

September 30, 2007

**NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF:**

***DENNIS SMITH  
COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT  
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**Fall Ideal for Planting Trees & Shrubs**

Finally, fall is here. The weather is becoming cooler, and gardeners are slowly migrating back outdoors after the summer heat . Now is a perfect time to add a new tree or a grouping of shrubs to the landscape. Or perhaps you have an area in the landscape that needs “remodeling” or rejuvenating. The fall may be the best season to plant, surpassing even the spring.

Many people prefer January through March for planting, but the fall months of September through December have distinct advantages. Fall planting follows the heat of summer, and precedes a cool winter season. Trees and shrubs planted use this to good advantage. Plant roots grow anytime the soil temperature is 40 degrees or higher, which may occur all winter in Texas. During the winter months, the root systems of the fall-planted specimens develop and become established. When spring arrives, this expanded root system can support and take advantage of the full surge of spring growth.

Fall planting is the optimum time to plant balled and burlapped trees and shrubs. Balled and burlapped plants have ample time to recover from transplanting and proliferate roots before spring growth begins. Remember however, all bare root plants, including roses and pecan and fruit trees should be planted in late winter when they are completely dormant.

When buying plants for your landscape, be sure to get healthy, well-grown plants. Always buy from a reputable dealer. Those in the plant selling business year-round depend on repeat customers, and only by selling customers quality plants can there be assurance of future business. Beware of plant bargains. They can easily turn out to be real headaches. A bargain is no good if it dies. The price tag, especially the cheapest one, is not the best guide to quality.

All plants have growing requirements. Think about the plant’s needs before you invest. Is it adapted to your area’s soil? Will it grow in sun or shade? Does it need a wet or dry

location? Is it cold hardy? Some nurseries have this type of information on tags beside the plant. If not, ask a nursery professional or the County Extension office.

'Plan before you plant' is always a good rule of thumb. Whether you are planting a single plant or an entire landscape, plan first, then plant. Good planning is a worthwhile investment of time that will pay off in greater enjoyment of attractive and useful home grounds, and in increasing the value of your home. It's much easier to move plants on paper than to dig them after planting in the wrong place. A plan saves many planting mistakes.

Every plant in the landscape should serve a purpose. Ask yourself if you want a plant for screening, for privacy, or for shade. How large will it be five years from now? Plants, like people, grow up. Remember, that a small one-gallon size plant will look entirely different after a few years of growth in your landscape.

### **Tree Care and Pruning Program**

Tree Care and Pruning will be the focus of a free program on Tuesday, October 2, beginning at 8:30 a.m. The program will be held at the Gregg County Extension Auditorium, 405 East Marshall in Longview. Mr. Daniel Duncum, Urban District Forester with the Texas Forest Service will be presenting the program. The program will teach how to care for the trees in the home landscape and the proper methods to prune trees. Anyone interested in learning "Proper Tree Care and Pruning Techniques" is invited to attend this free program. This program is sponsored by the Gregg County Master Gardeners, Texas Cooperative Extension- Gregg County and the Texas Forest Service.

### **Fall Landscape Seminar**

The Gregg County Master Gardeners are sponsoring a seminar on "Organic Gardening" on Saturday, October 13, 2007 with registration beginning at 8:30 a.m. Tickets are available from any Gregg County Master Gardener or from the Gregg County Extension Office for \$10. The seminar will be held in the Gregg County Extension Auditorium at 405 East Marshall in Longview.

The morning seminar will feature Dr. Dotty Woodson, Extension Program Specialist - Water Resources with the Texas Cooperative Extension in Dallas. Dr. Woodson has served as the horticulturist in Tarrant County for several years leading one of the largest Master Gardener organizations in the state. Topics that will be presented include: Organic Vegetable Gardening, Organic Landscape and Lawn Care, Basic Composting and Organic Insect and Disease Control.

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Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.