

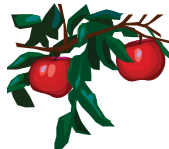
Merrimack County Agriculture Workshops

Feb - March - April

Look What's Ahead

For more information about these programs, contact Sadie Puglisi at 603-225-5505 ext. 323 or email her at sadie.puglisi@unh.edu, unless otherwise indicated. Or, check out our web page for complete flyers at www.extension.unh.edu/counties/Merrimack/Merrimack.htm.

February 19 - 11 am - 2 pm
Apple Pruning Demonstration
Hackleboro
Orchards,
Canterbury.



Harry Weiser, will demonstrate apple pruning techniques for dwarf, semi-dwarf and standard trees. UNH Cooperative Extension Specialist, Bill Lord, will discuss basic backyard apple care and the effects of warm weather on apple tree growth and fruit production. To learn more about Harry & Linda Weiser's operation, and/or to get directions to Hackleboro Orchards, visit their web site at:

<http://HackleboroOrchards.com>
or call them at: 783-4248. Both home and fruit growers and commercial orchardists are welcome.



February 21 -
8:30 am - 3 pm

Greenhouse Production Basics,
Massabesic Audubon Center,
Auburn. For more information, call Nada Haddad at 603-679-5616. For a flyer visit: <http://extension.unh.edu/Agric/Agric.htm>.

March 9 - 9 am - 3:30 pm
2nd NH Forage and Grazing Conference, Common Man Inn, Plymouth. While pasture management and grazing practices figure prominently in the program, we will also feature presentations on forage crop production, forage quality evaluation, equine nutrition, and economic considerations for hay and forage production. Registration for the conference is \$15 per person, to cover the cost of lunch. For more information, contact Carl Majewski at the Cheshire County Extension Office at 352-4550. For a flyer, go to: <http://extension.unh.edu/Agric/Agric/htm>.

March 14 - 8 am - 3:15 pm
Turfgrass Maintenance for Municipal Properties, Portsmouth Country Club, Greenland.

My turfgrass workshops have been such a success, I've made them an annual event! This full day conference discusses cultural practices, insect, disease and weed management, machine and equipment maintenance and fertilizer topics, all on basic level at a low cost. For more information, see the flyer on

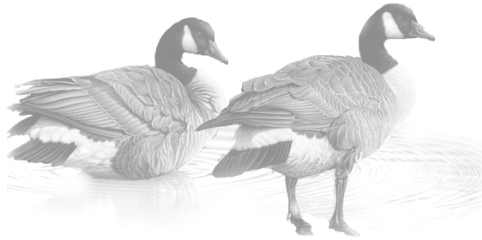
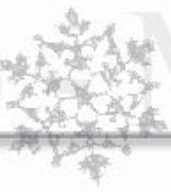
the web site listed above. Sorry to take this program so far out of our county, but this program is drawing a lot of attention from southern and eastern parts of the state. But the program is so great, you won't mind the drive, I promise!

March 22 -
Greenhouse
Twilight Meeting,



LaValley Farms, Hooksett. This will be a follow-up meeting to the February 21st program. Topics will include diseases and insects. More information will be mailed out to those on my greenhouse list. Or visit our web page in a few weeks. For information on LaValley Farms, visit:
www.lavalleyfarms.com

UNH Cooperative Extension programs and policies are consistent with pertinent Federal and State laws and regulations on non-discrimination regarding color, handicap, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veterans status.



March 27 and 28 - 8 am - 3:30 pm, Landscaping at the Water's Edge: An Ecological Approach to Landscaping Shoreland Property, Lake Shore Farms, Northwood. Cost: \$125.00 before March 17, \$150.00 after March 17. This workshop is designed for landscapers, conservation commissions, lakes associations and others who are in the business of developing, maintaining, or preserving shoreland properties, and others who are concerned about the impacts of landscaping on water quality. Topics cover water movement and drainage on landscape sites, soil quality, site analysis and erosion control, an outside session on site evaluation and improvement, ecological landscape design principles, plant selection for vegetative buffers, proper planting practices, low impact lawns and a hands-on exercise in landscape design and improvement. The registration fee includes the two-day program, a book, lots of additional resource materials, lunches and coffee breaks, a certificate of completion, and a window decal for your truck or office.

What Else Have I Been Up To?

Well, I'm glad you asked. Thanks to the IPM Grant Program sponsored by the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Division of Pesticides, I was able to create a fun, interactive and educational web page about turfgrass maintenance. The web pages offer a short movie about how to scout for grubs, interactive decision tools about herbicide use, and quizzes at the end of each section to test knowledge gained. Designed to be entertaining and easy to use, the web site offers an alternative to flat fact sheets about pest control. The site is designed primarily as a training tool for municipal turfgrass managers who have responsibility for athletic fields, playgrounds, cemeteries and parks. These employers typically hire seasonal workers who may or may not have basic turfgrass knowledge and need to be trained in a short amount of time. The information found on the site is very easy to follow and helpful to homeowners and anyone who wants to know how to healthy grass. Check it out at: <http://extension.unh.edu/agric/turf/turfipm.htm> and fill out the evaluation form. I'm looking for some feedback about how I can make it better!

Sadie Puglisi

**April 9 -
5 pm - 7 pm
Peach Pruning
Demonstration,**



Carter Hill Orchards, Concord. Learn pruning and grafting techniques from orchard owner, Rob Larocque, and UNHCE Specialist Bill Lord. We'll also discuss warm weather effects on peach growth and some basic pest management tips. For directions and information about Carter Hill visit, <http://www.carterhillorchard.com> . Both home fruit growers and commercial orchardists are welcome.



**April 11 -
Apple Twilight
Meeting, Meadow Ledge
Orchard, Loudon.** UNHCE Specialist, Bill Lord, is putting together an excellent program for commercial growers. Information will be mailed to those of you on my tree fruit mailing list in the near future, and will be up on the Extension web page.

Here are short summaries of the information I gained from the demonstration project I performed over the summer:

Fertilizer and Pre-germinated Seed Trials

In the spring of 2006 UNH Cooperative Extension and Merrimack Valley High School teamed up along with turf managers from the Boston Company to compare the differences between traditional and organic fertilizer and between pre-germinated seed and non pre-germinated seed. We used the goal areas on the practice field hockey field as our demonstration plots. One half of each goal area received organic fertilizer for each scheduled application, and the other received traditional fertilizer. We seeded one entire goal area with pre-germinated seed and the other was slit seeded with non pre-germinated seed.

Due to extreme wet weather conditions and uneven wear on the fields, the project did not produce useful comparison results, but some information was gained. As the applicator, I can comment about some of the differences between the organic and synthetic fertilizer.

- Organic fertilizer has a lower nitrogen content compared to synthetic fertilizers. To obtain 1 lb N/1,000 sq. ft. I had to apply 10 lbs of organic fertilizer per 500 sq. ft. compared to only needing 1.5 lbs of synthetic fertilizer per 500 sq. ft. I had to fill my fertilizer spreader twice and walk the plot for a longer amount of time to get the same amount of organic fertilizer applied compared to the synthetic fertilizer which I could apply with only 5 or 6 passes with the spreader.
- The application of 10 lbs of fertilizer on only 250 sq. ft. left a lot of granular material on the surface of the fields that could still be seen 8 days after application.
- The organic fertilizer had an odor to it that may not be welcomed to the students and coaches using the fields.
- However, on the positive side, organic fertilizer is a slow release material and with the large amount of rain that fell during the 2006 season, the organic fertilizer may have stayed in the soil long enough to be used by the plant, unlike the synthetic which has a greater potential to leach through the soil before the plant can take it up.

Seed comparisons:

Five days after the seeding, neither plot was showing signs of growth. The days following were hot and dry, then more excessive rain fell. The goal plot that was seeded with pre-germinated seed did not drain well. None of the seeded areas showed germination until almost two weeks after they had been seeded. At this time both plots were showing the same amount of growth.

Due to excessive rain, no conclusions can be made about the differences between pre-germinated seed and non pre-germinated seed. Under ideal conditions we would have hoped to see the pre-germinated seed establish faster than the traditional seeding. Faster establishment would have been useful in the late fall where worn areas could potentially be seeded after fall sports and be playable by spring.





We'd like to thank Merrimack County Valley School District and the Boston Company for their willingness and enthusiasm in participating in this project, and for the labor and resources they provided.

Variety Trials of *Eustoma Grandiflora*

Whenever I mention this plant people always crinkle their brow and say "I've never heard of that, what's the common name?"

I reply "Lisianthus"

To which they reply "No, what's the common name?" Believe it or not folks, that is the common name. Still never heard of it? Well, maybe someday soon you will.

On June 6, 2006 UNH Co-operative Extension planted a research plot of *Eustoma grandiflora* plants at Spring Ledge Farm in New London. The purpose of the test was to see which out of the 6 varieties produced the greatest amount of salable flowers with the highest quality and to see if high tunnels would produce saleable plants earlier in the season and with higher quality than the field grown plants.

The same varieties were planted in the field as in the high tunnel and included Echo Blue, ABC Blue, Cinderella Blue, Cinderella Pink, Laguna Rose and Twinkle Blue Blush.

Eustomas are harvested when at least one bud is fully open. Most plots had harvestable plants on August 5th. However, the plots in the tunnels had the greatest numbers of salable plants on August 12th, where the plants in the field had the greatest number of salable plants later in the season (September 2nd and 9th). This indicates that high tunnels have the potential to produce salable stems before the field grown crops. Plants in the high tunnels also produced taller plants with 1.8 plants per square foot between 16 to 18 inches harvested in a 6-week period compared to only .13 stems per square foot (13 plants total) produced in the field. Out of the six varieties that were grown, Cinderella Blue and Twinkle Blue Blush produced the most salable stems. Both varieties produced 11.3 stems per square foot over a 6-week period. Surprisingly, the industry standard, Echo Blue, and the variety similar to it, ABC Blue, gave the least amount of salable stems, 5.6 stems sq. ft. and 5.4 stems sq. ft., respectively, over a 6-week period.

All varieties had spots on the flowers that made the plants unsalable at times. Flowers in the high tunnel had an equal amount of spots as in the fields. This may be due to the condensation that builds in the tunnels and the unusually humid and wet spring.

These results should not be understood as scientific conclusions. The growing season was unseasonable wet and conditions in the field were not consistent as some soils drain more readily than others. No statistics were run on these numbers; these conclusions are based on comparing the grand totals, but it cannot be said that the differences in numbers are statistically significant.

We'd like to thank Spring Ledge for donating their time and land for this and for caring and maintaining the plants. We'd like to particularly send our gratitude to Heidi Moulton for harvesting, measuring, and recording all 1400 stems!