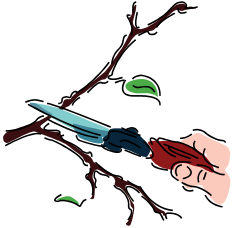


Master Gardener Newsletter

Tree Pruning

It is time to start pruning fruit trees and grapes. Pruning is best done on dormant trees and vines after the hard frosts are past and before the buds open. Pruning a dormant tree lessens the shock to plants and reduces the risk of spreading disease. Annual pruning increases fruit production and fruit size, makes a healthier stronger tree, and the job becomes more manageable. Here are a few tips to make the task less daunting. Keep tools sharp, oiled, and in good condition. Start by cutting out dead, broken, and diseased branches. Cut off suckers



that grow around the base of trees. Look for branches that cross and interfere with others and remove them. Consider removing low branches that interfere with travel around the tree and tall leaders that are growing too high. Lastly, work on shaping and thinning cuts. If cutting dormant branches less than one inch in diameter a wound compound does not need to be applied. When removing larger branches a dressing or latex paint can be applied to the wound. It is a good idea to disinfect tools when changing trees or after cutting diseased branches. A bleach solution of 8 parts water to 2 parts bleach solution is a cheap and easy disinfectant. The solution can be used as a dip for tools or put in a spray bottle to spray off the tools and tree wounds. Latex paint, white wash, or other light covering can be placed on tree trunks to protect trees from injury caused by daytime sun and night time freezing. For more information or questions about pruning and fruit tree care, consult David Drake at the Utah State University Extension Office 250 N. Main in Richfield, Phone: 893-0470 or use the internet at <http://extension.usu.edu/>.

Dormant Oil Spray

When the daytime temperatures get above 50 degrees and nights are no longer freezing every night, it is time for dormant oil spray. This spray is the first and best protection against fruit tree pests. The spray, also called horticultural oil, controls and prevents aphids and scale. For more fruit tree pest control information including weekly updates, visit <http://utahpests.usu.edu/ipm/htm/advisories/treefruit/>

Planting Grass and Pastures

It is time to plant grass and pastures. The majority of our grasses thrive on the warm days and cool nights of spring. It is also good to get new plantings established before the heat of summer arrives. For lawn planting resources, consider these extension publications: Plant A Lawn, If You Must - Some Tips at http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/factsheet/pub__9553950.htm and Growing Turf on Salt Affected Sites at <http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/HG-519.pdf>. For range and pasture planning resources, The Intermountain Planting Guide is an excellent reference. Copies are available in the office or on the web at http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/pub__7717229.pdf

Goodbye

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, I will be moving this spring to take a position with Texas A&M University as a Professor and Agronomy Specialist. I will take with me many fond memories of Sevier County and the numerous people I consider friends. It has been my pleasure serving you. Happy Trails.

Master Gardener

County Building Landscaping

As spring approaches, take a tour of the Sevier County Administration landscape. The design was done by the Master Gardeners and members of the Fremont Chapter of the Native Plant Society. There is a variety of native and low water use plants incorporated into the design.

Native Plant Society Calendars

The Fremont Chapter of the Native Plant Society published a 2009 calendar with amazing photos of local plants. A limited number of calendars are still available. Contact the Extension office or Wildland Nursery at 527-1234.