

## **2008 Home Show includes lawn and landscape seminars**

This year's Home Show, sponsored by the Building Industry Association of Okaloosa & Walton Counties, will include lawn and landscape seminars. The Home Show will be held April 5 and 6 at Okaloosa Walton College in Niceville.

On Saturday, April 5 at 2:30 p.m., I will provide a seminar titled "Winning the Weed War by Getting Back to Lawn Basics." People sometimes go to great extents to grow a lawn where it doesn't want to grow. Some people blame the weeds as the lawn declines. But in reality, it's not until the lawn thins that the weeds move in. Most weed problems occur because the lawngrass is "unhappy." Learning how to get to the "root" cause(s) of a weed problem is an important part of winning the weed war. Sometimes we attempt to grow the wrong type grass on a site. Quite often site conditions contribute to weed problems such as soil compaction or hydrophobic soils. Management practices that create nutrient imbalances, incorrect pH or weak root systems commonly contribute to lawns thinning and weed populations building. Not identifying or misidentifying pest problems can lead to poor performance of lawns and the establishment of weeds. In most cases, it's a combination of these factors which lead to a weed problem. During this presentation we'll take a look at winning the weed war in our lawns by getting back to lawn basics.

On Sunday, April 6 at 1:00 p.m., Sheila Dunning, University of Florida Extension Agent, will present a seminar titled "Water-Wise Landscaping." You do not have to replace your lawn, landscape and garden with rocks, cacti and a cow skull to have a water efficient landscape. Dunning will share proven practices that will help you in developing a visually pleasing landscape while reducing water misuse. Even in the sandy soils of Florida, we can have a nice landscape and a lower water bill by paying attention to plant selection, placement and watering practices. Proper planning can result in a water-wise landscape.

Also, Okaloosa County Master Gardeners will have an educational booth to help answer gardening questions and provide lawn and landscape publications to attendees. Master Gardeners will staff the booth throughout the entire Home Show.

Advance tickets for \$4 will be available at all locations of Eglin Federal Credit Union. Tickets at the gate on the days of the Home Show will be \$5. Children under 16 are admitted free when accompanied by an adult.

The Home Show features more than 110 indoor and outdoor exhibits of products and services for the home and the homeowner.

Larry Williams, UF/IFAS Extension Agent, Okaloosa County, March 25, 2008