

GARDENING GOES ONLINE WITH NEW TOOLS FROM UF/IFAS

GAINESVILLE, Fla. – These days, helpful gardening tools extend beyond just pruning shears, rakes and shovels.

In an effort to help Florida gardeners, the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) recently launched two new online gardening tools – a Florida gardening calendar and a guide to UF/IFAS demonstration gardens around the state. Both are available through the UF/IFAS Web site SolutionsForYourLife.com.

The online calendar provides gardeners across the state with a monthly guide of what to plant and do in their gardens, all based on UF/IFAS research and expertise. It was developed in response to common gardening-related questions that county Extension agents receive.

The calendar is available in three editions—North Florida, Central Florida and South Florida—and provides visitors with links to useful UF/IFAS Web sites and related publications.

“A lot of people don't know what to do when,” said Sydney Park Brown, Extension specialist in consumer horticulture with UF/IFAS. “Each calendar is different and is customized for that particular area. Plus it also links them to more information on the topic or task.”

The other new online gardening tool is a guide to the UF/IFAS-affiliated demonstration gardens that are found throughout the state. Floridians can come to these gardens to relax, to learn more about gardening, and even to get their hands dirty during hands-on demonstrations.

“I think anybody that's interested in plants loves to go to gardens,” said Brown. “And the great thing about the demonstration gardens is that everything is usually labeled and they offer practical, Florida-friendly landscape tips.”

Best of all, most of the UF/IFAS Extension gardens are open year-round and are free to the public.

“It's nice to know you've got these resources in your backyard,” Brown said.

On the Web:

http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/types_of_gardens/demo_gardens.html

http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/calendar/

About UF/IFAS Environmental Horticulture

UF/IFAS Environmental Horticulture strives to enhance people's lives through the proper selection, propagation, growth, placement, management and use of plants in interior and exterior surroundings. The Environmental Horticulture department consists of eight teaching/research locations and 67 extension locations. For more information about environmental horticulture, visit <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu>.