

# Lawn Information

March is the second best time (best time is August through October) to seed your lawn for repairs and to make it thicker or cover bare areas. Always follow the label on the seed you buy for the seeding rate. We recommend soil testing your lawn to find out what it may need rather than just applying a chemical fertilizer. It is not a good idea to apply fertilizer to cool season turf in the spring unless your turf is weak and thin or if you did not fertilize in the fall. Fertilizing in the spring encourages rapid succulent growth that is more susceptible to attack by insects and disease. If you want to apply an herbicide to get rid of broadleaf weeds in your yard follow the label on the products you buy. Remember that the label is the law. Beekeepers tell me that dandelions provide the first blooms for honeybees in the spring so you might want to tolerate some dandelions in your yard rather than trying to get rid of them.

Check the local stores to see what grass seed is available for purchase. Remember to buy seeds that are adapted to your growing area in order to reduce cost such as watering when we have a drought period. Most grasses adapted to our area may go dormant and turn brown during a drought but they will recover when the conditions improve unless they are abused. You might also want to consider cutting down the size of your lawn by starting a garden or a nature area in your yard.

The Berkeley/Jefferson Master Gardeners will have a booth at the Martinsburg Home Show this weekend. Stop by and ask your garden questions or sign up for our Gardening 101 workshop being held March 26, 2011 at the Berkeley County Youth Fair.

## *Forum for Rural Innovation: New Approaches for Agriculture and Rural Prosperity*

The seventh annual Forum for Rural Innovation will be held Friday, March 11, 2011 at the Best Western Lee-Jackson Motor Inn & Conference Center in Winchester, Virginia. The purpose of the Forum is to showcase new and exciting projects and programs that enhance farm or rural business profitability. This year's Forum will focus on local and regional food production, marketing, and distribution. Richard Pirog, from the world renowned Leopold Center in Ames, Iowa will describe their innovative work to support regional food systems, and the economic impacts of food systems. Also learn how West Virginia is addressing food systems on a statewide basis; hear the challenges of supplying large volume retailers; learn what it takes to transition into medium scale production of fruits and vegetables; and jump into social media as a marketing tool with Facebook. A registration fee of \$40.00 per person will include the forum program, morning refreshments, and the buffet lunch featuring local foods. Registration information is available on-line at [www.loudounfarms.org](http://www.loudounfarms.org) or by calling 703-777-0426. Pre-registration by March 4th is required. The Forum for Rural Innovation is a cooperative educational effort by the offices of Agricultural Economic Development and Cooperative Extension in Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick and Loudoun, counties of Virginia, Berkeley and Jefferson counties, West Virginia, Potomac Headwaters and Shenandoah RC&D, Virginia Cooperative Extension and WVU Extension.

## *Farmer Appreciation Breakfast*

The Berkeley County Farm Bureau is holding a complimentary Farmer Appreciation Breakfast on Saturday, March 19, 2011 from 7:30 am to 10:00 am at the Bill Butler Farm located on the Arden Nollville Road, Inwood. Please RSVP by March 10 by calling 304-274-3058 or 304-229-5968.

### *Gardening 101 Program offered*

The Berkeley-Jefferson Master Gardeners will hold a Gardening 101 Workshop for beginning gardeners on Saturday, March 26, 2011 from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm at the Berkeley County youth fairgrounds located in Martinsburg. Registration will be limited to 100 participants. Please use the registration form found at [www.berkeleyextension.com](http://www.berkeleyextension.com) to reserve a space for the program. For more information see the brochure on the Agriculture/Gardening section of our website or call 304-264-1936.

### **Garden Tips**

- Plant non-flowering trees and shrubs
- Seed peas (outdoors before St. Patrick's Day)
- Seed Swiss chard and turnips (indoors)
- Set head lettuce
- Fertilize spring-flowering bulbs
- Remember to turn your clocks ahead on Sunday for the start of Daylight savings time

***Until next time ... Until next time ...Happy Gardening, and Farming!***

Mary Beth Bennett, Ph.D. is a WVU Extension agent and associate professor. She can be reached at 264-1936, [MBBennett@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:MBBennett@mail.wvu.edu) or on the web at [berkeleyextension.com](http://berkeleyextension.com)