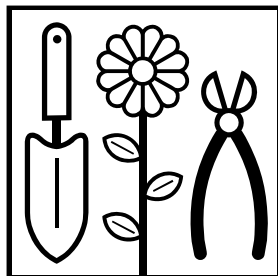


**August  
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## **Piscataquis Gardening**

University of Maine Cooperative Extension (UMaine Extension) is the major educational outreach program of the University of Maine, with offices statewide. UMaine Extension provides Maine people with research-based educational programs to help them live fuller, more productive lives.

### **Goal:**

The goal of the Piscataquis Gardening Newsletter is to provide timely information on practical, sustainable, research-based horticultural practices, tools and techniques which will improve home gardening success. Topics on growing and caring for vegetables, fruits, flowers, and landscaping for the home will be included as well as pest management techniques. Information will be based on our U.S.D.A plant hardiness zone. Upcoming events and programs of interest will also be included.

You can receive this newsletter electronically. To sign up for the electronic version go to [www.umext.umaine.edu/piscataquis/gardening/newsletter.htm](http://www.umext.umaine.edu/piscataquis/gardening/newsletter.htm).

If you have a question, feel free to contact me and I can include it in our garden question section.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Donna R. Coffin'.

**Donna R. Coffin**  
**dcoffin@umext.maine.edu**  
**Piscataquis County Extension**  
**Educator**  
**165 East Main Street**  
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**207-564-3301**  
**In Maine 1-800-287-1491**

### **Fall 2009 Master Gardener Volunteers Program**

The University of Maine Cooperative Extension is pleased to again offer its popular Master Gardener program in the fall of 2009. Participants in the Master Gardener program will receive thirteen 3-hour training sessions on gardening starting September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009. After successful completion of the training program, each Master Gardener will volunteer 40 hours to a community gardening project such as: working with the Charlotte White Center to achieve their goal of living more sustainably by growing their own food, planting and maintaining public gardens, designing and creating a mobile display to be used at fairs and other public functions, or answering public calls and requests for gardening information.

The 2009 program will focus on ornamentals, flowers, shrubs, and trees. The fee includes a 500-page reference manual. The program will be held on Wednesday evenings from 5:30pm to 8:30pm beginning September 9<sup>th</sup> at the Charlotte White Center on the Bangor Road in Dover-Foxcroft. For more information or to request an application, please call the Piscataquis County Extension Office at 564-3301 or 1-800-287-1491. Applications are due on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

*Article by Hannah Todd, Piscataquis and Somerset Home Horticulture Aide.*

### **Fruitless Fruit Trees – What happened?**

The most common reason for failure to flower and produce fruit is that the tree is simply too young. Dwarf or semi-dwarf apple trees may start producing fruit in as few as three years or take twice that long or longer depending on cultivar. If your trees have been growing long enough, the lack of fruit probably has some other cause.

Frost damage to flower buds during the dormant season or after buds start to swell in the spring is a common cause of failure to fruit. Frequently an early warm-up will cause trees to break out of dormancy only to have their flowers zapped by a

### **IN THIS ISSUE:**

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subsequent cold snap. Fertilizing late in the summer (after July 15<sup>th</sup>) may prevent the tree from going into dormancy and make flower buds more susceptible to freezing temperatures later in the winter.

Browsing deer nibbling on fruit trees can damage or remove flower buds as high in the tree as they can reach. When deer populations are high and feeding pressure is heavy, repellents are ineffective and effective fencing is expensive.

Buds that survive to open into flowers must be pollinated to develop into fruits. Bad weather (cold and/or damp) that prevents bees and other pollinators from working can translate into poor pollination and little to no fruit development. With only a few trees the problem with pollination can be lack of another variety to serve as a pollen source.

Some fruit tree varieties are self-pollinating or self-fruitful. Some pears and tart cherries are self-pollinating. For many apple varieties if there isn't a pollen source, it doesn't matter whether the flowers survive -- pollination will not occur, and no fruit will develop.

Once trees start to produce fruit, they may produce large crops one year and little to no fruit the next. Thinning the crop during the heavy crop year may improve fruit set the following year. Heavy pruning after a light crop year may prevent a fruit overload the next year.

Other factors that affect fruit production include the early training and annual pruning of fruit trees to create a sturdy structure open to sunlight, proper fertilization, and pest and disease control.

*Source: Janssen, D. Acreage & Small Farm Insights, University of Nebraska – Lincoln, August 2009, <http://acreage.unl.edu>*

### **More Diseases!**

You may have noticed that many of our trees are showing signs of leaf diseases. At this point in the growing season the trees can completely lose their leaves and still survive. The reason we have started seeing leaf spots, blotches and blights is the continued wet weather. It is not recommended to spray anything at this time, but home owners can reduce the amount of inoculum over-wintering by raking up the leaves and compost in an active compost pile or take them to the landfill. The Norway maple has shown to be very susceptible to a leaf disease called anthracnose. This tree has been planted in the

landscape but has revealed itself to be an invasive weed tree. The Norway Maple produces a prolific amount of seeds each year and many germinate and will compete aggressively with our native tree species.

Low bush blueberry producers are on the lookout for a leaf disease that could be spread to their whole field during harvest if not managed properly. The spots of *Valdensinia* are typically round, large, and brown, and can have a bull's-eye appearance. Leaves can have from 1 to about 10 spots that can be from an eighth- to a half-inch and larger. These spots rapidly enlarge on the leaves and can spread from stem to stem within a few days. Young leaves drop off when infected by only one spot and while still green. Stems can have complete leaf drop or only have a few infected leaves at the top of the stem. Older infected leaves will remain on the plant until leaf drop in the fall. In pruned fields, stems with complete leaf drop will not produce flower buds for the next year. Crop fields with leaf drop will have decreased yields and smaller berries. The fallen infected leaves are the source of new spores to cause more infections.

Please contact Seanna Annis or Dave Yarborough at the Blueberry Hotline (800-897-0757) if you suspect you have the *Valdensinia* Blueberry disease in your field or if you have any questions.

### **Finding Locally Grown Food**

Many home gardeners like to supplement what they raise with produce, meat and other food products that are locally grown and made. We are fortunate to have a group of farmers in our area that are raising crops and livestock products for their neighbors. Their group is called the Maine Highlands Farmers and you can see where they are located and what they have available at the group's website

[www.MaineHighlandsFarmers.com](http://www.MaineHighlandsFarmers.com).

Products that members have for sale include: seedlings, vegetables, small fruits, tree fruits, jams & jellies, pickles, meat, cheese, bakery products, honey, maple syrup, etc.

The Maine Department of Agriculture also maintains a list of Maine farmers who sell directly to consumers. It is located at [www.GetRealMaine.com](http://www.GetRealMaine.com). The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association maintain a

list of certified organic farmers at their web site [www.MOFGA.org](http://www.MOFGA.org).

### **Excess Garden Produce?**

Despite the terrible weather conditions some gardens have started producing abundant crops. If you are a lucky gardener that finds they have too much produce for your families needs please consider donated to your local food cupboard. Gardeners in the Dover-Foxcroft area can contact Reverend Tom Bruce at 564-2586 or 717-5317, for the best time to drop off garden produce. They serve hundreds of families in our area and welcome the chance to give these families some fresh produce. Gardeners in other towns can check with your town office for a food cupboard near you.

### **August Garden Activities:**

We still have about 6 more weeks of gardening season. Watch for disease or insect attacks on your plants. If you don't know what it is you can give us a call at the Extension Office at 564-3301 or in Maine 1-800-287-1491 or you can email Hannah Todd, Extension Home Horticulture Aide at [htodd@umext.maine.edu](mailto:htodd@umext.maine.edu).

- ◆ Be prepared to cover cold sensitive crops when the meteorologist calls for chance of frost.
- ◆ Continue harvesting crops such as tomatoes, beans, cucumbers, zucchini, etc.
- ◆ Plant cover crops to add organic matter to your soil after you have harvested your veggies.
- ◆ Pull annual weeds before they get a chance to set seed.
- ◆ Take your extra garden produce to the local food cupboard or share with a neighbor in need.

### **Featured Extension Publications:**

The following Gardening Extension Publications are available at the Extension office nearest you. Many publications are also available online for free download at <http://extensionpubs.umext.maine.edu/>. For sale publications can be ordered directly from our publications store at the same web site.

### **Ball Blue Book Guide to Preserving: 100th**

**Anniversary Edition** Item #4024, Publisher: Jarden Home Brands. The first Ball Blue Book guides were published in 1909. This elegant new version of America's classic food preservation guide is printed in glossy magazine format with plenty of full-page color spreads, and contains more than 500 recipes. Covers

general canning principles, high-acid foods, soft spreads, pickled foods, low-acid foods (including meats), condiments, and salsas. Includes sections on freezing and dehydrating, a trouble-shooting chart, a glossary, and an index. 128 pages, 2009. **\$7.95**

**Extending the Gardening Season** Item #2752, Publisher: UMaine Extension. Provides an overview of various types of plastic mulches and their uses, as well as row covers, cold frames, hoop houses, hot caps, and insulating water tubes. 5 pages, 2008. Free download available or buy a color copy. **\$0.75**

### **Calendar:**

August 21-22, 2009 - **2009 Maine Farm Days** at the Barker Farm, Leeds, ME. The Maine Farm Days Theme for 2009 is Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources. Presentations are scheduled pertaining to solar and wind energy, with presentations on farmland preservation from groups like Androscoggin Land Trust and Maine Farm Land Protection. Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District Executive Director Susan Gammon will speak about Carbon. You can learn more at [www.androscogginswcd.net](http://www.androscogginswcd.net) by clicking on Maine Farm Days (MFD) link on the home page.

August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 **Preserving the Harvest** There will be two (morning or afternoon) sessions- 10:00 AM—1:00 PM or 1:30 —4:30 PM at the Congregational Church on West Main St, Dover-Foxcroft, Maine. University of Maine Cooperative Extension is offering a 3-hour "Preserving the Harvest" workshop for beginner or first time food preservers. Participants will learn recommended methods for preserving foods, the latest and safest recipes, and equipment to insure safety and how to check for properly sealed jars. All participants will receive a "Preserving the Harvest" food preservation packet. There is a materials fee of \$20 per person. Materials fee is payable by check payable to "PEA" putting "Preserving the Harvest and Piscataquis County" the memo section. Participants need to bring a potholder with you to the workshop. Space is limited. Please call 564-3301 or 1-800-287-1491 to register for the preserving workshop. Contact Extension Educator, Jane Conroy if you have any questions or if you need special accommodations to attend 7 days prior to the event.

September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009 **Piscataquis County 2009 Master Gardener Class**. 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the Charlotte White Center, Bangor Road, Dover-Foxcroft. Pre-registration is required. . For more information or to request an application, please call the Piscataquis County Extension Office at 564-3301 or 1-800-287-1491. Applications are due on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

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Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426  
564-3301 or 1-800-287-1491 (In Maine)  
Piscataquis Gardening August 2009



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### **Fall Garden Cleanup: Offered Through Piscataquis Valley Adult Education Cooperative**

Don't put away those gardening gloves just yet—there's a lot to do to protect your investment over the winter and into the next growing season. Join Hannah Todd, Home Horticulture Coordinator with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension as she discusses all aspects of fall clean-up for the residential landscape including lawns, trees and shrubs, ornamentals, vegetable beds, and even the compost pile. Learn proven techniques to prepare your garden and grounds for the winter and beyond.

This class is intended for the beginning gardener, but experienced gardeners are welcome to attend. Please register so we can have enough handout materials for all who attend. This free two hour program will be repeated in three of the four school districts served by the adult education program. Please sign up through Piscataquis Valley Adult Education Cooperative at (207)564-6525.

<http://tinyurl.com/fallgarden>.

This one evening program will be repeated in Dover-Foxcroft, Guilford and Milo on these dates at these times:

**Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> from 6pm-8pm at the Milo High School**

**Tuesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> from 6pm-8pm at the Guilford High School**

**Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup> from 6pm - 8pm at the Foxcroft Academy**

### **Saving Energy at Home: Offered Through Piscataquis Valley Adult Education Cooperative**

Reducing your heating costs and other energy costs in your home is the focus of this program. Part of the session will include a demonstration on how to make a window shutter from cardboard, aluminum foils and duct tape as well as a door draft stopper from fabric and foam pipe insulation.

Supplemental home heating methods, insulation materials, and the importance of regular maintenance of your heating system will also be discussed. An overview of alternative energy sources and tax incentives will round out the program.

Cost to attend this program is \$10 with scholarships available. This program will be offered in three different locations. All programs will be Tuesday from 6 pm to 8 pm:

**September 29<sup>th</sup> in Milo**

**October 6<sup>th</sup> in Guilford**

**October 13<sup>th</sup> in Dover-Foxcroft**

Sponsored by University of Maine Cooperative Extension and Piscataquis Valley Adult Education Cooperative, to sign up for a session contact UMaine Extension at 165 East Main St., Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426, 564-3301 or in Maine 1-800-287-1491 or PVAEC at 48 Morton Ave., Suite M, Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426, 564-6525. <http://tinyurl.com/homeenergyclass>