



Spring/Summer Weed Control

Control of Summer annual weeds begins towards the end of Winter and the beginning of Spring. Preemergence herbicides should be applied in late-February to early March to prevent these annual Summer weeds from becoming an issue. To be effective, they must be applied before weed seed germination. These herbicides require 0.25 to 0.5 inches of rainfall or irrigation for activation so try to time the application within a day or two or expected rainfall, but not a torrential downpour where all of the product ends up being washed away. All of the herbicides in this list can be used on established, southern turfgrasses. **READ, and FOLLOW, THE LABEL completely** to make sure you can use it in your situation.

A partial list of common (active ingredient) and trade names for Pre-emergent Weed Control in Home Lawns by Homeowners can be found below. Just as with an application of fertilizer, applying in two different directions that total the labeled rate will provide a more consistent barrier to emerging weeds rather than an application in one single direction. Depending upon label directions and application restrictions for the particular product you purchase, reapplication may be beneficial in 6-8 weeks. It is not recommended you use a product that contains a fertilizer carrier at this time as the turf is not actively growing during dormancy and nutrients will only be leached out and wasted. Avoid applications of any fertilizer until you have mowed your actual turfgrass 3 times. Do not apply to areas that have standing water.

Common Name – Trade Name (partial list)

1. dithiopyr - Sta-Green Crab Ex; Green Light Crabgrass Preventer; Vigoro Preemergent Crabgrass and Weed Preventer
2. pendimethalin - Scotts Halts Crabgrass Preventer
3. oryzalin - Southern Ag. Surflan A.S.
4. isoxaben - Portrait Broadleaf Weed Preventer
5. benefin + oryzalin - Green Light Amaze Grass and Weed Preventer; XL 2G
6. benefin + trifluralin - Hi-Yield Crabgrass Preventer; Southern Ag. Team 2 G
7. corn gluten meal - Concern All Natural Weed Pre-venter Plus; Nature's Guide Corn Gluten Meal



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Use Label Information to Select Tomatoes

Tomatoes are in almost everyone's garden and would easily be voted the No. 1 vegetable.

However, as much as we love to grow tomatoes, we must admit that it's not always easy to do it successfully.

Tomatoes need full sun and deep, well-drained soil. They require phosphorous, nitrogen, potash and minor elements. And because of our naturally acidic soil, you may need to add lime.

There are hundreds of tomato cultivars available, categorized by plant growth habits and fruit types. When looking at varieties, Mississippi gardeners may choose how long before they want their fruit to ripen.

Early tomatoes like Early Girl, Bush Early Girl, Juliet, Celebrity and Super Sweet 100 ripen in 50 to 65 days from transplanting. Midseason tomatoes like Better Boy, Big Boy, Big Beef, Cherokee Purple and Brandywine ripen from 66 to 80 days from transplanting, and late-season tomatoes like Beefsteak and German Pink require more than 80 days to ripen.

A more important decision may be choosing disease-resistant varieties.

When you look at tomato selections, you may notice the letters V, F, N or TMV on the labels. These letters mean the plant is genetically tolerant of verticillium wilt, V; fusarium wilt, F; nematodes, N; and tobacco mosaic virus, TMV.

Selecting a plant with the most disease resistance increases your chance for success.

Other words you'll find on the tomato label are "determinate" and "indeterminate," and you need to know what these mean so you can select the growth habit best suited to your use.

Indeterminate tomato plants continue to grow and produce for an extended season. Fruit production may continue until the first frost.

Most heirloom tomato cultivars have an indeterminate growth habit. The continuous growth produces many main stems all capable of flowering and producing fruit. Because of this abundant, lush growth, it is best to prune and stake these tomatoes.

Determinate tomato plants grow to a certain size, set fruit and then decline in a short period of time. Most early-ripening tomato cultivars are determinate and will not produce tomatoes throughout the summer.

Determinate tomatoes are relatively compact and produce a full, bushy plant. Their main harvest is concentrated into a few weeks. This may be ideal for those who want to can or preserve the fresh tomato harvest or for those like myself who travel a lot during the late summer.

Semi-determinate is a third type of tomato plant that makes a bushy plant and sets fruit and ripens over a longer period of time than a normal determinate. An example is Celebrity tomato, one of my favorites, and an All-America Selection award.

Tomatoes are ideal for growing in containers, so there is no need to fret if you don't have a garden plot. Choose a container that is at least a foot deep with drainage holes at the bottom.

When container gardening, use a water-soluble fertilizer about every two weeks. You will more than likely be watering multiple times a week during the summer.



Garden Calendar: March

Planting

- Plant new roses.
- Broad-leaved Evergreens such as Magnolia and Holly can be set out at this time.
- Plant cold weather annuals: Sweet William, English Daisies, Pansies, and Calendulas.
- Divide Mondo Grass and Liriope. Divide Cannas, Chrysanthemums, Coreopsis, Phlox, and Obedient Plant.
- Start seeds for Tomatoes, Bell Peppers, and Eggplant. Set out Thyme, Lemon Balm, Oregano, Chives, Sage, and Winter Savory.
- Sow seeds of Johnny Jump-ups, Sweet Peas, Larkspur, Forget-me-nots, and Baby Blue Eyes.
- Flowering shrubs may be moved at this time. Larger shrubs should be moved with a ball of dirt and smaller shrubs may be moved bare-rooted.
- This is the best month to move Crape myrtles.
- Lawns may be sodded at this time. Plant Gladiolus throughout this month for continuous bloom. Plant Hostas.
- Caladiums can be started in outdoor containers as soon as weather warms.



Fertilizing

- Fertilize all the garden except acid-loving plants.
- Topdress Camellias with azalea-camellia fertilizer.
- Lime Peonies, Clematis, and Boxwoods.



Pest Control

- Spray new rose leaves for black spot weekly.

Pruning

- Prune roses at this time. Remove dead and weak canes. Properly dispose of clippings.
- Prune Crape Myrtles and Altheas.
- Prune evergreens for shape and size as early in the month as possible.
- Cut English Ivy back very hard. It will come back very nicely in the spring.
- Trim Mondo Grass and Liriope with lawn mower set on highest setting (6 inches). Dispose of trimmings.

Mulch

- Replenish mulch around Azaleas and Camellias.

Miscellaneous

- Dispose of fallen Camellia blossoms to prevent blight.
- Rake up seed hulls from under bird feeders. They will smother new growth.
- Remove dead flowers from Tulips and Daffodils. Do not cut foliage before it turns yellow and dies.



In Bloom

Bluebells, Chionodoxa, Daffodil, Hyacinth, early Iris, Pansies, Violet, Carolina Jasmine, Azaleas, Camellias, Forsythia, Pearl Bush, Photinia, Flowering Quince, Spirea, flowering fruit trees (Crabapple, Cherry, Pear, and Peach), Oriental Magnolia, and Redbud.



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Choose Annual & Perennial Flowers for Your Landscape

Now may a good time to begin planning for your landscape needs. I'll admit that I'm often last minute on deciding what I want to plant during the year, but early planning will save you a lot of time when that time arrives. What you choose depends on your garden objectives. If your thinking you want to add color to an area, annual and/or perennial flowers will be a great choice and there are lots of great options to choose from.

Annual plants provide color throughout the season. They sprout from seed, then flower, set seed, and die within one season. Annual plants include numerous selections of colors, leaf shapes, and uses throughout your landscape. They can be used as borders such as Begonia, Alyssum, Marigold (dwarf), and Verbena; for their foliage such as Amaranth, Caladium, Dusty Miller, and Joseph's Coat; while others can be used in containers or hanging baskets such as Geranium, Petunia, Marigold, and Periwinkle. Including some previously listed, many annuals may be used for a variety of uses such as Coleus. I must admit, I'm a big fan of Coleus. Coleus comes in a variety of leaf textures, shapes, and colors. They can be used in many landscape settings and, like many other herbaceous plants, they're easy to propagate vegetatively so you can fill-in empty areas as needed.



A mixture of annuals and perennials adds interest to the landscape.



Both annuals and perennials come in a variety of colors, textures, and shapes.

Perennial plants return year after year. They fit into many landscapes and can be used as borders, accents, or strong focal points. The foliage of many perennials is attractive during nonflowering seasons as well. Many gardeners include flowering bulbs and ornamental grasses in this category. Perennials need less maintenance, less water, and fewer pesticides than annuals. Like annuals, many perennials are effective in mass when they are in bloom such as Chrysanthemum, Salvia, and Daylily. Because of their seasonality, perennials are better viewed as small accents of color and texture for other plants. Many perennials are short bloomers and are best mixed with plants that bloom at different times of the year or included with other landscape plants, including annuals, as part of an overall design.

Other perennial plants, such as ferns and monkey grass, are noted more for their foliage rather than flowers. These may include Holly ferns, Leather ferns, or Southern Maidenhair. Ferns prefer more shaded areas as does Hostas. Inclusion of these plants adds interest and creates seasonal color or texture in the landscape.

Both annual and perennial plants are very versatile in the landscape and have a range of beautiful flowers and foliage.

Within each, there are numerous plants that are heat and cold tolerant. Some like dry soils while others prefer moist or wet soils. While most need sunlight, there are many that like part sun or shade. Just know there are a number of annual and perennial plants that fit your landscaping needs. For more information or to see a list of many other annual and perennial plants including descriptions, refer to Publication No. 1826: *Annual & Perennial Flowers for Mississippi Gardens*.



Coleus is an annual with such a variety of colors and textures that they look good in a bed by themselves.



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Growing Greenhouse Tomatoes

With the right technique, growing tomatoes in the greenhouse can be a rewarding experience. Today I am going to provide an overview of how to cultivate greenhouse tomatoes.

There are two primary cropping systems for greenhouse tomato production. One option is to produce a single crop by setting plants around mid-September and growing them until mid- to late June. In Mississippi a two-crop system is preferred instead. With a two-crop system both a spring crop and a fall crop are grown. For the fall crop, termination should be close to the end of December. For the spring crop, termination should be around mid- to late June when the temperature increase causes production decline.



The optimal relative humidity for growing greenhouse tomatoes is 60-70 percent, though this is often unobtainable in Mississippi. The optimum temperature range is 70 to 82 °F during the day and 62 to 64 °F at night. Nutrient deficiencies can develop below 60 °F as plants are unable to absorb some elements at cool temperatures. Do your best to avoid temperatures above 90 °F. Temperatures in the high nineties and above promote fruit splitting and other fruit quality problems. Another issue with an elevated greenhouse temperature is the risk of leaf damage. Leaves lose more water to the atmosphere as their temperature increases. As long as there is adequate water available, water loss is normally compensated by an increase in water absorption by the roots. As the temperature reaches the upper nineties and above, plants can lose water at a faster rate than the roots can absorb. This water loss results in leaf burning and scorching.

There are several ways to reduce greenhouse air and plant temperatures. The method I am going to highlight today is the use of a shade cloth. A shade cloth can be placed on the greenhouse or suspended above the crop within the greenhouse using wires or a similar system. The benefit of using a shade cloth on a suspension system within the interior of the greenhouse is that you can easily move it in response to cloudy or sunny conditions. One disadvantage is that while there is a decrease in light penetration, there is not a same reduction in heat. This is due to light being converted to heat within the greenhouse. In contrast, this process occurs before entering the greenhouse when the shade cloth is placed on the exterior. Shade cloths come in a variety of “percent shade” formulations. What is best will depend on the season and the number of expected cloudy



days. A percent shade of 50 percent in May and June for the spring crop and August and September for the fall crop is recommended. Keep in mind that a shade cloth must be custom ordered to fit a greenhouse. Using white in the greenhouse (floor covering, bags, strings, etc.) will also assist with heat control.

For more information on how to grow quality tomatoes in your greenhouse, see Extension Publication 1828, *Greenhouse Tomato Handbook*.



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Calibrating Pump-Up Sprayers for Spot Treatment

How much pesticide do I put in my sprayer to do an effective spray? This is a question that I get on a regular basis. Many products will tell you on the label to add a certain amount of product per gallon of water, but some tell you how much per acre to apply. Applying the correct amount of pesticide to the target weed, insect, disease etc. is key in controlling the pest.

First you should measure out a 340 square foot area that is like the area that you will be spraying. So if you are spraying a fence row where weeds are 4 foot tall then you should mark off an area of 85 feet (304 square Feet/4ft= 85 feet). Next Fill the sprayer to a known level in the spray tank with water only and make a mark on the side of the spray tank.

Next spray the 340 square foot area that you marked off. Make sure to get good coverage and remember the technique that you use because it is important to follow the same technique when you are spraying with pesticide in the tank. Using a measuring cup that has ounce markings, fill the spray tank with water back to the line that you marked on the side of the spray tank. The number of ounces that it takes to fill the spray tank back to the line on the spray tank is equal to the number of gallons per acre that you are applying. So, if it takes 50 ounces to fill tank back up then you are applying 50 GPA.



Now that you have figured out how many GPA you are applying then you need to know how much product that the pesticide label recommends applying per acre. If the label states, you need two quarts per acre of pesticide then how much would you put into the 2 ½ gallon sprayer?

	GPA	Gal of tank
2 quarts per acre of pesticide =64 ounce	(50 gallons /2.5 gallons=20)	
64 ounces /20= 3.2 ounces of pesticide for a full 2 ½ gallon sprayer		

Taking time to complete these few steps will ensure that you make an effective spray application.

Private Applicator Certification Training

MSU Extension is offering the PAT online. Since May, 2020, this program individuals from all 82 counties have (re)certified through the program. Go to <https://myaccount.extension.msstate.edu/> and select Register through the MSU Canvas Portal. Fill in all required fields including personal information, physical address, mailing address, and password for your account. After all required fields are filled with your information, select **Sign UP**. You will receive an email with instructions to finish setting up your account.

The MSU Extension Service conducts courses of training for private pesticide applicators wishing to obtain certification. A private applicator is defined as an individual who is at least 18 years of age and who is producing an agricultural commodity on his/her land or on rented land.

For those needing a private applicator license and do not want to take it online, please contact you local Extension of-fice.

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Private Applicator

TRAINING AND TESTING ONLINE

Watch the training modules, pass the exam, and receive your private applicator certification from MDAC Bureau of Plant Industry.

\$20 COST

Visit <http://msuext.ms/agmes> or contact your local MSU Extension office for info on how to register.

Calendar of March Events

Date	Event
	Beekeeping for Beginners Series
Feb 27th— March 19	The Pine Belt Beekeepers Association will host a Beekeeping for Beginners series each Tuesday from February 27th through March 19th beginning at 6:30 PM. This program will cover Getting Started in Beekeeping, Equipment, Hive Inspections, and more. The program will be held at the Lamar County Extension office located at 216 Shelby Street in Purvis. There will be a Field Day held Saturday , March 23rd at 11:00 AM located at 1262 Browns Ridge Rd. in Hattiesburg. For more information contact Ed Hafer at 601-467-7567.
	Create an Edible Legacy: Making Your Own Food Forest Garden
March 1st	This program will be held at the Crosby Arboretum located at 370 Ridge Rd. in Picayune beginning at 11:00 AM. Dr. Eddie Smith will introduce a variety of trees, shrubs and other edible plants, mostly native species, suitable for your property. Includes a brief history of fruit production, Native American use of fruits and foods, fruit crops best adapted to Mississippi, and permaculture and food forest principles. This “Smart Landscapes” program is free to Arboretum members, and \$6 for non-members. Space is limited, reservations are required at the link below. https://reg.extension.msstate.edu/view/view_month.aspx?as=81&wp=662&aid=MSU
	Beginning Beekeepers Short Course
March 9th	Pearl River County Extension will host a Beginning Beekeepers Short Course Saturday, March 9th from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Pearl River County Fairgrounds located at 124 Rodeo St., Poplarville. Costs is a \$10 per person pre-registration fee (make checks payable to Pam Hogan and put for Beekeeper Short Course on the for line of check) due by Friday, March 1st or \$15 per person registration at the event. Checks can be mailed to Pearl River County Extension, 204 Julie St., Poplarville, MS 39470. For more information, contact the Pearl River County Extension office at 601-403-2280.
	Crosby Arboretum Spring Native Plant Sale
March 15th & 16th	10:00 AM– noon (members may enter at 9:00 AM). Grab a cart (or bring your own) and browse our outstanding selection of native plants for your spring planting projects. Knowledgeable staff, volunteers, and Mississippi Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer plant questions, offer pertinent publications and resources, and help you choose the plants suited to your property’s unique environmental conditions. Free admission. Use Service Entrance and follow signage. Sale will be held on the loop drive behind the Visitor Center. Visit the Crosby Arboretum website for more March events.
	29th Annual Landscape Symposium
March 23rd	Hosted by the Stone County Master Gardeners, this program will be held at Black Jack Ranch located at 853 Oil Well Rd. in Wiggins from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Topics include Creating Pollinator Gardens by Dr. Eddie Smith, Beautiful Flowers by Dr. Jim DelPrince, All-American Winners from the MS Trial Gardens by Dr. Patricia Knight, and Beginning Bonsai by Mr. Mike Jennings. There will also be a vegetable and plant sale. The program cost \$10 and pre-registration is required by March 21st. Make checks payable to Stone County Master Gardeners and send to 214 N. Critz St, Suite A, Wiggins, MS 39577. For more information, please call 601-928-5286.
	Sustainable Home Lawn Management
March 26th	Tim Ray, with Harrison County Extension, will host a Sustainable Home Lawn Management program from 1:00 PM—5:00 PM at the Harrison County Extension office located at 14281 County Farm Rd. He will discuss the most important aspects of proper lawn management including mowing, fertilization, watering, and pest control. He will focus on what homeowners in our area should and need to know for a healthy, weed-free lawn. There is no cost for this program but space is limited. Please pre-register by calling 228-865-4227.



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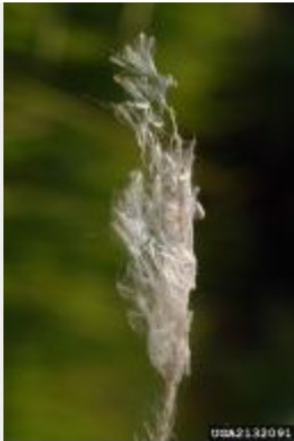
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Cogongrass

As spring green up is upon us, Cogongrass patches are beginning to be noticed.

The noxious weed is found most frequently in southeast Mississippi but it has been documented in the majority of Mississippi Counties. Cogongrass has no nutritional benefits for livestock and is detrimental to forage crops, lawns, and forestry land. It has been listed as one of the worst weeds in the world.



Cogongrass Seed Head, Cogongrass patch in a pasture and a field overtaken by Cogongrass, which many researchers have classified among the worst weeds in the world. Herbicide treatments applied in the early spring are instrumental in eliminating the noxious weed.

Cogongrass is easy to identify during winter dormancy, as it typically grows in a large circle with a tan color that is different from surrounding dormant grasses. Early spring green up is noticeable now along roadways, in fields, and many other areas.

The key to remember is that at this point, with research and information available, eradication is not an immediate option. Through integrated practices we can control patch size and limit the spread of seed. Management considerations include mechanical tillage and herbicides. Herbicide recommendations for Cogongrass include glyphosate and / or imazapyr. Please consult extension publications and seek input on which option best suits your scenario for management solutions to fit your needs.

Research continues to show that herbicide applications twice per year offer the best control. Start with an herbicide treatment in the early spring before blooming with the noticeable “feathery” flowers. The second treatment should be applied in the fall 4-6 weeks prior to the first frost in the fall.

More information on Cogongrass control can be found by reaching out to your local MSU Extension Agent or seeking publications on our website, <https://extension.msstate.edu/>.