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## Clean Hands Can Save Lives

Sometimes it takes a serious concern before people make changes in their habits. We have been talking about the importance of handwashing for years, but the spread of Coronavirus is reinforcing the point. Watching the news and hearing the information about new case, which continue to develop, who wouldn't want to try to keep themselves and their families safe. Washing your hands is easy and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs.

Follow these five steps from the Center of Disease Control (CDC) every time you wash.

1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

When do we need to wash our hands? Handwashing is especially important during these key times when you are likely to get and spread germs:

- **Before, during, and after** preparing food

- **Before** eating food
- **Before and after** caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- **Before and after** treating a cut or wound
- **After** using the toilet
- **After** changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- **After** blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- **After** touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- **After** handling pet food or pet treats
- **After** touching garbage

Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community—from your home and workplace to childcare facilities and hospitals. If we look for the positives in serious illnesses like the flu and Coronavirus, maybe more people will get in the lifelong habit of handwashing.

Take the time and make the effort. You never know when the steps you take to keep your hands clean is what is keeping you and your family healthy.

Source: CDC



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# Gardening Time Is Near



The month of April means it is time to get serious about gardening. Timing is important when it comes to certain gardening tasks. It could mean the difference between success and a flop. Many annual flowers can be planted outside this month. A few good choices for planting now are geranium, petunia, salvia, snapdragon, and zinnia. Gladioli bulbs can also be planted now through mid-June.

Many gardeners prefer to transplant azaleas in April, so they can group the plants according to their flower color. Summer vegetables, like beans, cucumbers, squash, and melons can be planted this month. Our last frost usually happens around April 22, give or take ten days, but you may have to cover tender vegetables if a killing frost is in the forecast. Continue to plant perennials, trees, and shrubs, and be prepared to water them if the soil is dry.

Prune any spring flowering plants like azalea and lilac after the flowers fade. Plan on pruning berry producing shrubs like holly and pyracantha while in flower to prevent complete removal of all of this season's berries. Cut out any winter damage on trees and shrubs that may have occurred this year. You can still divide hostas and other perennials in April. Hostas and ornamental grasses will die out in the middle when they need dividing and create a "donut" effect. Remember to keep them watered once you move them.



Fruit trees sprays on apples and peaches should begin after flower petals fall. Be sure to spray in the evening when bees are not foraging. And, with any pesticide, read and follow the label. Scout out or observe your landscape plants before using an insecticide. Pests may not be present. If you find a problem and are not sure what it is, bring it into the Extension office for a diagnosis.

When it comes to lawn care, most of our lawns are tall fescue. They do not need to be fertilized now. Wait until fall. You can mulch your landscape plants as needed but do not apply any more than a 3" layer of mulch. Pine needles, cypress mulch and pine bark are good choices. Be sure the mulch is pulled away from the base of plants. Critters love this environment. They are more apt to damage plants when mulch is present. For answers to your garden and landscape questions call the N.C. Cooperative Extension, Surry County Center at 336-401-8025 or visit us online anytime at [surry.ces.ncsu.edu](http://surry.ces.ncsu.edu).

# Farmer's Markets



April is usually the month when many farmer's markets open and provide fresh produce to families throughout the area. This year each market is operating on a day-to-day basis. Farmers want to provide their bountiful harvests to their customers, but with the of the coronavirus (COVID-19) it becomes challenging. Markets that open will do so with safety of their communities in mind. As a customer of the market, there are some thing you can do to help make the market(s) a safe place to gather food for your families.

Customers should not come to the market if they are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or have come in contact with someone who is sick. Do not be offended if you or someone who is displaying symptoms at the farmers

market is asked to leave. Safety is the market's top priority. This will not happen to offend anyone but to keep everyone safe.

COVID-19 is not a foodborne illness. It is extremely unlikely to cause illness through respiratory transmission, not eating. The routes to be concerned about include being in very close proximity to many people or coming in contact with high touch surfaces. Here are a few tips to follow and think about as you visit the market:

- Pre-order from vendors if possible. This will keep market numbers to a minimum and give you the commodity you want.
- Keep yourself distanced by six feet.
- Wash your hands BEFORE and AFTER entering the market area.
- Do not touch items at the market unless planning on purchasing the item.
- Do not sample items at the market.
- Masks are not necessary. They help prevent the spread of the virus from sick people but are not protective to healthy people.

Monitor the Surry County Farmer's Market Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Surry-County-Farmers-Market-596405117037988/>) and N.C. Cooperative Extension, Surry County Center's webpage ([surry.ces.ncsu.edu](http://surry.ces.ncsu.edu)) for announcements of any delays in opening day or closing after opening.



# Scholarship Opportunity

The Surry County Extension Master Gardener Volunteers have established a scholarship of \$500 to promote the professional preparation of future leaders in the field of horticulture. The scholarship will be awarded to a graduate of a high school or home-school program in Surry County who is a resident of the county. It is intended for a college student entering their junior or senior year. The deadline for application is May 1.

Funding for the scholarship comes from the Master Gardeners' successful Gardening Symposium held each April. Those interested in applying for the scholarship can find additional information and the application form at [www.facebook.com/surrymastergardeners/](http://www.facebook.com/surrymastergardeners/) and [surry.ces.ncsu.edu](http://surry.ces.ncsu.edu).

## NC STATE EXTENSION

Master Gardener | Surry County

# Healthy Families- Eating Smart and Moving More

Looking for ways to help your family eat healthier and get more physical activity?

- Start with a **plan**. Sometimes the hardest part about fixing dinner is figuring out what to make. Spend a few minutes each week to think about what your family likes to eat, what food you have on hand, what is in season, what may be on sale and what meals fit into your busy

schedule. Post a list of meals you and your family enjoy in a handy spot like the inside door of a cabinet. Keep adding new favorites to expand your options.

- Make a list of all the food you will need for your meals. Divide the list of the ingredients into those you have and those you need to purchase.



**Shop** for a week at a time and stick to your list. Use food labels to make informed choices with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's updated Nutrition Facts label. The updated label can help you make food choices that contribute to lifelong healthy eating habits. Some of the changes include updated serving sizes; larger, bolder calories; and updated Daily Values and nutrient listings. Check out the changes at [www.fda.gov/NewNutritionFactsLabel](http://www.fda.gov/NewNutritionFactsLabel).

- After you have selected your food, it is time to start cooking. Stick to your plan for your meals. Involve the whole family in making simple healthy meals for everyone to enjoy.

Moving more is essential for good health. From children to older adults and everyone in between, we all need to fit more physical activity into our day. It is recommended that adults get 30 minutes of daily physical activity and children 60 minutes. These amounts don't have to be done all at one time; do some in the morning, some during the day and finish up in the evening. Remember every little bit helps. Strive for a mix of bone strengthening, muscle building, and aerobic activities.

Need some suggestions on how to be active while having fun? Think of things you enjoyed doing as a child. It is sad as adults, many of us have forgotten how to play. I like the quote by George

Bernard Show, "we don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing."

We many no longer be able to safely climb trees or play on an organized sports team, but there are many fun things we can do if we just think about it. Dig in the dirt while planting flowers or a garden, ride a stationary bike, take a nature walk, go on a scavenger hunt, or turn on some music and dance. The possibilities are endless. Physical activity helps our self-esteem, improves sleep and just helps us feel better overall. Make a habit of fitting some fun in your day. You and your family are worth the effort.

For more ideas to help your families be healthier, visit <https://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/>.



### Disclaimer

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## Coronavirus Update

We continue to work with local and state health officials, as well as NC State and N.C. A&T State Universities, to monitor the evolving coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. To help prevent the spread of the virus, N.C. Cooperative Extension, Surry County Center is canceling ALL events, meetings, workshops, etc. until at least mid-April.

Our office will remain open during normal business hours with limited staff. Surry County Government prefers that the public call or email staff for any related business, if possible. Our Extension agents are still available via email, phone, and other technological means, and will continue to assist you to the best of their ability. If you must come in person or meet with an agent one-on-one, staff will be disinfecting public areas and workspaces.

We sincerely appreciate your patience and understanding. We will provide additional information as it becomes available.

Please know that these changes are intended to protect the health and safety of our community while striving to provide the resources and services you need. We will continue to closely monitor the situation and act consistently with local, state, and national recommendations.

We thank your patience and understanding at this time, and we are committed to continue serving and growing our community. Together we will see it through, one day at a time.

Additional resources can be found at:

- NC State University Coronavirus Resources: [ncsu.edu/coronavirus](https://ncsu.edu/coronavirus)
- Surry County Government Website: [co.surry.nc.us](https://co.surry.nc.us)
- N.C. Cooperative Extension, Surry County Center Website: [surry.ces.ncsu.edu](https://surry.ces.ncsu.edu)

### **Accommodation Statement:**

*For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact the Surry County Center at (336) 401-8025, no later than five business days before the event.*

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