraordinary amounts of money to kill his own plants, lawn, or garden.

Next, most neighbors are not horticulturists or lawn and garden experts. When I ask homeowners why they did something completely off the wall in their yard, the overwhelming answer is, "Because my neighbor did." My daddy used to ask me, "If someone else jumped off a cliff, would you?" Even things your parents or grandparents did may not be horticulturally sound practices. Before you spend the money, time and effort on gardening tasks, you need to know how, why, and when to do a task properly.

Finally, people don't actually know or realize the complexity of plants. Before I was to appear on the gardening show Making It Grow, a friend asked, "How could anyone talk thirty minutes each week about plants?" The truth is many scientists spend their whole lives studying one minute plant part. These are just a few of the reasons we are having the Annual Pee Dee Home and Garden Workshop on Saturday, March 15th, at the Pee Dee Research and Education Center (PDREC).

This year's theme is "Joy from the Garden" and the Florence County Master Gardeners have planned a full day of exciting gardening programs. From 10:00 a.m. until noon, Margot Rochester, a renowned horticultural writer, presents "A Gardener Grows: A Saga in Two Parts." In the afternoon, six different gardening programs featuring local and statewide gardening specialists will whet even the expert gardener's palette. Admission is \$35/person if you are pre-registered and \$40 at the gate. The program begins at 9:00 a.m. and lunch is included. For more information contact Barb Matthews at (843) 493-0788, Rachell Hyman at (843)669-1749, or Sally Haynes at (843)374-2477. Please make checks payable to FCMG and mail them to Sally Haynes, 179 N. Country Club Road, Lake City, SC 29560. The festival will be held rain or shine on March 15th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Pee Dee Research and Education Center (PDREC). The PDREC is located on Pocket Road near the Florence/Darlington County line. In Florence, take Exit 169 off I-95 or Irby Street to TV Road. Go north on TV Road until it dead ends into Pocket Road. Turn left; the Pee Dee Research and Education Center is one mile on the right.

Master Gardeners will be selling many of their favorite plants throughout the day (shop early to get your favorites). Also, a display garden showcasing many different winter vegetables and flowers will amaze even the most experienced plant lover.

Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer. Should you require special accommodations due to a disability, please notify our office at 661-4800 in advance. If you enjoy gardening and using flowers and plants in decorations, please watch Down Home with Tony and Amanda on Thursday nights at 8:00 pm on the SC Channel (ETV's digital station). If you don't get that channel, you can go to www.mig.org, select streaming video, and scroll down to where our shows are archived.