



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™  
EXTENSION

# Farm, Family & 4H

NESHOBA COUNTY

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2021

## The New Blessing Box



"Blessing Box". Simply put, this Blessing Box is a large, waterproof, storage container placed at the Depot. Its intended purpose is to supply essentials to the less-fortunate of our town. The students filled the Blessing Box with water, individual snacks, blankets, toiletries, gloves, and many other items. These items are free to anyone in our community who is in need. Community members are also encouraged to donate items to the Blessing Box. The idea is to take what you need, and bring what you can. Leadership Neshoba Class of 2020/2021, we are proud of your accomplishments and your service to Neshoba County.

Every year, The Community Development Partnership, Neshoba County 4H, East Central Community College, and Philadelphia Main Street join together to host a program called Leadership Neshoba. Each class of this program consists of outstanding youth from Philadelphia, Neshoba Central, Leake Central, and Choctaw Central High Schools who apply to be in the program. Along with their career building curriculum and a host of wonderful educational tours around town, the Leadership Neshoba group is tasked with completing a service project. In the past, the chosen service projects have been anything from encouraging nursing home residents to cleaning up and painting park benches. This year's group of high-school juniors decided to create what they are calling a



## Save the Dates!

### SWD Livestock Show

January 28—February 3

### Dixie National Junior Roundup Show

February 4—February 11

### January 28—Quick Bites - Online Master Gardener Volunteer Training

A new year is here and Master Gardener training will start soon! Jeff will cover how the training will work and what Extension agents in the county need to know about it. He will go over the fees payment, recruiting, management and other items for Master Gardener training in 2021. zoom registration link:  
<http://msuext.ms/qb2021-01-28>. You must register to participate.

### S.A.F.E.T.Y

Will be starting up soon!  
See Page 3 for more details



Follow us on  
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Extension for tips  
and upcoming events!

KEEP UP WITH THE NESHOBA COUNTY EXTENSION,  
4H, AND MASTER GARDENERS ON FACEBOOK!  
JUST TYPE IN THE SEARCH BAR:  
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# Mississippi State Trial Garden Potting Soil Recipe

## Basic Large Container Mix

### Ingredients:

15 gallons composted fine pine bark (soil conditioner)  
 5 gallons sphagnum peat or peat-based bagged potting soil  
 3 cups controlled-release fertilizer (e.g., Osmocote, Nutricote)  
 11/2 cups dolomitic lime (garden lime)  
 1/2 cup micronutrient fertilizer (e.g., Micromax) water wetting agent (optional)

### Directions:

1. Break up clumps of sphagnum peat if using compressed bales.
2. Combine pine bark and sphagnum peat. If using a powdered wetting agent, add it now.
3. Add a small amount of water—just enough to reduce dust during mixing. If using a liquid wetting agent, add it to this water.
4. Blend the pine bark and sphagnum peat until the mix looks uniform.
5. Add fertilizer, lime, and micronutrients and mix until well blended (no clumps).
6. Add water slowly while mixing until the mix is moist but not wet.
7. Transfer the mix to your container and shake the pot to settle. Avoid packing or tamping the mix.
8. Plant your selected plants into the container. 9. Top-dress the pot with the appropriate amount of fertilizer for the plants.
10. Water in your new transplants very well, but slowly. You want to water until water begins draining from the holes in the bottom of the pot.
11. If saving leftover potting mix, read the comments to learn about the steps to use it later

### Comments

- This mix is intended for large containers. Pots larger than 6 inches are what we consider large.
- If the controlled-release fertilizer you select has micronutrients included, you will not need the additional micronutrient fertilizer.
- Other fertilizers can be used, but the amounts will need to be adjusted to deliver an equivalent amount of nutrients. ONLY slow- or controlled-release fertilizer should be used.
- The fertilizer in this recipe is only a starting amount. You will need additional fertilizer to ensure optimal plant growth.
- If you are growing plants that are acid lovers, reduce the amount of lime by half (add only 3/4 cup).
- If you save extra mix for later, keep it in a dry location. Make sure to water in very well immediately after planting. Water until the water runs clear from the holes in the bottom of the pot. This will prevent salt damage. Water as normal from then on.

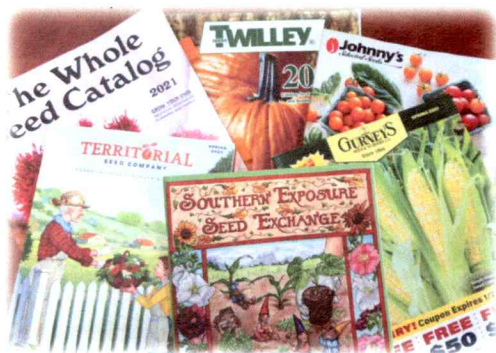
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Publication 3409 (POD-01-20)

By Geoffrey Denny, PhD, Assistant Extension Professor, Plant and Soil Sciences

[https://extension.msstate.edu/sites/default/files/publications/publications/P3409\\_web.pdf](https://extension.msstate.edu/sites/default/files/publications/publications/P3409_web.pdf)





## Shop carefully for 2021 garden seeds

Dr. Gary R. Bachman  
MSU Extension Service

I'm in my 2021 garden planning mode right now, and along with many other intentional gardeners, I have my mind on seeds. The intentional gardener needs to begin the new year by purchasing seeds, but be aware that the source is important. Last week I talked about how easy it is to go overboard as garden catalogs pile up at this time of year. How the seed companies entice us to buy more than we could possibly plant! When I want to buy seeds for my home landscape, I like to shop the local, independent garden centers. Their seed racks are always a highlight of my gardening year.

I was shopping this weekend, and the displays of onion sets and seed potatoes had just been put out. I had to get a couple of bags of white, yellow, and red onion sets; and red, yellow and blue seed potatoes. Of course, I realize these were impulse buys. If you do any kind of gardening, you know that impulse buying without knowing where the plant is going to be placed is part of the game. But being an intentional gardener means you must control these impulses. I was already planning on buying these onions and potatoes, although I had not planned on doing it this weekend. Now the thing about the display racks of seeds is that the selection is generally limited to reliable garden standbys. This is the place to buy those standard seeds but these garden center displays can't offer the numerous specialty varieties because of the sheer numbers available.

That's where the garden catalogs fit in. You can find exactly the variety you want, including the new selections you've read about. Be sure to order from reputable companies. My recommendation is to choose those that provide great products and even better customer service. For example, I recently had a germination issue with a couple of varieties of lettuce I purchased from one of my favorite companies. I called, and they did some research on the lot number of the lettuce. They found there had been problems with those seeds. I had new packets of seeds in three days. That's customer service. I strongly recommend buying seeds directly from reputable businesses with a proven history of selling high-quality products, rather than major online retailers or auction sites. You don't know where the seeds are coming from. Do you remember the mystery seeds many Americans received from China in 2020?

I have one last piece of advice for intentional gardeners buying seeds in 2021. Plan right now what you'd like to grow in your 2021 garden. Seed companies do not anticipate seed shortages like we saw last spring, but it's better to be safe than sorry. Don't delay thinking about your garden needs, and purchase seeds right away for the spring, summer and fall seasons.



## 4H S.A.F.E.T.Y. Shooting Sports

Neshoba County 4H has a well-established S.A.F.E.T.Y. Shooting Sports Club for youth ages 8- 18. The goal of this club is to teach the youth of our community about firearms safety and conservation via regular practices and a little friendly competition. While accomplishing this main goal, our kids also learn a great deal responsibility and have fun doing it. The disciplines offered are Archery, Shotgun, .22 rifle, .22 pistol, air rifle, and air pistol. Parents with children interested in joining need to call the Neshoba Extension Office at 601-656-4011 and/or email us at [ca783@msstate.edu](mailto:ca783@msstate.edu). When you get in touch with us, you will learn what is necessary to enroll in 4H as well as all the details associated with joining this particular club.

## **“ Helpful Extension Publications for January and February”**

To find these extremely useful publications, visit [extension.msstate.edu](http://extension.msstate.edu) and search for them using the search box:

### Weeds:

Newsletter “Forage News”  
Article “Getting in front of lawn weed issues before spring”  
P1322 “Establish and Manage Your Home Lawn”  
Video “How to Treat Lawn Burweed”

### Getting an early start on your spring garden:

Video “Start Seeds Indoors Using Egg Cartons”  
P1995 “Starting Vegetable Transplants”  
Video Series “LED Lights for Starting Seeds Indoors:”  
IS1294 “Soil Testing for the Homeowner”

### Pruning:

P2729 “Understanding Pruning and Injury Wounds in Fruit Trees”  
IS0204 “Pruning Landscape Plants”



## We Need Your Help!

We are trying to build our online newsletter mailroom in order to spread the word about our programs. If you are interested in receiving an email newsletter, or know someone who is, please send us an email at [amm97@msstate.edu](mailto:amm97@msstate.edu) Thank You!

-Neshoba Extension

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