

Annual Report to the People

October 2010
Home & Garden
Information Center



135 Old Cherry Road
Clemson, SC 29634
Toll-free: 1-888-656-9988
Monday- Friday
From 9AM to 1PM
www.clemson.edu/hgic

Mission Statement

The mission of the Cooperative Extension Service is to provide sound, scientifically based information to South Carolinians and help them use that information to improve the quality of their lives.

Award-Winning Website

The HGIC was awarded the 2009 National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) 1st Place Website Award. The information found on the HGIC website is written specifically for SC residents but is applicable to much of the southeast. The HGIC website received **2,494,246 page views** in FY 09-10. The site has several sections, including Fact Sheets, Hot Topics, Test Your Knowledge, Videos, and South Carolina Updates.



Fact Sheets

Twenty six new fact sheets were written for a total of 612 fact sheets on the HGIC website. Updated pesticide recommendations were added to 29 fact sheets. Topics of these fact sheets range from landscaping, indoor plants, and vegetable gardening to food safety and nutrition.

In addition, 1,020 fact sheets, 207 educational documents and 167 user's guides were mailed to South Carolina citizens last year.

Award Winning Fact Sheets

HGIC 1182, *Echinacea*
SCACAA 2nd Place Publication



Echinacea

Website Hot Topics

Each month timely topics are featured in this section of the website. This **proactive approach keeps the residents of South Carolina informed** on topics that are frequently asked about by clients. The plant topics range from proper plant care to a wide range of insect and disease problems. The food safety and nutrition topics are geared towards helping citizens

make wise food choices, safely prepare and preserve food, and maintain an overall healthier lifestyle. Hot Topics are now available in a printer-friendly format.

Award Winning Hot Topics
Fertilize Pecan Trees to Encourage
Nut Production!
SCACAA 1st Place
Fact Sheet Award



Thanksgiving Turkey

Website Test Your Knowledge

Test Your Knowledge



- A. Spittle bug**
- B. Boxelder bug**
- C. Lightning bug**
- D. Kissing bug**
- E. Lovebug**

Each month a new “Test Your Knowledge” quiz is added to the website. These quizzes are a **fun way to engage the citizens of South Carolina** in learning more about the world around them.

The quiz features a photograph of plants, insects or diseases to identify with a list of multiple choice answers. Once the correct answer is selected, the client is taken to a web page with detailed information about the subject. Test Your Knowledge answers are now available in a printer-friendly format.

Drought Updates

To keep South Carolina residents up to date with the drought situation, updates are provided on a weekly basis from April to November using data from the USDA-NASS South Carolina Field Office.

Food Recalls

These updates provide easy access for South Carolina residents to know which food recalls could affect them. Last year, 134 food recalls were listed on the HGIC website. During times of a major food recall the Clemson University home page, local news websites and radio stations would promote this feature on the HGIC website.



Carpenter Bee

Web Videos

The HGIC Staff produced 3 new high definition videos, for a total of **17 videos**. These videos are available through the HGIC website (www.clemson.edu/hgic), YouTube, and iTunesU. These videos cover the cultural needs of trees, shrubs, annuals and perennials, as well as managing insect and disease problems.

Award Winning Web Videos
Carpenter Bees
SCACAA 1st Place Video Award

Training Master Gardeners

The HGIC staff organized and taught classes for Master Gardeners.

A basic plant pathology course was presented to the Charleston, Greenville, Pickens, Oconee, Richland and Lexington county Master Gardeners. Adobe Connect was used to teach the Charleston county class. This class helped prepare Master Gardeners to accurately diagnose plant problems.

At the end of a year, the Pickens and Oconee County Master Gardeners participated in hands-on training where they had the opportunity to put their knowledge to work by identifying various plant samples and solving consumer horticulture problems.



Master Gardener Students



HGIC Staff working at SCBG Garden Fest 2010

Home Lawn Care IPM (Integrated Pest Management)

In early spring 2010, *Home Lawn IPM* workshops were held for residents in Columbia and Spartanburg, SC. Many in attendance were Clemson Extension Master Gardeners who volunteer their time assisting homeowners with lawn care and problem solving.

The importance of proper turfgrass maintenance (i.e. mowing, fertilization and irrigation) and correct pest identification were discussed.

Cultural control measures were encouraged to prevent turf problems with pesticide recommendations being the last control option. The importance of safe pesticide application for homeowners, their families and neighbors, and the environment was emphasized.

SC Botanical Garden's (SCBG)

Garden Fest:

Building Communities, Growing Vegetables

In response to SC resident's ever-increasing interest in growing vegetables and obtaining locally grown produce, the SCBG held a Garden Fest to help answer their questions and make their efforts more rewarding. Two HGIC horticulture specialists manned the Keeping Things Growing information center. One HGIC food safety specialist manned the Preserving Garden Produce information table. Approximately 225 people interested in vegetable gardening attended.

USDA-CSREES Grant

A USDA-CSREES (now the USDA-NIFA) grant was awarded to fund the Home Lawn IPM workshops in 2010.

Southeast Color Connection Trade Show

Two HGIC Staff members helped man the Clemson Extension booth at the Southeast Color Connection Trade Show. Over 350 people visited the booth with questions and information requests about growing plant material.

Phone Calls

The HGIC received 22,218 calls through our toll-free lines. 13,430 calls came through between the hours of 9 AM and 1 PM. Of those, approximately 6,500 calls were answered by a horticulture or food safety specialist.



Clemson Extension Horticulture Trade Show Booth



South Carolina Landscape & Turfgrass Association



Extension Agent Examining Plant Problem

SCLTA 34th Annual Conference & Trade Show

An HGIC staff member served as the Master of Ceremonies at the 34th South Carolina Landscape & Turfgrass Association (SCLTA) and Clemson University Annual Landscape Contractors, Turfgrass Management & Grounds Maintenance Conference and Trade Show at the South Carolina State Fairgrounds in Columbia, SC. There were 730 people in attendance.

He also presented information about the newly revised Environmental Landscape Certification Plant Identification CD. The new CD includes nearly 300 popular South Carolina landscape plants and over 1,000 color images, as well as proper botanical names and culture, including height, width, form, foliage, USDA hardiness zones, origin, site requirements, flower/fruit information, and growth rates.

The ELC plant CD will aid landscape companies as well as homeowners in identification of plants as well as providing the information needed to properly select plants for different environmental and site specific conditions.

Pesticide Recommendations

The HGIC assisted the Clemson Plant Problem Clinic with 31 insect pest control recommendations for residential landscape problems. These replies included relevant information on the life cycle of the insect pest, and cultural and chemical pest control measures.



HGIC Staff at the Your Day Radio Studio



Your Day Radio

The HGIC staff participated in 4 Your Day Radio call-in shows in 2009/2010. Through this show staff members were able to assist South Carolina residents with landscape and plant problems.

Your Day radio airs Monday through Thursday from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm EST. on 8 public radio stations and is available online through live web streaming.

Carolina Gardener Magazine

An HGIC staff member served as the Midland Regional Reporter for *Carolina Gardener* magazine. Monthly reports feature things to do for the lawn, trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetable garden. *Carolina Gardener* magazine is written by and for Carolina gardeners. Over the years the *Carolina Gardener* magazine readership has expanded across the Southeast.



Carolina Gardener Magazine Cover

Nutritional Assistance for County Agents

An HGIC staff member shared nutrition articles on "Tips to Avoid Winter Weight Gain" and "Have a Heart Healthy Valentine's Day" with Food Safety and Nutrition Extension Agents to use in newspaper columns and radio programs. Assistance was also provided to county Extension agents for writing articles on food budgeting & couponing, promoting good eating habits in children, and encouraging picky eaters to consume more vegetables.



Building a Healthy Tomorrow

An HGIC staff member provided the New Horizons Family Center (Summerton, SC) a list of nutritional fact sheets to help teen mothers know what to feed their babies, how to plan menus, make lists and shop for groceries, and prepare meals for the entire group at the center.

Staff helped with the 4-H exhibit at the State Fair in Columbia, SC. Activities were provided to engage students in learning more about agriculture and South Carolina's natural resources.



Home Canned Food & Grenade

Home Canning Safety

With renewed interest in growing local foods, comes increased interest in preserving foods at home. The HGIC provides up-to-date information on how to safely preserve foods by canning, drying and freezing. The hot topic article *Can Foods Safely Avoid “Can Grenades!”* was written in response to numerous calls from consumers who stored food in jars without knowing how to process it safely. Fact sheets for preserving fruit were updated and provided to farmers markets for local distribution.



Healthy Food Choices

Cooking Healthy, Eating Smart

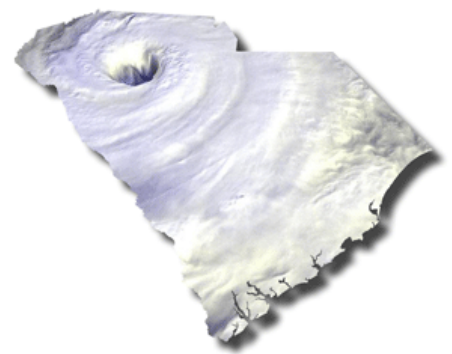
An HGIC staff member participated in developing materials and collecting data for the Cooking Healthy, Eating Smart (CHES) project to reach South Carolina’s senior citizens with information to help them choose and prepare safe and healthy foods.

Sharing Knowledge with Universities

The fact sheet, HGIC 4200 *Planning Meals for a Family*, was included in Oxford, Ohio’s Miami University Spring 2010 manual for KNH 104, Introductory Food Science and Meal Management, a 4-hour course required to earn a degree in dietetics.

Nutrition Abroad

Nutritional information and fact sheets were provided to a retired Extension nutrition professional to use in teaching basic nutrition to 100 people during a summer mission trip to Jamaica.



Hurricane Image over State of South Carolina

Food Safety Information in Hurricanes

Clemson University News Room listed the HGIC as a source for food safety information after a hurricane. HGIC 3800, *Food Safety in Hurricanes & Floods* is available on the HGIC website.



Spanish Fact Sheets

Fact sheets on basic food handling topics are available to meet the needs of Spanish speaking residents.

www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic

HGIC Staff

James H. Blake, Ed.D.
Extension Associate

Millie Davenport
Horticulture Extension Agent
Associate

Janis Hunter
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Vicki Landreth
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Food Safety Information Specialist

Janet McLeod Scott
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Associate

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Horticulture Extension Agent
Senior Associate

Home & Garden Information Center Overview

Website Data

- 2,494,246 page views

Fact Sheets

- 26 new fact sheets added
- 612 total fact sheets available

Hot Topics

- 24 new hot topics

Test Your Knowledge

- 12 new test your knowledge quizzes

Web Videos

- 3 new HD videos
- 17 total videos
- Available on 3 websites:
 - www.clemson.edu/hgic
 - iTunesU
 - YouTube

Radio and Print

- 4 Your Day radio call-in shows
- 9 Magazine columns

Phone Calls and Mailings

- 22,218 calls received
- 13,430 received between 9AM and 1 PM
- 6,500 calls answered by specialists
- 1020 fact sheets mailed
- 207 misc. educational documents mailed
- 167 HGIC user's guides mailed

Drought Updates

- Posted weekly Apr. - Nov.

Training Sessions

- 4 Master Gardener classes
- Home Lawn Care Workshop in Columbia and Spartanburg
- 3 Trade Shows

Food Recalls

- 134 food recalls listed