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News Release
Contact: Chickasaw County Extension Office, 641-394-2174

Annual Horticulture Chautauqua Scheduled for March 9

CALMAR -- March is the month that most gardeners come out of hibernation. Pruning, raking, tilling and clean-up will start in earnest. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach can help you ease into the bustle and have some fun by coming to the 10th Annual Horticulture Chautauqua in Calmar.

The Chautauqua was popular 100 years ago when people attended lectures for current information. Today, everything is on the internet, but it is still hard to beat a real person who can answer your questions!

The Northeast Iowa Horticulture Chautauqua will be held on Saturday, March 9 from 9 am to 4 pm at the NE Iowa Dairy Center in Calmar. Twelve presentations will be offered covering a wide variety of topics. Participants will choose four sessions to attend that day.

The topics are diverse. Learn about plant care by attending a session on succulent plants, the enchanting world of mini-hostas, and new perennials for 2013. Learn about garden projects featuring dwarf conifers, picture frame planters, and raised bed gardening. Enjoy your bounty learning container gardening and the benefits of local foods to our economy, health and taste-buds. Enjoy a session on garden art using mosaics and other recycled items or learn how to do flower pounding on cardstock, or fabric, for unique art from your garden. Learn how to design, plant and maintain your landscape. All sessions feature local experts and resources.

Advanced registration is due March 1 and includes lunch. The program is coordinated by the Iowa State University Extension Consumer Horticulture Program in northeast Iowa.

More information about the Chautauqua is available from your local ISU Extension office or online at www.extension.iastate.edu/chickasaw.

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News Release
Contact: Jason Fischbach at 715-373-6104 ext 5.
Upper Midwest Hazelnut Conference to Be Held March 1 & 2

The Annual Upper Midwest Hazelnut Growers Conference will be held March 1 and 2 in Eau Claire, WI at the Florian Gardens event center. The conference is co-sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Extension and the University of Minnesota. The conference will provide research-based information to prospective, beginning, and experienced Midwest hazelnut growers on a wide variety of topics.

Jason Fischbach, the UW-Extension Agriculture Agent in Bayfield County is the organizer of this year’s conference. According to Fischbach: “Hazelnuts are an emerging crop for the Upper Midwest with potential to provide significant economic returns to growers while improving soil and water quality on our agricultural lands. The annual hazelnut conference is a great opportunity to learn about this new crop and the development efforts underway across the United States.”

As in previous years, the goal of the 2013 Conference is to provide information on how to grow, harvest, and sell hazelnuts along with updates on the many exciting hazelnut research and development projects taking place in the Upper Midwest and beyond. The focus on Friday, March 1 is hazelnut production. The day is intended for experienced, beginning, or aspiring growers. The day will feature presentations from hazelnut growers and researchers and cover enterprise budgeting, planting, management, harvesting, processing, and marketing. Can you grow hazelnuts in the Upper Midwest? Is there a market? Attend the Friday session and you’ll find out!

The focus on Saturday, March 2 is research and development. The day will feature researchers from the Upper Midwest Hazelnut Development Initiative, the Hazelnut Research Consortium, and the University of Guelph. In addition, graduate students working with hazelnuts will have the opportunity to share their research. This is your best opportunity to learn more about what’s happening with hazelnuts.

A full conference agenda and registration form can be found at http://www.midwesthazelnuts.org/ or by calling Jason Fischbach at 715-373-6104 ext 5. Pre-registration is requested by Friday, February 22.

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News Release
Contact: Jesse Randall, ISU Extension Forestry, 515-294-1168, randallj@iastate.edu

Annual Forest Stewardship Conference is March 9

The 2013 Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference is Saturday, March 9 at Sinsinawa Mound Center, Sinsinawa, Wis. This is the nineteenth year for the conference, which annually draws 500 woodland landowners from Wisconsin, Illinois and Iowa.

According to Jesse Randall, Iowa State University Extension Forester, "It has become one of the largest private woodland owner conferences in the nation. The conference regularly fills to capacity, so those interested in participating are encouraged to register early to secure their place and receive the 'Early Bird' registration discount.”

More than 25 presentations will cover a wide range of topics focusing on private woodland owners, including, timber marketing in today’s economy, erosion control in your woodlands, herbicides to use in woodlands, shelterwood harvesting techniques, introductory tree pruning, tree ID, common tree diseases and pests and how to treat them, chronic wasting disease updates, selecting and growing grapes in the Midwest, and crop tree release techniques to maximize tree growth.

Online registration is available and can be found at the following web address http://extension.illinois.edu/go/tristateforest. Participants will have the opportunity to interact with state and federal forest managers, as well as to see the most recent advances in forestry technology at the vendors fair.

“This year, there will be a two-hour fly tying clinic taught by Allen Pattillo and a two-hour fruit tree grafting workshop,” Randall said. “Enrollment for both the fly tying clinic and the fruit tree grafting workshop will be limited
Participants in these workshops will be able to take home the introductory fly tying kit and/or 5 grafted apple trees on certified rootstocks but the workshops do have an additional fee.

Additional conference information is available online at www.extension.iastate.edu/forestry, including the conference takes, presentation info, brochure and registration materials. The adult registration fee is $50 per person. The fee includes a continental breakfast, buffet luncheon, refreshments, resource packet and handouts.

The deadline to mail registrations is Feb. 22. Advance registration is required; no walk-in registrations on the day of the conference will be allowed. Participation is limited to 550; so early registration is encouraged and will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration materials will be posted at http://www.forestry.iastate.edu.

The conference is presented in partnership with the Cooperative Extension Services at Iowa State University and University of Illinois; the Department of Natural Resources from each of the three states; the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Iowa State University; and the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The Sinsinawa Mound Center is located in Wisconsin, a few miles east of Dubuque, Iowa. For more information, contact Jesse Randall at 515-294-1168 or send email to randallj@iastate.edu.

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News Release
Contact: Carole Yates, Co-Facilitator, (319) 273-7599, carole.yates@uni.edu

Program Provides Grants to Energy-Saving Farmers

Farmers with small to mid-sized operations may apply for grants to incorporate energy efficiency, energy conservation, and renewable energy measures into their farms.

Grants of up to $2,000 are offered through the Farm Energy Working Group at the Center for Energy & Environmental Education which is located at the University of Northern Iowa. The money for the grant comes from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, a research and education based at center at Iowa State University.

The grant funding can pay for the farmer's time for installation, administration, and report writing. Grants cannot cover equipment purchases.

Past projects have included a robotic milking machine in Monona, wind and solar projects, and biogas heaters and generators. For more information, visit http://www.uni.edu/ceee/energy/farm-energy-working-group. The deadline for application is Feb. 28.

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News Release
Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, Communications Coordinator, 563-794-0599, wiemer@iastate.edu

ISU Extension Hosts Food Safety and Postharvest Handling Workshop

How fresh produce is handled after harvest has a critical impact on its shelf life, quality and safety. Farmers interested in learning about tools, techniques and philosophies for proper handling of their specialty crops are invited to attend a postharvest handling and food safety workshop hosted by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach on March 8.
The free workshop will feature Atina Diffley, a former co-owner of Gardens of Eagan and a Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service board member. Diffley will draw on her years of experience in vegetable production and marketing to provide growers with useful, practical and profit-making guidance on how to achieve the highest quality of sale.

The workshop will be hosted live on the ISU campus in Ames and broadcast to 12 locations throughout Iowa on March 8 from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Northeast Iowa producers may view the presentation at several locations: the NE Iowa Dairy Foundation Center in Calmar, or the ISU Extension offices in Buchanan or Dubuque counties.

Each grower will receive a free copy of the third edition of the Wholesale Success: A Farmers Guide to Food Safety, Postharvest Handling, Packing and Selling Produce manual, edited by FamilyFarmed.org President Jim Slama and farmer Atina Diffley. The recently revised, 312 page book is the definitive training source on selling into wholesale markets. It includes topics such as: Calculating Return on Investment; Cleaning, Drying, and Curing Produce; Traceability; Packing Shed Design; and Maintaining the Cold Chain.

Wholesale Success builds the capacity of farmers to meet the burgeoning demand for locally/regionally grown fruits and vegetables. Adopting best practices in food safety, postharvest handling, packing, and business management will help farmers be more efficient and profitable. It will also give buyers an incentive to increase their purchases of locally grown food.

Registration is required. To register, visit http://bit.ly/T6mCNU or call Teresa Wiemerslage, ISU Extension at 563-794-0599 to reserve a spot and book.

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