

Fall Home & Garden Expo

The inaugural Fall Home and Garden Expo will take place Saturday, October 2 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Crestview Community Center, 1446 Commerce Drive in Crestview, Florida. The expo is brought to you by the Building Industry Association of Okaloosa & Walton Counties and the Okaloosa County Master Gardeners Association.

The Home & Garden Expo will feature indoor and outdoor exhibits of products and services and educational seminars for the homeowner and gardener. There will be food vendors as well as children's activities.

Master Gardeners will provide indoor and outdoor educational booths as well as landscape seminars. I will provide a seminar titled Fall-Florida's Best Gardening Season.

Fall should be our busiest gardening season in North Florida. It's a more comfortable time to be outdoors. Some plants only do well when planted during the cooler weather of fall. Fall planted trees and shrubs have a higher survival rate as compared to those planted in spring. Many nurseries have a better selection of trees during the cooler months. And, nurseries and garden centers could use your business this time of year.

I'll cover why fall is our best gardening season. This topic will include information on annuals, perennials, bulbs, vegetables and herbs to plant during fall. Basic fall lawn care and the reasons why trees and shrubs are best planted during fall and early winter will be addressed.

Seminars provided by Okaloosa County Master Gardeners will include: Antique and Old Garden Roses, Flowering Shrubs and Small Trees for Northwest Florida and How to Select and Plant a Healthy Tree.

There will be demonstrations on tree planting, pruning and how to take a soil sample. We will also provide a plant clinic for the public to bring in their lawn, garden and landscape problems for diagnosis.

Friends of Eden State Park will provide a garden related program and the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance will provide a workshop on how to make a rain barrel.

Tickets purchased in advance will be \$4 and can be purchased at all Eglin Federal Credit Union Branch Locations. Tickets purchased at the gate will be \$5 per person with children 12 and under getting in free.

For additional information visit the Building Industry Association of Okaloosa & Walton Counties website at www.biaow.org or call the Okaloosa County Extension Office at 850-689-5850.

Larry Williams, UF/IFAS Extension Agent, Okaloosa County, September 23, 2010