



Southern Charm Garden Path

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Local Residence in Butterfly Garden



"The One Less Traveled By"

Article & Pictures by Rosanne Brown

"Two roads diverged in a wood...", this famous line from Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken", finds the traveler pondering which path to choose for the remainder of his walk. The traveler laments on what could be from what appears ahead, as opposed to what might be missed on the other path. Life is full of opportunities, and no matter the path, make the best of your journey.

This is what our Lee County Master Gardeners do. This group of unique, talented, and diverse individuals have a common love of horticulture and use that super power for good throughout our community. From the educational programs they provide in the schools to local gardens they tend in the community, this group of hard working green thumbs, make it their mission to transplant their appreciation of nature into others.

Thanks to our Lee County Master Gardeners, the Lee County Extension Office has many gardens, several paths, and we get to walk them all. One garden is on the north side of the building, the Southern Charm Garden, and one to the south, the main garden, the Dale Smith Native Plants Garden, which includes a butterfly garden. They usually have many visitors. Almost daily you will bump into a worker or a passerby. You might say some of them have taken up residence here, and that is just the pollinators and animals that frequent the gardens. Whether starting the day anew, taking a breather from work, or spending some time just winding down from the day, the gardens offer a wonderful getaway and are open for the public to enjoy.

Also, the Master Gardeners maintain a greenhouse on the grounds. This is one of the busiest places in the Spring, as they prepare for their annual sale. Many shoppers stand in line year after year in anticipation of what special plant they may find or wanting to purchase a tried and true favorite. Both new gardeners and seasoned green thumbs converge to peruse the different plants to find exactly what they need for that special spot in the yard, an added variety to a flower bed, or a uniquely designed, one of a kind fairy garden to grace the porch. The money raised during the sale funds the many community activities, public gardens, and educational projects provided by the Lee County Master Gardeners.

Does this make you think about taking a new direction in your life, maybe get your hands a little dirty? In the words of Robert Frost, be one to say, "I took the one less traveled by. And that has made all the difference."

Master Gardener registration is open through September 9th or until full. Follow this link for more information:

<https://extension.msstate.edu/.../leadership/master-gardener>

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Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. ANGUS L. CATCHOT JR., Director

More from the gardens



Southern Charm Garden



Black Eyed Susan



American Beauty Berry



Butterfly Garden



BECOME A *Master Gardener*

TRAINING IS SELF-PACED AND
COMPLETELY ONLINE!

[Click here for more
information or to register.](#)

Register online from
August 12 – September 9

- 1 Master Gardener Course
Volunteer Option **\$175**
- 2 Home Gardening Course
Non-Volunteer Option **\$225**
- 3 Individual Classes *
\$35 per class

*available year-round

COURSES OPEN ON **OCTOBER 1** AND MUST BE
COMPLETED BY **DECEMBER 10.**



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CATTLE MARKET NEWS

How to Collect a Hay Sample *(an excerpt from Hay Testing and Understanding Forage Quality P2539)*

By Rocky Lemus, PhD, Extension/Research Professor, Plant and Soil Sciences



Producers should routinely get a representative sample for hay analysis because forage quality can change based on forage species and mixtures, maturity, management, harvest and storage conditions, rain damage, and insect or disease damage. When sampling hay lots, sample each hay lot separately. A hay lot is defined as hay from the same field, same cutting, harvested under the same environmental conditions, and having a uniform forage composition (grass or legume only, or grass/legume mixture).

To determine the quality of the hay accurately, a representative sample must be taken using a hay probe. Use a hay probe that is 12 to 24 inches long and 3/8 to 5/8 inches in diameter. Grabbing and pulling hay from different bales is not the correct method, and it will not provide uniform samples for analysis. Producers should sample 15 to 20 round bales depending on the number of bales in the lot, and samples should be taken from the round edge of the bale. For example, if sampling a hay lot that contains 300 bales, sample every fifteenth bale to obtain a representative sample of the entire lot. If the outer layer of the bale has deteriorated, remove the outer layer (usually several inches) before sampling to avoid collecting material that will skew the analysis.

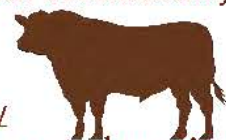
For pastures that will be grazed, samples should be obtained directly from the standing forage in the field. These samples should be taken shortly before the livestock are turned into a pasture. The producers should walk over the entire field and collect 30 to 50 random small grab samples per each 5 acres. Grab samples are taken by reaching down and grabbing a small section of forage between the thumb and forefinger at the same height that the livestock will graze the pasture. Avoid collecting samples in areas that have high weed infestation or areas that have high concentrations of legumes or grass.

Sample at least 10 square bales near the center of their ends to ensure a uniform distribution of leaves and stems in the sample. If square bales have been stacked in an open barn, collect samples in both sides of the barn in a zigzag pattern or at different heights. Once the samples are obtained from each lot, mix the samples thoroughly in a bucket and store in a quart-size, plastic zippered bag. Hay samples are perishable, so it is important to ship or deliver the samples to the lab as soon as possible to prevent moisture loss and microbial deterioration of the sample. Label the bag with all the necessary information using a permanent marker. Include the producer's name, hay lot, forage species, hay cutting, weather conditions, and any other relevant information. Information written on a plastic zippered bag is sometimes erased, so make sure that a label with the same information is placed inside the bag for easy identification. Fill out the information sheet provided by the forage testing lab. If you are working with Extension agents and livestock or forage Extension specialists, some laboratories will send copies of the report to them as well, so make sure their names and addresses are in the appropriate places on the form.

Depending on where the samples are sent for analysis, time of the year, and the location of the forage lab, results can take up to 3 weeks. Mississippi State Chemical Lab can process forage samples for nutrient analysis, or you may send samples to a private certified forage testing lab of your choice. For more information on how to send samples to Mississippi State, visit <http://www.mscl.msstate.edu/> or contact your county Extension office. The cost for analysis of CP, ADF, and NDF ranges from about \$15 to \$50, depending on the lab. After the results come back, use them to balance the forage-feeding program for the various groups of livestock on your farm.

Explore this complete publication & more information on the extension website at: <https://extension.msstate.edu/publications/hay-testing-and-understanding-forage-quality>

Lee County Cattlemen Association connects local cattlemen and provides access to learning & knowledge for the betterment of their cattle herds, from farm to plate. The next meeting will be **Thursday, September 17th, 6 pm**, with Kelsey Harvey, Assistant Professor, Animal & Dairy Sciences. **Call 662-841-9000 by NOON the TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15TH, to RSVP.**



FORESTRY NOTES

Forestry/Wildlife Myths & Misconceptions

Revised by Brady Self, PhD, Extension Professor, Forestry, from an earlier version by Tim Traugott, PhD, Extension Professor Emeritus

(CONTINUED FROM July/August 2026 Lee Links)

Misconception #6: All our hardwood forests are being converted to pine.

Uninformed people often make this statement. Sometimes you hear, “Timber companies are cutting all our hardwoods!”

It is true that many acres have been converted to pine from low-grade hardwoods to meet landowner and industry objectives and product demands at the time. In addition, timber industries have practiced intensive pine management over the last few decades. As of 2020, hardwoods covered approximately 45 percent of the state’s forestland (compared to 40 percent covered by pine), and this percentage has actually increased in recent decades due to hardwood establishment on former agricultural fields. Admittedly, pine forest acreage increased 20 percent between 1987 and 1994, but that is only part of the story. Hardwood acreage increased 10 percent over the same period, and overall forest acreage has increased more than 18 percent since 1938 (source: Mississippi Forestry Association).

An unrecognized culprit of hardwood losses is conversion of hardwood forests to other uses, such as agriculture, housing developments, and road construction. A glaring example of this occurred in the Mississippi Delta. Between 1957 and 1977, more than 530,000 acres of bottomland hardwoods were cleared for agricultural purposes.

[Explore this complete publication & more information on the extension website at:
https://extension.msstate.edu/publications/forestrywildlife-myths-and-misconceptions](https://extension.msstate.edu/publications/forestrywildlife-myths-and-misconceptions)



**Join us for the next Forestry meeting,
Monday, November 2nd, at 6 PM.**



Call 662-841-9000 by 12 PM on Friday, October 30th to reserve your seat.

What's NEWS?



EXHIBIT DAYS OPEN HOUSE!



See exhibits **Tuesday, September 1st, 4 - 6 PM, at The Tupelo Children's Mansion James Lumpkin Visitor Center.** Peruse and appreciate all the Adult & Youth Exhibits and the Best in Show recipients! Exhibits will be available for pickup, Wednesday, September 2nd, from 2 - 5 PM.



Bloom at Noon



Help us welcome our Lee County Master Gardener, Debbie Huffman. She will be presenting "Bring on the Flutter! How to Attract Butterflies to Your Garden." A presentation on how to provide the best environment for butterflies year-round, from egg to adult. You are welcome to join us Tuesday, September 8th, at 12 PM, at the Lee County Extension Office. Seating will fill up quickly, so be sure to call our office to reserve your spot! Our number is 662-841-9000. We hope to see you there!



THE LEE COUNTY CLASSIC LIVESTOCK SHOW

Our annual show, open to 4-H & FFA members, will be held Friday & Saturday, September 11th & 12th, at the MAFES Agri-Center in Verona, MS. Please come cheer on your favorite exhibitor or animal!

Friday, September 11th

Dairy Goat Show 1 PM

Rabbit Show 6 PM

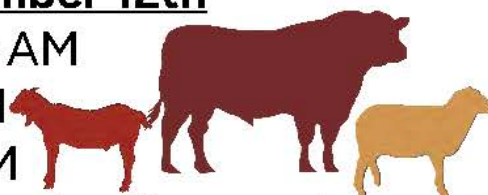


Saturday, September 12th

Beef Show 10:30 AM

Goat Show 11 AM

Sheep Show 2 PM



Entries are accepted through Monday, September 7th, on the Showman App. You may enter by following this link or going to <https://showman.app/shows#/lee-county-classic-livestock-show-3c2d>



We also offer many opportunities for youth ages 5-18 in our 4-H programs. If you know a child in the Lee County area that is looking for a place to learn and grow, contact our office about available clubs. We offer a wide of array of options from participation in animal projects, to learning art, cooking skills, & sewing, STEM activities, a Junior Master Gardener club, and Shooting Sports competitions.



Please call us at 662-841-9000 for more information or to reserve your seat at our next program!

Three Fabulous Fall Vegetables & How to Cook Them

Fall brings delicious seasonal vegetables packed with nutrients and flavor. Buying in season at local farmers markets offers top value in both nutrition and money savings! Here are three versatile veggies to enjoy during autumn.

1. Sweet potatoes: Mississippi farmers produce this nutritious veggie packed with vitamin A, vitamin C, beta carotene, and dietary fiber. Sweet potatoes are delicious roasted, turned into hash browns and sauteed, microwaved, or cooked in the air fryer for a naturally sweet side dish.
2. Cabbage: this affordable vegetable brings fiber, vitamin C, and vitamin K to your diet. Did you know it comes in a variety of colors, including white, green, red, and purple, and can have smooth or crinkled leaves? Cabbage makes a terrific addition to soups and stir fries, can be sauteed by itself, or even sliced into a slab and grilled like a steak!
3. Butternut squash: like sweet potatoes, butternut squash is loaded with vitamin A, vitamin C, beta carotene, and dietary fiber. The easiest way to cook it is to slice it in half lengthwise, scoop out the seeds, and bake it in the oven, so you don't have to deal with the tough peel. It's delicious cut into cubes, tossed in olive oil and coarse salt, then roasted. Butternut squash can be added to salads, soups, and even macaroni and cheese!

These are just three of the many fall vegetables you can add to your meals as the days get shorter and cooler! For more ideas about adding fruits and vegetables to your meals, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/healthy-weight-growth/healthy-eating/>

AIM for CHange is short for Advancing, Inspiring, Motivating for Community Health through Extension. The award-winning program was launched in 2018 and is made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



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EXTENSION

SEPTEMBER



2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30	31	01 Exhibit Days Open House 4-6 PM Tupelo Children's Mansion	02 Crochet 10-18 4:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	03 Foodies 9-18 5 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office Back Kitchen	04	05
06	07 LABOR DAY OFFICE CLOSED	08 Bloom at Noon 12 PM Aggies 8-18 5:30 PM MAFES AgriCenter Verona, MS	09 Expressive Arts 8-13 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office Master Gardener Online Course Registration CLOSES	10	11 The Classic Livestock Show Dairy Goats 1 PM Rabbits 6 PM MAFES AgriCenter Verona, MS	12 The Classic Livestock Show Beef 10:30 AM Goats 11 AM Sheep 2 PM MAFES AgriCenter Verrona, MS
13	14 Cloverbuds 5-7 Jr Leaf 8-13 4:30 PM Rabbit Club 5-18 5:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	15 Sewing Club 1 Advanced 10-18 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	16	17 Sewing Club 2 Beginner 10-18 3:30 PM Cattlemen 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	18	19
20	21 Ropes & Reins 8-18 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	22	23	24 Junior Master Gardener 8-13 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	25	26
27	28 STEM Club 5-13 4:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	29	30	01	02	03

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EXTENSION

OCTOBER



2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27	28	29	30	01	02	03
04	05	06 Foodies 9-18 5 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office Back Kitchen	07 Crochet Club 10-18 4:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	08 Expressive Arts 8-13 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	09	10
11	12 Cloverbuds 5-7 & Jr Leaf 8-13 4:30 PM Rabbit Club 5-18 5:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	13 Aggies 8-18 4 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	14	15 Sewing Club 2 Beginner 10-18 3:30 PM Cattlemen 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	16	17 4-H Day at the State Fair 8 AM - 5 PM MS Trade Mart Jackson, MS
18	19 Ropes & Reins 8-18 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	20 Sewing Club 1 Advanced 10-18 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	21	22	23	24
25	26 STEM Club 5-13 4:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	27	28	29 Junior Master Gardener 8-13 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	30	31 HALLOWEEN

We also offer many opportunities for youth ages 5-18 in our 4-H programs.



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