



## Coming Events

### Workshops and Demonstrations

- Thurs., Jan. 29, 10:00a  
*Spring Lawn Care*
- Thurs., Feb 12, 10:00a DEMO  
*Grapevine Pruning*
- Wed., Feb 18, 1:00p DEMO  
*Fruit Tree Pruning*
- Thurs., Feb 26, 10:00a  
*Small Fruit - Blueberries and Brambles*
- Thurs., Mar. 12, 10:00a  
*Composting*
- Thurs., Mar. 26, 10:00a  
*Pruning Woody Ornamentals*

All classes will begin in the auditorium at the Agriculture Building and are free unless otherwise indicated. Registration is required. Phone, visit or e-mail.

### Contact us :

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<http://alamance.ces.ncsu.edu/>

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## Mark Your Calendar



A new year is here and that means it is time to start up our Think Green Thursdays gardening class series again. The class topics are suggested by our horticulture advisory group, class participants and readers of this newsletter. When Chris and I first discussed offering these gardening classes, I wondered how we would come up with enough topics to fill the year's schedule. The problem we have now is how to get all the classes we want to do in one year.

We always try to add something new every year while many popular topics like pruning, vegetable gardening and lawn care are repeated. Adding new classes means something else gets left off. Some of the other regular classes like daylilies and rain barrels may be offered every other year. It is a challenge trying to get every class we want to present on the calendar. We have scheduled 19 TGT classes for 2015 that will consist of a variety of different subjects. Watch our website, <http://alamance.ces.ncsu.edu/> for news of all the upcoming classes.

# Coming Attractions



The first TGT class is scheduled for January 29 on the topic of spring lawn care for cool season lawns like tall fescue. January may seem a little early to talk about lawn care, but February and March are the best times to apply fertilizers and weed control to cool season lawns. I know you have seen the advertisements on TV for lawn fertilizers in April and May, but that recommendation is for more northern climates. Late spring lawn fertilization in Alamance County will encourage brown patch disease and that is something you just don't want. To learn more about proper lawn care, join us on January 29.



Grapevine pruning and a small fruits class are coming up in February. Muscadines, blueberries and blackberries are relatively easy to grow around here, but there are a few things you need to know. Some folks just plant them and forget them and wonder why they don't get any fruit. They are much easier to grow than tomatoes, but do require a little care.



Speaking of tomatoes, one of the new classes for 2015 is Totally Tomatoes. This is a class that has been requested for a couple of years and has finally made its way on to the schedule. Tomatoes are perhaps the most popular vegetable garden crop grown and deserve to get a little more attention. They definitely show up more in our plant lab than any other plant. The number of insect, disease and cultural problems that affect tomatoes can make growing them quite a challenge.

Most people (including myself) spend more money growing tomatoes than the fruit is worth, but the satisfaction of growing a nice tomato is worth the cost and effort. This class will provide in-depth instruction on variety selection, proper fertilization, staking, and pest management. We won't guarantee you will be successful growing tomatoes, but after this class at least you'll have a fighting chance.



If you have any questions about our Think Green Thursdays class schedule or any other gardening topic, please give me or Chris a call at (336) 570-6740



## January Garden Tips

**R**eview your garden journal from last year and lay out this year's garden design. Order plants and seeds, keeping an eye toward crop rotation to help prevent disease.

**H**ouseplants don't require much water or fertilizer this time of year, but they do require a bit of attention. Wipe dust from plants with smooth leaves with a damp cloth. Use a cosmetic brush to clean the hairy leaves of African violets and gloxinia.

**U**se a magnifying glass to inspect both sides of leaves of your houseplants. Look for signs of insects. Sticky residue may indicate the presence of mealy bugs or soft scale. Small, fine webs may indicate spider mite infestation. Call the Alamance County Cooperative Extension for information on the treatment of insect problems on houseplants.

**G**roup clean, insect-free houseplants together to increase humidity during these dry winter months. Mist the group periodically to further enhance air moisture.

**I**f your houseplants are on a windowsill, keep the leaves away from the glass, especially when the weather is very cold. The glass will conduct the cold and may burn tender leaves. Draw the drapes or shades at night for more protection

**C**heck the condition of stored bulbs and tubers of dahlias, tuberous begonias, caladiums and callas. Bulbs stored in warm, humid conditions are prone to rot. Discard any bulbs that feel soft or rotten.

**W**hen the weather turns frigid, remember the wildlife. Fresh, free-flowing water is essential to all animals, so keep birdbaths ice-free and filled up. Prevent ice from completely covering the surface of your water garden by floating a tennis or other soft rubber ball in the water.

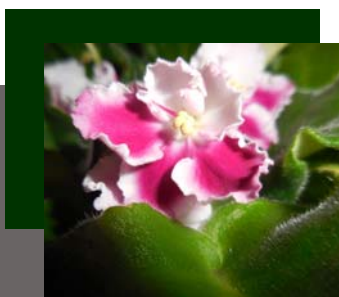
**S**ow seeds of cool-weather vegetables (broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, lettuce, onions and spinach) in containers for transplanting into the garden in March. Outdoors, sow edible-pod peas and garden peas beginning this

month. Continue to plant asparagus.

**T**oward the end of this month, apply a dormant horticultural oil to roses. Do this before bud-break to smother over-wintering insects and their eggs. Read the label carefully for instructions on use.

**Y**ou can spray your fruit trees with dormant oil at this time, too. This may help control scale insects and other pests.

**W**inter annual weeds can be a problem in your lawn and garden this time of year. Hand pulling or raking is the most effective method of removal right now. Resist the temptation to spray with herbicides unless temperatures turn mild for a few days (Above 50 degrees). Sprays just won't work when it's too cold. Remember to read and follow all label directions. Late next summer, you may consider applying a pre-emergence herbicide to prevent those winter annual weeds. Of course, if you are overseeding your lawn, this will also prevent germination of lawn grass seed.



## *Arbor Gate Plant of the Month*



### Rosemary

### *Rosmarinus officinalis*

This woody, perennial herb with fragrant, evergreen, needle-like leaves and white, pink, purple, or blue flowers, is native to the Mediterranean region. It, like many other herbs, is a member of the mint family.

Given good drainage and plenty of sun, Rosemary will not only make an excellent addition to your grilled meats and stews, but also to your mixed shrub/perennial border

The plant growing at Arbor Gate is “Salem”, a robust cultivar that stands up to our winters, even tolerating a clay soil and achieves a height of about 2-1/2 feet by about 5 feet wide. Rosemary does not transplant well, so rather than move it, purchase a new plant.

Much lore surrounds this historic plant; read some here:  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosemary>

Read about its care here:  
<http://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/rosmarinus-officinalis/>

