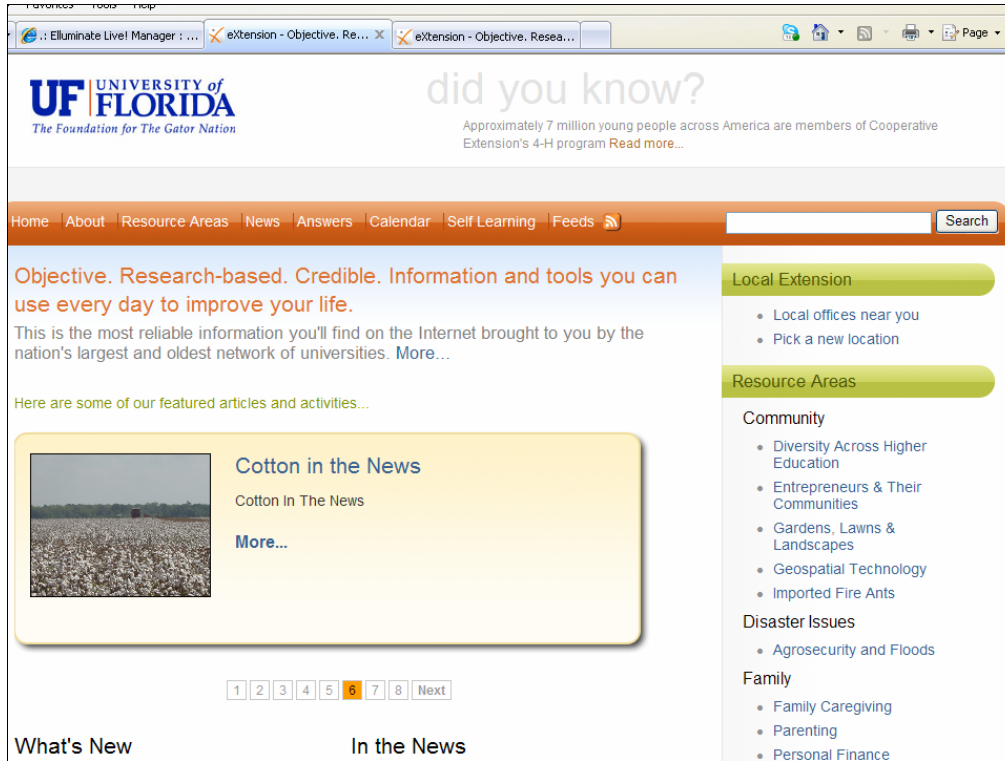




Our “National” Website  
<http://www.extension.org/>

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UF/IFAS Extension Service  
Okeechobee County

Florida Extension Agents may wish to become familiar with the National eXtension website. This PPT will give a brief overview of my experiences with this tool, and offer some ideas how you can become involved with this educational resource.



This screen shot shows the **public** home page for the eXtension website, <http://www.extension.org>. Note the different kinds of resources available in the orange bar at the top of the page.



<http://www.extension.org/>

This public website leads to:

- News (press releases)
- Calendar (events)
- Answers (FAQS)
- Self learning (modules)
- Feeds (blogs)
- Resource areas (topical content)

It has a search button to find local Extension office

These are the kinds of resources currently available through our national site. The search button on this page will help direct the visitor to their local county extension office for assistance.



<http://www.extension.org/>

This public website leads to:

- News (press releases)
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- Self learning (modules)
- Feeds (blogs)
- Resource areas (topical content)

It has a search button to find local Extension office

I have been most involved within the Resource areas, which is also linked to the ever-growing list of **Answers** to Frequently asked questions (FAQs)



## Resource Areas (Communities of Practice)

### Community

- Diversity Across Higher Education
- Entrepreneurs & Their Communities
- Gardens, Lawns & Landscapes
- Geospatial Technology
- Imported Fire Ants

### Disaster Issues

- Agrosecurity and Floods

### Family

- Family Caregiving
- Parenting
- Personal Finance

### Farm

- Animal Manure Management
- Beef Cattle
- Cotton
- Dairy
- Horses

### Pest Management

- Wildlife Damage Management

### Youth

- Science, Engineering, and Technology for Youth

The public can move through the menu of Resource areas to arrive at a page that will give them information on a particular subject.

From the standpoint of the Extension Agent, these are referred to as a Community of Practice (CoP).

Additional Communities of Practice may be added if there is sufficient interest in agents and specialists supporting such a topic.



## Resource Areas (Communities of Practice)

### Community

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- Entrepreneurs & Their Communities
- **Gardens, Lawns & Landscapes**
- Geospatial Technology
- **Imported Fire Ants**

### Disaster Issues

- Agrosecurity and Floods

### Family

- Family Caregiving
- Parenting
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### Farm

- Animal Manure Management
- Beef Cattle
- Cotton
- Dairy
- Horses

### Pest Management

- Wildlife Damage Management

### Youth

- Science, Engineering, and Technology for Youth

I have been involved with the both the Imported Fire Ant community plus the Gardens, Lawns & Landscapes Resource Area, also know as the Consumer Horticulture CoP.



The front page for the each Resource Area includes featured seasonal topics, news releases, and many other kinds of information from the US Land Grant Universities.

Consumers can scroll through archived FAQs or use the orange search button window to narrow down their quest for a particular topic.

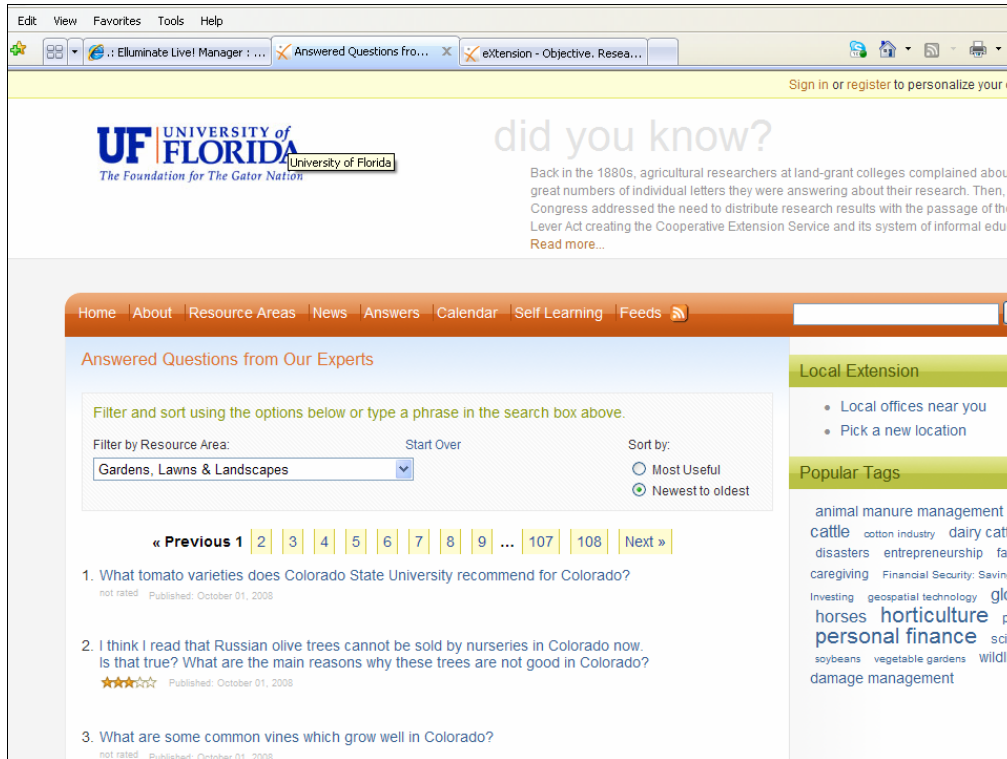


[www.extension.org/horticulture/faqs](http://www.extension.org/horticulture/faqs)

“Answered Questions from Our Experts”  
(FAQs)

- e.g. *gardens lawns, landscapes* category
- This topic is searchable from FAQ # 1 though #1615
- Uses key word tags for content and location

In the Horticulture CoP, there are currently 1615 FAQs that have been answered, reviewed and edited, and are able to be accessed by consumers.



Consumers can see the questions listed from the most recently published question first, or can choose the “most useful question” option.

The “most useful rating” is assigned by the public, and uses a 5-star rating system. Right now, 85 horticulture questions have a 5-star rating.



Website also has “Ask an expert” page:

<http://www.extension.org/horticulture/faqs>

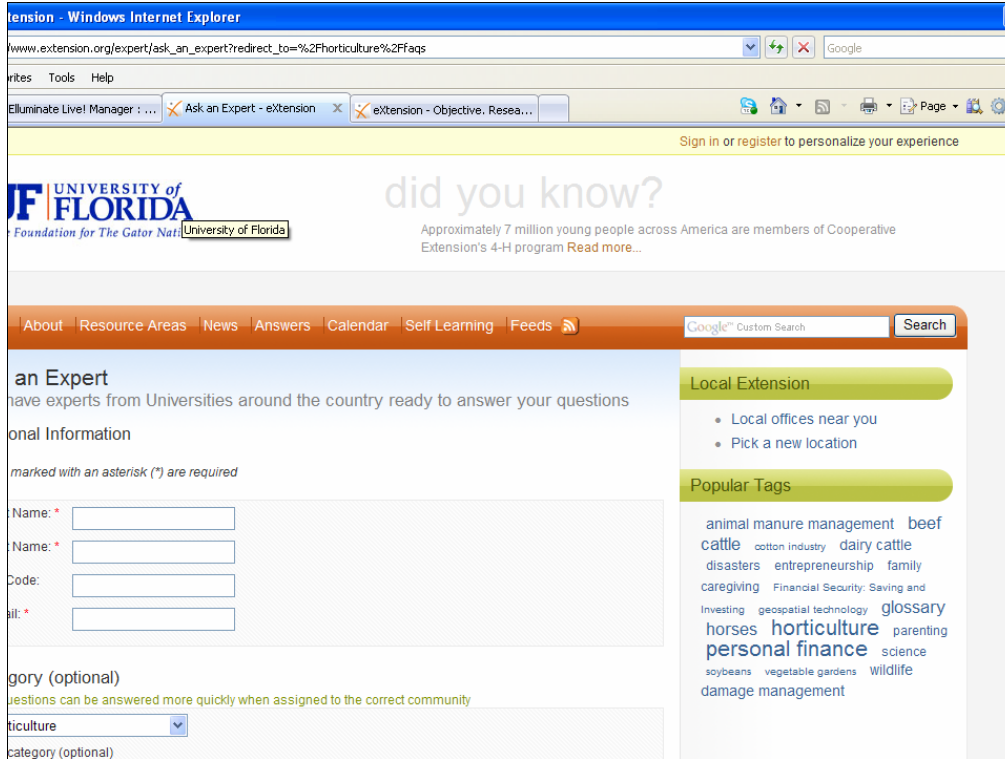
85. [I have a dwarf variegated willow tree and need to trim it. When is the best time to prune without damaging the tree?](#)

Published: January 08, 2008 ★★★★★

86. [What are the brown circles in my lawn?](#)

Published: January 07, 2008 ★★★★★

The “most useful rating” is assigned by the public, and uses a 5-star rating system. Right now, 85 horticulture questions have a 5-star rating.



If the search does not result in the user finding a good answer, they can submit a question directly to an expert.

Consumers are directed to this page, where they enter identifying information and their question.



<http://www.extension.org/>

“Experts” volunteer to respond to questions.

Filters are in place to direct questions based on:

- area of expertise
- geographic location

Here’s a question:

Extension staff can sign up to be an expert. Public questions are sent by the systems based on the kind of expertise identified by the Extension staff “experts,” and by their geographical location.



faq.extension.org:  
Incoming question assigned to you

Hi there,

You have an incoming question assigned to you at the eXtension Ask an Expert site.

The question is:

***"I have ficus hedges around the perimeter of my yard planted 4 years ago. In the past 4 months or so the leaves have fallen off in large amounts and continue to do so. What can I do to save the trees. Is this some type of disease that can be treated and if so with what. Thanks"***

Comment from the assigner: This question has been unanswered for a week. Hoping you can help out! Thanks! Beth

We need your help. Please either

- 1) Answer the question
- 2) Assign it to someone else to answer
- 3) Reject it (but only if it's a duplicate submission or inappropriate)

Please resolve this question before Monday, October 6, 2008, 6:30 PM. Here's the link:

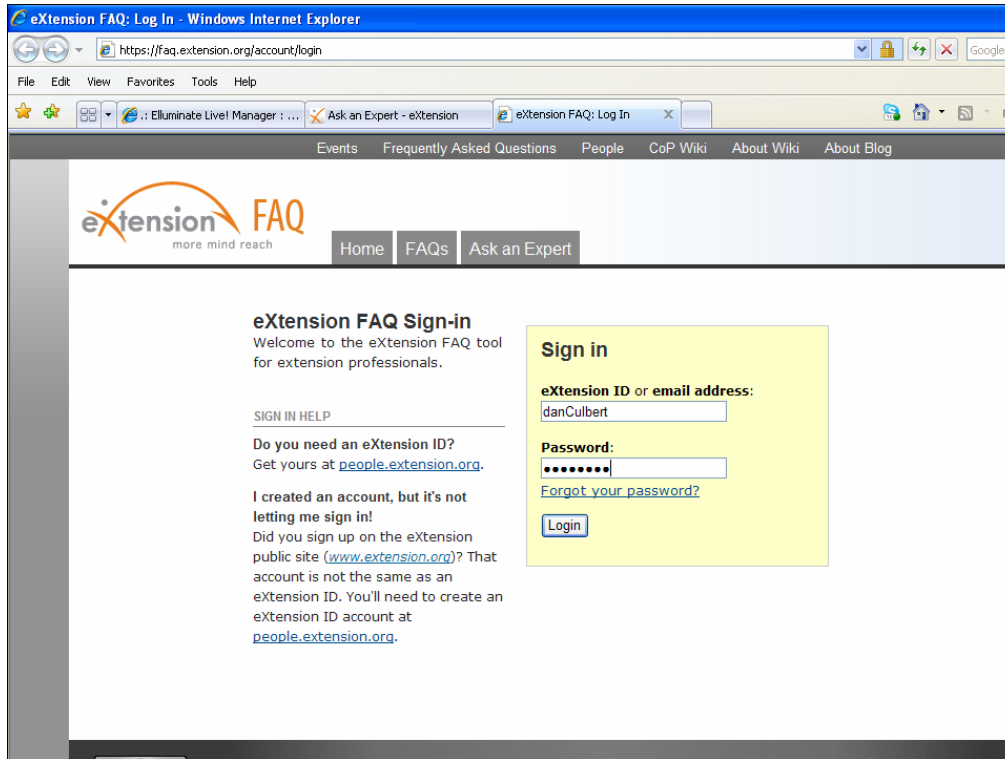
<http://faq.extension.org/expert/question/5974>

Thanks for your help!

p.s. We encourage anyone to answer a question if they have the knowledge. So it's possible another expert may have answered this question before you got a chance. You don't have to thank the person (although it may be nice) -- just try to return the favor sometime!

The question was assigned to you Saturday, October 4, 2008, 6:30 PM.

Questions are emailed to the "Expert" for handling. When you click on the link, your computer opens a new webpage to enter the Expert system.



First step is to sign in with your eXtension ID and password.  
Then you will be redirected to the FAQ page.



faq.extension.org:  
Incoming question assigned to you

- Expert signs in
- Can search for similar questions based on keywords (*tags*)
- Or – expert composes answer
- Response is emailed to clientele
- Expert can designate this as a FAQ
- FAQ is edited and reviewed (2x) before publishing on web.

Experts are encouraged to see if a similar question already exists in the FAQ database. If not, go at it!

My suggestion is to copy the question into a blank Word document, compose a short concise answer with a word processing program that checks for spelling, etc, and then copy your response back into the webpage. In most cases, it is a good idea to include a suggestion for the consumer to contact their local Extension office. (I also copy that agent if I can figure out where the question is coming from!).

After submitting the response to the consumer, the expert can elect to add it to the system. These FAQs will be edited and reviewed before publishing.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the eXtension FAQ website. The browser tabs include "Elluminate Live! Manager", "Ask an Expert - eXtension", and "eXtension FAQ: Ask an E...". The website navigation bar includes "Events", "Frequently Asked Questions", "People", "CoP Wiki", "About Wiki", and "About Blog". The eXtension logo is visible with the tagline "more mind reach". The main navigation menu has "Home", "FAQs", and "Ask an Expert" buttons. Below the navigation, there are tabs for "Incoming", "Assigned to me", "Resolved by me", "Resolved", and "Spam Review". A "Reports" link and user name "DanCulbert" are also present. The main content area displays "Incoming Question #5974" with a text box containing the question: "I have ficus hedges around the perimeter of my yard planted 4 ayears ago. In the past 4 months or so the leaves have fallen off in large amounts and continue to do so. What can I do to save the trees. Is this some type of disease that can be treated and if so with what. Thanks". To the right of the question, a blue box states "This question has been resolved" with a link to "Skip to resolution details" and a button labeled "Convert this Question & Answer into a FAQ". Below the question, it says "Rey Sanchez submitted this question 9 days ago" and "Category: uncategorized". The location "Miami-Dade, Florida" is listed with a small map icon. The "Question Resolution" section shows "Resolved by Daniel Culbert" and "Date: Monday, October 6, 2008, 10:27 AM".

I would recommend that when experts have signed in, they should look at the location from where the question came.

This can help the assigned expert decide if they are able to answer the question, or if they want to assign it to another expert.

Favorites Tools Help

Elluminate Live! Manager : ... Ask an Expert - eXtension eXtension FAQ: Ask an E... X Page

**Response (emailed):**

Southeastern Florida has been invaded by a new insect pest, a whitefly, which is probably the culprit. It is capable of defoliating several different kinds of Ficus plants. Leaves will turn yellow before they drop.

Here is a link to a fact sheet that shows photos and discusses more about this pest:  
[http://miami-dade.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/ornamental/ornamental\\_publications/The%20Fig%20Whitefly%20\(AUG2008\)%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf](http://miami-dade.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/ornamental/ornamental_publications/The%20Fig%20Whitefly%20(AUG2008)%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf)

Insecticidal soap or oil sprays may be effective for control on Ficus hedges. Thorough coverage of the undersides of the leaves is important. It is necessary to repeat these applications every week. Chemical insecticides may be needed. However, avoid products that will hurt natural enemies that are important for long-term control of this pest. Insecticides with systemic properties may be very useful. They can be applied as a drench to the soil and provide longer lasting control.

For more specific information please call Dade County UF Extension agents or Master Gardeners in Homestead at [305-248-3311](tel:305-248-3311).

**History**

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Submitted by [Rey Sanchez](#) from [www.extension.org](http://www.extension.org)  
Saturday, September 27, 2008, 10:00 PM

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Assigned to [Ron Sheffield](#) by [ASK-bot](#)  
Saturday, September 27, 2008, 10:00 PM

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Assigned to [Tom Wichman](#) by [Beth Raney](#)  
Wednesday, October 1, 2008, 4:31 PM

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Assigned to [Daniel Culbert](#) by [Beth Raney](#)  
Saturday, October 4, 2008, 2:30 PM  
Comments: This question has been unanswered for a week. Hoping you can help out! Thanks! Beth

Published questions also include a “history” of who and how long it took to respond to the question. Clicking on the blue name will give the expets a way to contact that professional if desired.

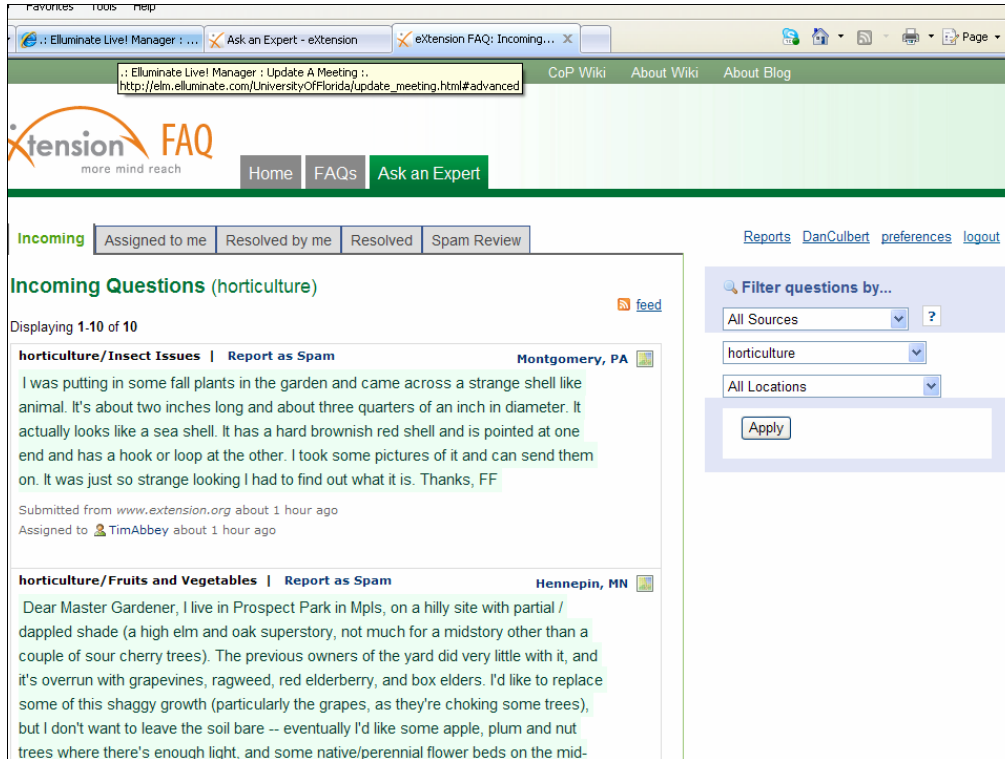


faq.extension.org

- Other Incoming Questions can be reviewed and answered
- A list of personally assigned and resolved questions can be viewed
- **Escalation Report** (emails) are sent to experts to improve timeliness for unanswered questions.
- FAQs waiting for review /editing can be viewed & comments added, ore even thrown out before publishing.  
<http://faq.extension.org/my/reviews>
- FAQs can be marked to “watched” for later activity

**Makes use of “Wiki” technology”**

All of these web pages make use of pages that can be edited by any expert that is signed into the system - an example of a Wiki technology.



Once in the system, experts are encouraged to look around at other recently submitted questions. This can give the expert a good feel of what hot topics there are out there.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the eXtension FAQ website. The browser's address bar shows the URL "http://www.extension.org/faq". The website's navigation menu includes "Events", "Frequently Asked Questions", "People", "CoP Wiki", "About Wiki", and "About Blog". The main header features the eXtension logo with the tagline "more mind reach" and navigation buttons for "Home", "FAQs", and "Ask an Expert".

The main content area is titled "Questions resolved by me (horticulture)" and displays a list of resolved questions. The first question is "Where could I obtain a list of plants native to Piscataway, NJ?" submitted from "Middlesex, NJ" and answered by DanCulbert 8 days ago. The second question is "What causes a white mold on summer squash which causes the plant to wither and die?" submitted from "Gwinnett, GA" and answered by DanCulbert about 1 month ago. The third question is partially visible, titled "horticulture/Trees and Shrubs" from "NH".

On the right side of the page, there is a "Filter questions by..." panel with three dropdown menus: "All Sources", "horticulture", and "All Locations". An "Apply" button is located below the filters. At the top right of the main content area, there are links for "Reports", "DanCulbert", "preferences", and "logout".

Experts can also view a list of their participation, which is quite useful when filling out those reports of accomplishments for reporting purposes. Remember this is a National-level activity, and these are peer-reviewed products!

extension FAQ  
more mind reach

Home FAQs Ask an Expert

My Comments [feed](#)

Displaying 1-25 of 28  
1 2 [Next »](#)

ID	Question	Status	Last Updated
37160	Hi, I live in Eugene, OR. We get a lot of rain and have a lot of areas like fern ridge and Alton Baker that have a lot of standing water. Why is there such a small mosquito population? It seems to me that this area seems ideal for them.	awaiting approval	3 months ago
13376	<b>new activity</b> Ants are taking over my garden and killing some of my plants. Is there a way I can kill them without putting chemicals on my vegetables that could harm my family?	published	6 months ago
5316	The fruit of my eggplant develops a rotted area that extends deep into the fruit. Do you know what the problem is?	inactive	7 months ago
1882	<b>new activity</b> How much soil do I need to add under my tree to plant ground covers?	published	7 months ago
29061	I summered several houseplants outside this year. I've discovered that ants have taken up residence in the containers. Do you have any suggestions on how to get rid of them?	published	8 months ago
27799	<b>new activity</b> I have noticed oaks turning totally brown seemingly overnight. Some turn brown instantly; with the others, half the leaf is green and the rest brown. There is no red or yellow to indicate Bacterial Leaf Scorch (BLS). Are there any Sudden Oak Death (SOD) cases in Salem or Gloucester counties in New Jersey?	published	9 months ago
8246	How does one plant the shrub called Angel Trumpet?	published	9 months ago
	<b>new activity</b> I transplanted a lemon tree from a large pot into my back yard. The		

Here's a list of questions that I have been involved in with this CoP.



faq.extension.org:

**To become active in eXtension, visit**

<https://people.extension.org>.

Create user name and password

**Who can get an eXtensionID?**

- individuals closely associated with the U.S. Cooperative Extension system (either those working at a Land-Grant Institution, State college or U.S. Government personnel affiliated with Cooperative Extension), or individuals in Extension-related organizations working on projects with Cooperative Extension staff.

**To log on to FAQ expert system:**

- <http://faq.extension.org/account/login>

To add your name to the list of experts, you must have a username and password – so visit this page to get your eXtension ID.

https://faq.extension.org/account/login

Events Frequently Asked Questions People CoP Wiki About Wiki About Blog

**tension** **FAQ**  
more mind reach

Home FAQs Ask an Expert

### eXtension FAQ Sign-in

Welcome to the eXtension FAQ tool for extension professionals.

SIGN IN HELP

**Do you need an eXtension ID?**  
Get yours at [people.extension.org](http://people.extension.org).

**I created an account, but it's not letting me sign in!**  
Did you sign up on the eXtension public site ([www.extension.org](http://www.extension.org))? That account is not the same as an eXtension ID. You'll need to create an eXtension ID account at [people.extension.org](http://people.extension.org).

#### Sign in

**eXtension ID or email address:**

**Password:**

[Forgot your password?](#)

RIGHTS RESERVED [Contact Us](#) version 1.14.0 r1771  
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Have you signed up yet?



Coding for eXtension search buttons are also available

Also see this webpage to see how your programs can make use of **eXtension**:

<http://about.extension.org/>

A screenshot of the "Ask an Expert" form on the eXtension website. The form is titled "Ask an Expert" and includes the eXtension logo. It has a "Question" field, an "Email" field with a note "Type it carefully, this is how you'll receive your answer", and an "Ask" button. The form is set against a light grey background.

There are many other ways that you can become fully integrated into our national eXtension system. See the [about.extension](http://about.extension.org/) page for more!