

Dig In!

Canyon County Horticulture News for Master Gardeners & Friends

Spring/Summer 2016 Volume IX Issue 1 <http://extension.uidaho.edu/canyon>

Meet our New Educator!

New Horticulture Educator in Canyon County

BY RICH GUGGENHEIM



Hello and thank you to everyone who has welcomed me into your community. For those who have not yet met me, I look forward to meeting and working with you!

For those who do not know me yet, my name is Rich, and I am the

new Horticulture Extension Educator for the University of Idaho in Canyon County. I started in January and am excited to be here. Prior to working here, I worked in Colorado as a 4-H/ Horticulture Extension Coordinator. It was a fun job that kept me very busy and a job where I learned a lot. While I was there I had the opportunity to work with youth and adults in a variety of extension programs including 4-H and the Master Gardener programs. I also enjoyed having a weekly radio program and writing for the newspapers.

Prior to that, I attended Colorado State University where I earned my master's degree in Human Resource Studies. While I was there I worked in the trial gardens, taught Horticulture courses and worked with the Master Gardeners.

Before I attended grad school, I worked at Walt Disney World as a horticulturalist.

I still am an avid Disney fan, and go back each spring for the EPCOT International Flower and Garden Festival. Before I worked for Disney, I attended Brigham Young University - Idaho where I earned a bachelor's degree in horticulture. I look forward to working with you and if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to stop in or email me at richg@uidaho.edu.

Pest Alert Network

Sign up for free alerts on when pests need to be controlled

BY DIAN ROBERSON
Canyon County Horticulture Program Assistant

We all have those garden pests that need our attention every year. Maybe it is the Codling Moth in your Apples or when that first frost will appear in the fall.



If you are like me, you forget when to spray and what to spray from year to year. Wouldn't it be nice if someone would just send you an e-mail or a text that says "Hey! It's time to spray for Codling Moth!" or "Cover your tomatoes. You might get frost tonight!"?

(Cont'd on the next page)

Well, for many years, this service has been available to the agricultural community throughout Idaho in the form of the Pacific Northwest Pest Alert Network. Over the last year, the website has been overhauled and improved to include homeowners! Now you can go to www.pnwpestalert.net and sign up as a homeowner to receive local lawn & garden information and pest alerts. They will be sent FREE directly to your phone or email! It is as easy as that! These alerts will be generated by a dedicated group of Canyon County Master Gardeners in cooperation with University of Idaho Extension Educators from all over the state. Master Gardeners will be scouting tirelessly to spot anything in the landscape that might be of interest to you and report it on the Pest Alert Network to you. You can be involved as a Citizen Scientist. If you notice something arise in your area that you think is alert worthy, we would like to know! You can e-mail us at ccmg@uidaho.edu and we will get the word out with research based information on the subject.



CALENDAR

Spring/Summer Calendar 2016

April

30 **Nampa Farmers Market Opens.** It is located at the Longbranch parking lot at Front and 13th. The market is there on every Saturday from 9am-1pm through October. For more information, visit their website at www.nampafarmersmarket.com.

May

2 **Canyon County Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Clinic** begins at the Extension Office in Caldwell. Plant Clinics are open every Monday and Wednesday afternoon from 1pm-4pm and on Friday mornings from 9am-noon through September.

11 **Caldwell Farmers Market Opens.** It is located on Arthur Street between Kimball and 7th Avenue. The market is there every Wednesday from 3pm-7pm. For more information, visit their website at www.caldwellidfarmersmarket.com.

June

Stop by and visit our beautiful, blooming demonstration garden in West Park (Lone Star and Midland) in Nampa this summer. Always open, always free.

30 **Regional Master Gardener Conference** in Rexburg, ID

July

28-31 **Canyon County Fair**, Caldwell

August

19-28 **Western Idaho Fair**, Boise

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Published two times annually in print and online by University of Idaho Extension in Canyon County:

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Idaho Sustainable Land Management

SAMANTHA GRAF, M.S.
Canyon County Extension Educator - Livestock

What does the word “tree” trigger in your mind? Drinking lemonade on a hot summer’s day under a tree in the cool shade? Do you think about trees and shrubs helping you conserve energy and water? How about using trees and shrubs to help you attract wildlife?

Canyon County Extension is offering a short-course this fall to learn more about these topics.

The “Idaho Sustainable Land Management” program will focus on designing windbreaks, attractive and functional landscaping for conservation endeavors, as well as landscaping to attract wildlife and pollinators to your property.

Additionally, it will cover how introducing trees and shrubs into your landscape can aid in conservation efforts, and getting your small acreage ready for your conservation efforts. Attendees can purchase an optional soil test prior to the course beginning to aid in determining soil preparation needs.

The course will be held from 10am to 3pm on Saturday, September 24th and Saturday, October 1st at the Canyon County Extension Office. The cost for this course is \$20 per person and pre-registration is required. Please contact the Canyon County Extension Office to RSVP no later than Friday, September 16th.

Idaho Seedling Sale

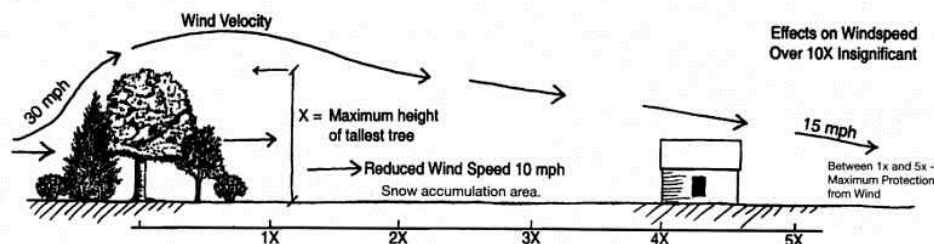
SAMANTHA GRAF, M.S.
Canyon County Extension Educator - Livestock

The Idaho Sustainable Land Management short-course will coincide with the Canyon County seedling tree sale. Numerous varieties of seedling trees, shrubs, perennials and grasses recommended for Southwestern Idaho will be available for purchase. A list of available varieties and pricing will be available from the Canyon County Extension Office in September, 2016. Pre-orders are highly recommended to ensure the availability of variety, size and pricing. Seedlings will be available for pick up in spring of 2017.

Attending the Idaho Sustainable Land Management course is recommended for those purchasing seedlings.

For more information contact Rich Guggenheim at the Canyon County Extension Office at 459-6003

Conservation Plantings Provide Many Benefits An Example of the Effects of a Windbreak on Wind Speed.



Pinteresting Garden you have there!

What I learned about gardening off social media, and the way it underscored the importance of research based gardening information!

BY RICH GUGGENHEIM

How many of you have checked out the gardening section of Pinterest? I'll admit I use Pinterest, and I am a guy. There are some really great ideas I have gotten off there.

However, Pinterest is plumb full of old wives tales on how to do, well, just about anything. I want to tackle just a few of the best gardening things I have seen there, and remind readers of the importance of getting your information from a known, reputable source. Your local Land Grant University provides you with research based solutions for your life. The University of Idaho Extension is your "go to" source for answers about gardening in Idaho.

So, here is a list of the top 5 wives tales I see on Pinterest, which you should avoid:

1. Use Epsom salts for a bumper tomato crop.

While this may sound like a good idea, the simple fact of the matter is any time you begin a gardening project



you should start with a soil test. It is also a good idea to have your soil tested every few years just so that you know what is going on and what, if any, amendments may be needed. Your Extension office can provide you with information about

performing a soil test. As a general rule Epsom Salts, Magnesium Sulfate, are not needed in Idaho soils

because our soils generally have adequate amounts of Magnesium and due to our soil's pH, is readily available to be taken up by our plants.

2. Adding sugar or baking soda to your garden's soil makes your strawberries sweeter.



The sweetness of your fruit or veggies is not determined by the amount of sugar in the soil. Plants do not acquire their sweetness from the soil. If you really want sweeter fruits, add the sugar to them in the kitchen.

3. Add eggshells.

I have seen many uses for eggshells in the garden. They are purported to keep slugs and snails away, add



calcium to your soil, keep rabbits from eating your plants and more. Again, the best place to start is with a soil test. Usually, most Idaho soils have adequate levels of calcium. To keep slugs, and snails away, you may want to consider using diatomaceous earth. I've tried the eggshells to keep rabbits away, with little to no luck. They will eat what they want, and eggshells really aren't going to stop them. If you choose to use eggshells in your garden, the best thing to do is crush them up and place them in your compost bin.

4. Pennies or copper which repels slugs and snails.

If I had a penny for every time I saw this...



Taking a moment to think about this, yeah, it does work to a limited degree. But if it actually does effectively repel slugs and snails, all you are going to do is repel the slugs and

snails from your collection of pennies and onto your collection of peonies. Try using copper sulfate or beer as an alternative. I hear slugs really like Miller.

5. Adding sand to help loosen up clay soils.

This one is perhaps my all time favorite. Have you ever made concrete?

If you want to build soil tilth, add organic matter. Organic matter aids in soil drainage, improves the nutrient holding capacity and helps break up heavy clay soils.



So while you may be prone to seeing these wonderful things that tell you how easily you can have amazing gardens on Pinterest, the reality is that any garden worth having is going to require work. If you want to find out what shortcuts you can take and actually do work in your area, the best place to start would be from a trusted, reliable source. The local Extension Office is your source for reliable and accurate information, and, we are on social media too!

Lumpy Lawns?

Worms may be to blame.

BY RICH GUGGENHEIM

Lumpy lawns can be caused by worms. Worms are great decomposers of organic matter, which increases



the availability of nutrients to your plants. The worms in your soil are also great at de-compacting your clayey.

They are efficient little creatures so if you have

worms, aside from lumpy lawns, you probably also have good soil tilth too! (Meaning it has good water and air penetration.)

Despite all the good they do for your soil, they can be a nuisance because of the lumpy lawn situation they cause. The lumps are caused by the tunneling action and by the castings (poop) worms cast upon the soil surface.

The bad news is for those who do not like worms making their lawns lumpy. There really isn't much you can do to effectively control worms. You can try reducing water, and you can use a roller drum, but these have their drawbacks as well.



Are You Ready For Irrigation Season?

BY LINDA PHILLIPS
University of Idaho Advanced Master Gardener

Spring is here! I have been visualizing and planning my garden and yard. One thing I must remember to plan for is irrigation. In Canyon County, on the average we only get 1/4" of rain during the summer months when most of our plants are growing fast and producing fruit. That's why we need to be efficient in our irrigation.

One of the most common issues we see in Plant Clinic is sick or dead plants from improper watering. No matter what type of irrigation system you are using, Irrigation Water Management (IWM) will help you attain the most benefit from your water resource. Your soil type and condition, your crop's rooting depth and E_T (how much water the plant uses per day) will help you determine how often and how long you should irrigate.

Your soil type (or the percentage of sand, silt and clay in your soil) will determine how much water your soil can hold (water holding capacity) and how fast the water will soak in (infiltration rate). These factors help determine how often and for how long you irrigate. Sandy soils will take in water faster than a clay soil, but sandy soils cannot hold as much water as clay soils. For example, a fine sandy soil can only hold about 0.5 inches of water/foot of soil and a clay soil can hold about 2 inches of water/foot of soil. Therefore, you would not want to apply water for as long on the sandy soil as the clay soil for an irrigation.

The condition of the soil can also affect how much water it can hold. The higher the organic matter in the soil the more water the soil will hold. Compaction layers will also affect your irrigation. If you have compaction layers that effectively lessen your rooting depth, you will have to irrigate for a shorter period and more often.

Crops have different rooting depths (see chart at right). The chart shows to what depth roots of mature crops will extract soil water from a uniform well drained soil. You will want to get water to this depth, but you do not

want water to 10 feet on strawberries if roots only go down 2 feet.

Another thing you would want to know is the rate which your plant is using water. This is called E_T . Average E_T values for the Treasure Valley range from .25 to .35 inches/day.

Crop Rooting Depths	
Crop	Depth (Ft)
Berries, Cane	4-5
Corn, sweet	2-3
Fruit & Nut Trees	4-5
Grapes	5
Lawn/Sod	1-2
Melons, Squash & Pumpkins	3-4
Most Vegetables	2-3
Shrubs/Trees <10 ft tall	2-3+
Shrubs/Trees >25 ft tall	5+
Strawberries	1-2

Here's an example for grapes, if you have a silt loam soil, which will hold 2 inches water/foot of soil and the rooting depth for grapes is 5 feet, you will have 10 inches of water in the root zone. Most plants can only use 50% (or half) of the water available, so you can use 5 inches of the water. Grapes' E_T value is .33 inches/day. Taking the water available and dividing by E_T you know how often to irrigate. (5 inches water/.33 inches per day = 15 days)

Knowing this information will let you apply the right amount of water at the right time.

Want to Learn More? Check out these publications:

-CIS 1098 Watering Home Lawns and Landscapes <http://irrigation.wsu.edu/Content/Fact-Sheets/CIS1098.pdf>

-CIS 1157 Watering Home Lawns: How Much and How Often www.cals.uidaho.edu/edcomm/pdf/CIS/CIS1157.pdf.

-Idaho NRCS FactSheet: Lawn Irrigation Guide: An Easy Way to Save Water (Has instructions on determining how much water you sprinklers are putting out) www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs144p2_044055.pdf.

Tuna Can Sprinkler Calibration

SAMANTHA GRAF, M.S.
Canyon County Extension Educator - Livestock

As we begin our irrigation season, many of us are curious how much and how often we should be watering our pastures to attain optimal growth. However, before you can answer this question you need to know how much water your sprinklers are actually putting out.

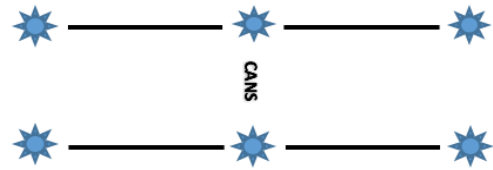
The first step is to determine which type of sprinkler system you have in your pasture. Is it a solid-set system, where the delivery pipes are buried under the ground and the sprinkler heads rise above the ground surface? Is your sprinkler system mobile, such as wheel or hand lines, traveling large gun-type, or an end-tow system (something similar to a K-line style)?

The steps to calibrate actual sprinkler application rate vary slightly depending on which irrigation system you have in place. For this scenario we are going to use a solid-set sprinkler system to determine real application rate in inches applied per hour.

So, what is the easiest way to find out how many inches per hour your sprinkler system really delivers? It's actually pretty simple, but you do have to complete some math.

The supplies you will need include: eight (8) straight-sided cans of equal size and height such as used and clean tuna-fish cans; one large can to pour all the water collected into such as a used, clean soup can; stopwatch or timer; ruler or tape measure; calculator; pencil and paper.

Place your eight (8) tuna-fish cans between two sprinklers as shown below, and turn on your sprinklers for 45 minutes.



When the 45 minutes is up, take the water from each tuna-fish can and pour it into the large soup-type can. Measure the total amount of water in the large can with your ruler.

Now comes the math.

Let's use 2.5 inches total in the large can as an example.

$$\begin{aligned} &2.5 \text{ inches (total inches)} \div 8 \text{ cans} \\ &(\text{number of cans}) = 0.313 \text{ inches per can} \end{aligned}$$

We also need to know our time frame to help us complete the calculation.

$$\begin{aligned} &45 \text{ minutes (sprinkler run time)} \div 60 \\ &\text{minutes per hour} = 0.75 \text{ hours (time measured)} \end{aligned}$$

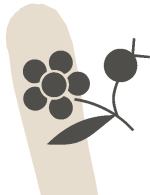
Now we can figure the actual sprinkler application rate in inches per hour.

$$\begin{aligned} &0.313 \text{ inches (inches per can)} \div 0.75 \\ &\text{hours (time measured)} = 0.417 \text{ inches per hour} \end{aligned}$$

If you need to know how long to run your sprinklers to deliver a set amount of water the formula is below.

$$\begin{aligned} &2 \text{ inches (desired application amount)} \div \\ &0.417 \text{ inches per hour} = 4.79 \text{ hours} \end{aligned}$$

During your irrigation cycle, be sure to monitor run-off. You may have to stop irrigating for a while to allow for the water to seep into the soil, and then begin irrigating again until the desired application amount has been achieved



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This \$20 tip could save you hundreds on lawn care!

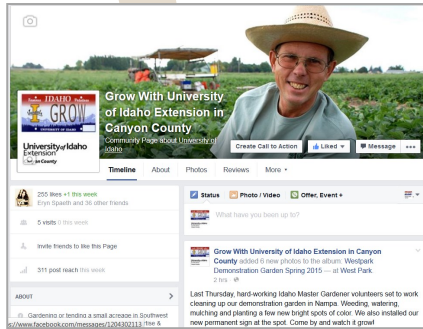
BY RICH GUGGENHEIM

Lawn aeration is an inexpensive way to reduce soil compaction and thatch, increase oxygen and water penetration in the soil and improve overall lawn health. When done in the spring and fall, aerating your lawn, increases rooting depth; reducing the need for water, fertilizer, and other chemicals to be applied to you lawn as it promotes a healthier lawn which is more resistant to disease and pest.

Join our "growing" Conversation!



<http://www.facebook.com/UIExtGrowVandals>



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