

# Healthy Georgia Connections

Issue No. 16

NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM **UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA** COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

## EXTENSION FEATURE

### Flavor of Georgia grand prize goes to Charleston and Church Cheddar Rounds

Josh Paine, *marketing specialist, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences*

Charleston and Church won the grand prize in the University of Georgia's 2020 Flavor of Georgia Food Product Contest for its savory Cheddar Rounds snacks.

Warren and Jen Simmons, owners of the Atlanta company, developed the product in 2016 from a handwritten recipe by his grandmother, who was an avid hostess of friends and family at her home in Charleston, South Carolina. The couple topped the savory snack food with Georgia pecans to complete a "deliciously Southern" treat, as the package reads.

The couple were among 30 finalists who gave virtual product pitches from their businesses and home kitchens to a panel of socially distant judges who sampled submitted products in Athens on Oct. 27. The final round of judging was postponed from the original judging and awards date of April 7.

A signature event for UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Flavor of Georgia has launched many market-ready and established products into success, often garnering increased sales and publicity for businesses.

Entries are judged on technical aspects such as flavor, texture and ingredient profile. The judges also consider consumer appeal including packaging, innovation or uniqueness, and how well the product represents the state of Georgia.



The winners by category, product name, company and city are listed below.

- **Barbecue Sauces:** *Strawberry Balsamic and Rosemary Barbecue Sauce, Aubs Company, Decatur*
- **Beverages:** *Georgia Grey Black Tea, Thistle & Sprig Tea Company, Atlanta*
- **Condiments and Salsas:** *Georgia Peach Balsamic Vinegar, A&A Alta Cucina Italia, Johns Creek*
- **Confections:** *Georgia Fried Peanut Cluster – Vanilla, Georgia Fried Peanut Company, Edison*
- **Honey and Related Products:** *Wildflower Honey, White Oak Pastures, Bluffton*
- **Jams and Jellies:** *Apple Fig Pepper Jelly, Wisham Jellies, Tifton*
- **Meats and Seafood:** *920 Pork Sausage, 920 Cattle & Co., Millen*
- **Miscellaneous:** *Lemon Cream Cheese, Bootleg Farm, Springfield*
- **Sauces and Seasonings:** *You Saucy Thing Soy Ginger Vidalia, Chinese Southern Belle, Smyrna*
- **Snack Foods:** *Cheddar Rounds, Charleston and Church, Atlanta*

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**AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES****Pruning tips for ornamental plants**

**Brandon Crumsey**, *Agriculture and Natural Resources agent, Clayton County Extension*

To prune or not to prune, that is the question. Pruning is an important part of maintaining plant health and maximizing plant productivity. This is often a topic that brings fear and confusion, but pruning is, in fact, a beneficial and routine task.

Ornamental plants in the home landscape are pruned for several reasons, including maintaining a desired size or shape; promoting healthy, vigorous growth, flowering or fruiting; and removing sections damaged by insects, disease or weather.

Each plant in the landscape has its own growth habit and different requirements for pruning. Some shrubs have dwarf growth habits and may never require pruning, while vigorous, large-growing shrubs may require frequent pruning. Anyone can prune, but not everyone prunes properly.

Improper pruning, or pruning at the wrong time of the year, can result in misshapen plants, reduced flowering or plants that are more likely to be damaged by insects, diseases or winter cold. Because flowering ornamentals form their flower buds at different times of year, pruning times must be adjusted accordingly.

Many spring-flowering plants such as azalea, dogwood, forsythia, redbud and rhododendron set flower buds in the fall, so pruning during the fall or winter months eliminates or decreases their spring flower display.

Plants that typically flower during the summer form flower buds on new growth and can be pruned during the winter with no effect on their flowering. However, sometimes plants may need to be pruned outside of these ideal windows to remove damaged or dead plant parts, to remove obstructions from windows or buildings, or to help stop the spread of diseases.

As a general rule, plants that flower before May should be pruned after they bloom, while those that flower after May are considered summer-flowering and can be pruned just prior to spring growth.

One exception to this rule is the oakleaf hydrangea, a summer-flowering shrub that forms flower buds the previous season.



Another exception is late-flowering azalea cultivars, which bloom during May, June or July. Prune both the oakleaf hydrangea and late-flowering azalea cultivars after they bloom. Newer azalea varieties like the 'Encore' line, which bloom in the spring, summer and fall, don't require much pruning — if any at all — as long as they are planted in the right place. At most, you may need to prune taller shoots back into the body of the plant immediately after spring flowering. 'Knock Out' roses start flowering in spring up until frost, but should be pruned back to about 12 inches to the ground in early spring, after the threat of last frost has passed, to help stimulate vigorous growth throughout the season.

Other types of plants, like broadleaf evergreen shrubs, generally require little or no pruning at all because they usually develop a naturally symmetric growth habit when left alone, but late winter when they are dormant is usually a good time if pruning is desired.

Pruning is only harmful to a plant if done incorrectly or at the wrong time. With the right information and confidence, pruning should become a normal part of your landscape maintenance routine.

To learn more about pruning ornamental plants, see [UGA Extension Bulletin 961](#), "Pruning Ornamental Plants In The Landscape," and [Bulletin 949](#), "Basic Principles of Pruning Woody Plants," which can be found at [extension.uga.edu/publications](http://extension.uga.edu/publications).

**FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES****Helping teens get smart about relationships**

**Ted G. Futris**, *Extension specialist and professor, College of Family and Consumer Sciences*

Teen dating may be the last thing on parents' minds, especially during a pandemic, but it is likely on the minds of your teenagers. And why wouldn't it be? Dating, love and romance are a normal and important part of adolescence.

Between the ages of 12 and 18 (and longer for some), teens are trying to figure out the answer to the developmental question "Who am I?" In pursuit of finding their identity and place in this world, developing a fully formed sense of self during adolescence is essential to forming healthy relationships, now and later in life. Learning how to manage the emotions and experiences linked to teen love is part of that process.

But is your teen ready? Do they (and you) have the "relationship smarts" needed to navigate the ups and downs of teen romance? Dating for teenagers may look different today, with teens connecting more online than offline, but the social skills they develop through those connections have lasting impacts.

Teens are more likely to have positive relationships with peers when they have the decision-making skills to better handle pressure situations; the communication skills to assert their own opinions and advocate for clear and healthy boundaries in a relationship; and the conflict management skills to respond to tension in positive and safe ways. These skills are also important in avoiding risky behaviors, such as experiencing dating violence or having sex before they are mature and ready.

As a parent or caregiver, you can help your teen learn these skills. You can help them understand what a healthy relationship should look like and how to manage the range of emotions that are normal in all romantic relationships.

For example, maintain a caring, supportive relationship with your teen, and be open and sensitive to their views. Share your own relationship experiences and expectations, and model the behaviors you want your teen to learn.



Work together to form clear expectations and rules on dating. Remember, this is not a one-time discussion. Talk with your teen often.

You are not alone — your local UGA Extension office can help too. Since 2008, Extension has been working with schools and after-school programs to help more than 15,000 teens through the Relationship Smarts program.

According to one of the participants, "The stuff we learned is stuff that sometimes we don't really talk about in schools and at other places ... so I know that I can be aware of my relationships and be smart about things."

To learn more about why relationships matter, how relationship education can help teens and what schools can do to promote relationship-smart teens, read UGA Extension Bulletin 1537, "Youth-focused Relationship Education: Helping Georgia's Youth Become Relationship Smart."

For additional resources to help you talk with your teen, visit [t.uga.edu/5DQ](http://t.uga.edu/5DQ) or contact your local UGA Extension office.

**4-H YOUTH****Georgia 4-H provides virtual and in-person environmental education**

*Austin Clark, 4-H public relations associate, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences*

The Georgia 4-H Environmental Education program is accommodating the needs of students around the state by offering both virtual and socially distant in-person visits at its six facilities in Georgia.

In response to COVID-19 restrictions, UGA Extension 4-H environmental educators around the state began posting videos to highlight activities, concepts or ideas that would have been traditionally taught in person. Since March, more than 50 videos from the centers have been posted on topics ranging from animal care to the geography of Georgia to wilderness survival. The videos also allowed each center to highlight local and unique environmental landmarks, such as the salt marshes and beaches on the coast and the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests.

Social media is not the only way youth can experience Georgia 4-H facilities and programs.

Following the launch, one teacher summarized her experience with the program to organizers by saying, “I just wanted to let you know how much we loved the 4-H videos you posted last spring. We spent the last couple of weeks of sixth grade remote learning, doing Outdoors Atlanta lessons. Your videos were great starters and models for the students, who then went outside to do their own tree walks, pond explorations, bug hunts, sunset watches, shelter-building, et cetera. Thanks so much for making these available.”

The series has already reached 217,900 youth and adults throughout the state. Due to its popularity, the 4-H Environmental Education program will continue this series throughout the fall with 10 additional video uploads occurring through the end of November.



Social media is not the only way youth can experience Georgia 4-H facilities and programs. Beginning this fall, all centers have added in-person lessons and one-hour virtual sessions are also available for scheduling. These two additional avenues of interaction reflect the traditional experiences youth have when visiting the centers, while following UGA and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines to ensure the health and safety of everyone.

“Tens of thousands of K-12 students and teachers typically fill our 4-H facilities during the school year, building memories and bringing learning to life using Georgia as a classroom without walls. We hope that by offering these short virtual programs, we can give youth and adults a way to stay connected to our facilities and our programs during these times when so many are missing their annual field studies with us,” said Melanie Biersmith, associate state 4-H leader.

To learn more about the virtual and in-person offerings through the Georgia 4-H Environmental Education program, visit [georgia4h.org/ee](http://georgia4h.org/ee) or contact the centers directly. View the current library of videos at [georgia4h.org/ee/archive](http://georgia4h.org/ee/archive).

**Flavor of Georgia**, *continued from page 1*

All winners and finalists earn the right to have their products stamped with the Flavor of Georgia logo and the signature contest apron.

Since 2007, more than 1,600 products have been submitted to Flavor of Georgia. A total of 117 products were entered this year, all of which are featured in the annual directory on the contest website.

The contest is supported by sponsorships from the Georgia Agribusiness Council and the Georgia Department of Agriculture and its Georgia Grown marketing program, to which finalists receive a one-year membership.

More information about the contest is available at [www.flavorofga.com](http://www.flavorofga.com) and by following the contest on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram @flavorofga.

**EXTENSION PUBLICATIONS****Consumer Horticulture Benefits our Environment**

As populations increase and our country becomes more urban, protecting the function of our valuable ecosystems depends on residents actively supporting plant and soil health as well as water and air quality where they live and work: [t.uga.edu/519](http://t.uga.edu/519).

**LOOKING <sup>TO BUY</sup> LOCAL?**  
**Let Us Connect You!**

**AG PRODUCTS CONNECTION**

In collaboration with Georgia Grown and other industry partners, UGA Extension is using its network of county offices to connect agricultural producers with consumers looking for fresh, Georgia-grown products. Visit [t.uga.edu/508](http://t.uga.edu/508) for more.



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