

VOL. 2 | FEBRUARY 2020

OUR BACKYARD

An agricultural newsletter by Hardin County AgriLife Extension



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From the Agent

Howdy!

I hope that everyone is getting along great at the start of this new year. January was the kickoff of stock show season in Texas and also a time to be getting our garden areas prepared for planting, except all the rain has gotten in the way of that a little. I have added the Horticulture Corner into the newsletter and hope everyone finds it helpful.

We have been busy working on upcoming programs for this year and believe we have put together some fresh new ideas that are going to keep you coming back for more programs. As always we encourage your thoughts and ideas for programming, so don't be a stranger!

Until next month,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie A. Pace".

Katie A. Pace | Hardin County Extension Agent



HORTICULTURE

Corner

In the Garden

To keep up with a fast approaching spring, here are a few reminders of what to do in February:

Check trees and shrubs for scale insects

Mid to late February prune your roses

Now is the time to move a young tree or shrub!

Start preparing spring bed and garden areas for planting. tilling in several inches of compost can help soil fertility

What should I plant this month?

Plant these cool season crops so they can be ready to harvest before the summer heat:

Radishes

Greens

Lettuce

Spinach

Sugar Snap Peas

Carrots

Turnips

Now is also the time to plant many types of shrubs and trees like:

Roses

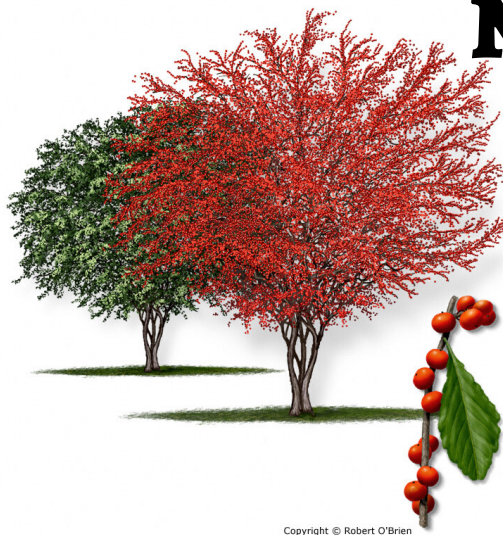
Fruit and nut trees

Blueberries

Blackberries

Native Texans

One of our readers is wishing to add some more native plants to her landscape so she gave me the idea to include a Texas Native plant of the month. This month I have picked Possumhaw Holly



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Possumhaw Holly gets its name from the reddish fruits that are commonly mistaken for hawthorn fruits and are very apparent in winter when it has lost all its leaves. It is a large shrub/small tree that is native to East Texas and can grow in a wide variety of soil and moisture conditions with little maintenance.

G O O D

reads

Dog's sniffing out crop disease?

Dog detectives might be able to help save ailing citrus groves, research suggests. Scientists have trained dogs to sniff out the crop disease called citrus greening that has hit orange, lemon and grapefruit orchards in Texas. The dogs can detect it weeks to years before it shows up on tree leaves and roots, the researchers report. "This technology is thousands of years old – the dog's nose," said Timothy Gottwald, a researcher with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and a co-author of the study. "We've just trained dogs to hunt new prey: the bacteria that causes a very damaging crop disease." Dog sleuths are also faster, cheaper and more accurate than people collecting hundreds of leaves for lab analysis, according to the study in the Proceedings of National Academies of Sciences. In one experiment in a Texas grapefruit orchard, trained dogs were accurate 95% of the time in distinguishing between newly infected trees and healthy ones. "The earlier you detect a disease, the better chance you have at stopping an epidemic" by culling infected trees, explained Gottwald.

Another plant scientist, Laura Sims, of Louisiana Tech University, said she was impressed by the rigorousness of the research. She applauded the steps taken to determine if the dogs were sniffing out the bacteria itself or a plant's response to an infection. To do that, the researchers infected a variety of unrelated plants with the bacteria in a laboratory. The dogs were still able to pick out the infected plants. "You've seen dogs working in airports, detecting drugs and explosives," said Gottwald. "Maybe soon you will see them working on more farms."

Upcoming Programs for *Hardin County*

All programs to be held at the Hardin County Annex Building
1135 Redwood Kountze, Texas 77625

So You Think You Want To Be A Beekeeper?

Special guest speakers James and Chari Elam will be speaking to our community about what it takes to keep bees! Please come attend this **FREE** program to be held February 20, 2020. Please RSVP by February 18, 2020



**Bluebonnet
Beekeeping**



This year we will be hosting a Backyard Basics Series featuring six new topics:

Backyard Chickens: Care & Egg Production

Backyard Gardening- From the Ground Up

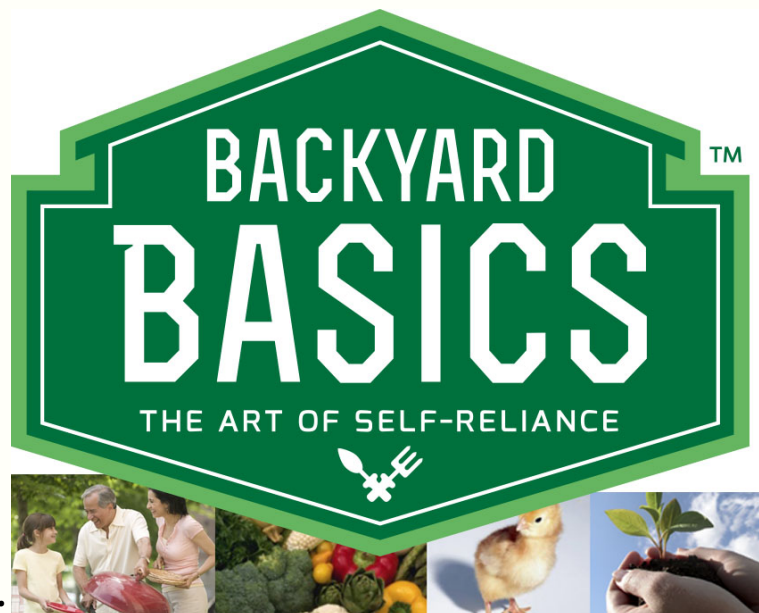
Backyard Pecans

Backyard Organic Gardening

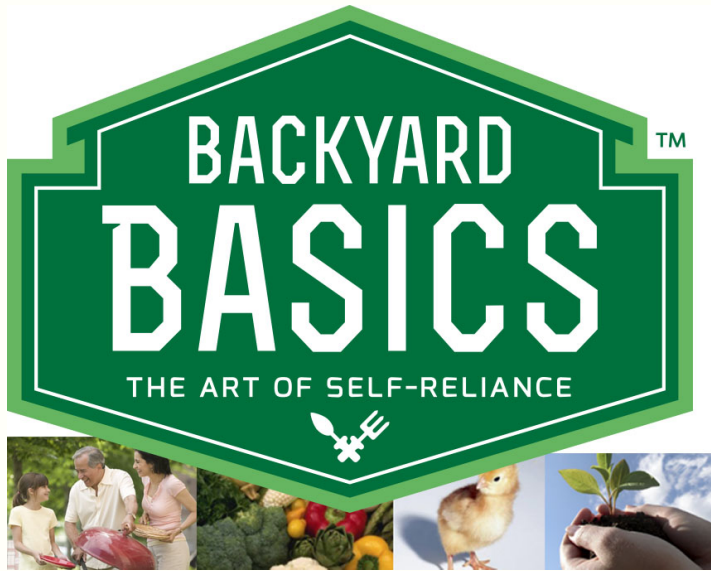
Backyard Citrus Trees

Backyard Earthworms

The complete series is \$100 or each class is \$20.



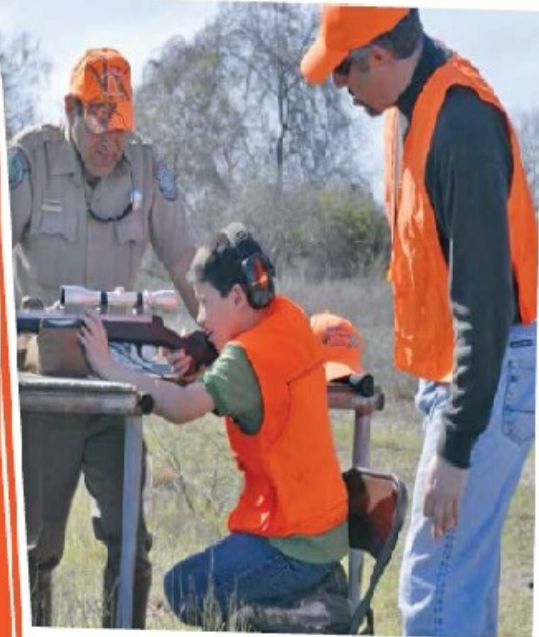
The first program on Backyard Chickens: Care & Egg Production will be held on February 27, 2020 at 6:00 PM. Please RSVP by February 25, 2020



If you are struggling trying to know where to start with gardening, come attend our next Backyard Basics class, **Backyard Gardening- From the Ground Up**, that will be held March 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM. Please RSVP by March 3, 2020

Huntmaster Training Program

Come join us March 20, 2020 at 5:00 PM and March 21, 2020 at 9:00 AM for Texas Youth Hunting Program Huntmaster Training. With this training you will be able to guide, volunteer, and organize hunts for youth across the great state of Texas. Must attend both days of training The cost is \$90 to non TWA Members or \$55 to those who are already TWA members



Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting are encouraged to contact the Hardin County Extension Office at (409) 246-5128 two working days prior to the meeting to determine how reasonable accommodations can be made.

Get involved with Hardin County Extension

Please consider joining the Hardin County Agriculture Committee to provide leadership and suggestions for upcoming programming. You don't have to make a large time commitment, with as few as four meetings per year, but we would love to hear your ideas and for you to share input on your county!

Please contact the office to update your email address, or if you know someone that would like to be added to this list, at (409) 246-5128, or by email katie.pace@ag.tamu.edu. We also welcome suggestions for upcoming newsletters!

PO Box 610 | 1135 Redwood | Kountze, TX 77625

p: (409) 246-5128 | f: (409) 246-5201

<http://hardin.agrilife.org>

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